



Obesity

The causes of obesity are complex:

- genetic, metabolic, physiologic and environmental factors
- social and cultural contexts, which affect eating behaviors, diet, physical activity and satisfaction with one's own body
- socioeconomic considerations, such as access to affordable healthy food and safe environments for physical activity

Unhealthy weight control behaviors (e.g., fasting; skipping meals; eating very little food; vomiting and using diet pills, laxatives or diuretics) have also been found to co-occur with obesity. Many adolescents, particularly teenage girls, have body image concerns and engage in unhealthy weight control behaviors.

Obese children are more likely to have a lifetime of chronic health problems (including diabetes, asthma, sleep apnea, cancer, and cardiovascular disease). In addition, they are at greater risk of experiencing symptoms of psychological and social distress due to the stigma of being overweight or obese, including:

- social isolation
- behavioral difficulties
- negative self-view
- low self-esteem
- depression
- suicide

Children who are overweight are also at higher risk for bullying and victimization. In addition to being targeted by their peers, research has also found that weight bias has also been associated with teachers and school staff attributing less desirable personality characteristics to obese youth and their families.

If your child is overweight and experiencing any of the psychological/social difficulties listed above, please contact the Linden team so that we can help them help themselves get to a healthier and happier place.