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For more information:

Call 865.546.3998
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East Tennessee Children's Hospital Gastroenterology and Nutrition Services

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Greetings!

We hope you are enjoying the summer with your family and friends. A year ago we started this newsletter as a way to share information with our local physicians. Our first newsletter was a report on obesity, and since then I have been continually reminded that the obesity epidemic is increasing in the United States. In a recent study (2007) on state obesity rates, Tennessee was ranked the third heaviest with more than 30% of the population considered obese. Only Mississippi and Alabama have higher rates of obesity. This newsletter is filled with practical tips you can use to help your patients create new, healthier, lifestyle behaviors.

This spring my office created an obesity intervention program for overweight children and their parents called Bee Fit 4 Kids because we were so troubled with this obesity epidemic in our children. Bee Fit 4 Kids is one of a few programs in the United States that uses a family approach to fighting childhood obesity. The program is open to any child in the community whether or not they are our patient. Please look at www.beefit4kids.com or call 865.546.3998 for more information.

Sincerely,

Youhanna S. Al-Tawil, MD

Obesity: Revisited One Year Later

Fact: 80% of children who are overweight at aged 10-15 years will be obese at aged 25 years, and if the overweight begins before aged eight, the obesity in adulthood will be more severe.

As medical professionals it can be tough to convey all the medically necessary information to our patients in the limited amount of time we have with them. One of the health issues that can easily be overlooked is overweight and obesity. Unfortunately, not dealing with a child's weight issue can have both immediate and long-term health consequences. According to the Centers for Disease Control, a population-based sample of children aged 5 to 17 years revealed that 70% of obese kids had at least one cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factor and 39% had two or more CVD risk factor including high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and abnormal glucose tolerance. Other health consequences directly related to obesity include:

- Coronary heart disease
- Type II Diabetes
- Cancer- endometrial, breast, colon
- Hypertension
- Dyslipidemia
- Stroke
- Liver and gallbladder disease
- Sleep apnea and respiratory disorders
- Osteoarthritis
- Gynecological problems

The time for action is now, and each of us can do something to tackle the epidemic of obesity.

Childhood Obesity and Behavior Change

By Gina Hummel, PhD Clinical Psychology



As we focus on childhood obesity in this newsletter, my colleagues will be sharing strategies for changing a child’s behavior in order to attain weight loss. Before we can dive head first into this process, I would like to slow down a little bit and check in with the child about what we are asking them to do.

Change of any sort is hard for most of us. Even with a compelling reason, most of us do not embrace change when faced with it. That is why when I meet with children and teens in my first visit, I like to ask about their reaction when someone suggested that they see a psychologist. Sometimes they groan, sometimes they glare, and sometimes they seem legitimately happy to have a place to sort out their problems. Depending on their response to my question, I adjust my approach to treatment. For example, a reluctant child may need a visit or two to get comfortable in a new setting and meeting a new person before any big changes can be made. I find that treatment compliance and outcome is improved when I let them set the pace.

When approaching my work with a child facing the need to lose weight, I use a traffic signal analogy. Using the red, yellow and green lights on a traffic signal, I ask them how they feel about these changes. Red represents a “No Way!” response, yellow, “I don’t know, I guess I could try,” and green, “Bring it on!” I allow them to freely share where they are – even if it is a “red light”. Accepting this and not judging the position they find themselves in allows their weight loss to be about them not their parent’s plan for them.

It would be great if all kids were green lights in their views of change; however, we know this does not reflect reality. Once they are willing to talk about change we can work on increasing motivation, visualizing how their life will be different if they make some change, and then making some small easy changes that ultimately lead them to a plan of their own using the tools we provide them. The path to healthy weight management can only happen one step at a time!



Easy Tips for Being Healthier

By Ashley Rogers, MS, RD, LDN



Adopting a healthy lifestyle can sometimes be a challenge, however when you make small adjustments to your normal routine it becomes simple to live healthier. By making both dietary and environmental changes the health risks associated with childhood obesity can be reduced. Here are a few practical tips that will help guide your overweight patients to live healthier lives:

- Avoid skipping meals. Allow 20 minutes to eat each meal to help reduce desire for second portions.
- Avoid sugar-sweetened beverages including sweet tea, sugar sodas, and sports drinks.
- Avoid a sedentary lifestyle. Be physically active daily.
- Avoid high fat and sugar concentrated snacks. Fruits, vegetables or low fat dairy products are better choices.
- When dining out avoid ordering fried foods. Instead, choose foods that are grilled, baked or broiled. Also, order sauces and salad dressings on the side.
- Use smaller plates for your meals; you tend to put less food on your plate, which will help save calories.
- Avoid going grocery shopping hungry and take a shopping list to cut down on the impulse buys.



Our weight management program, **Bee Fit 4 Kids**, promises to be effective in treating child and adolescent overweight and obesity, in adherence with the recommendations set forth by the American Medical Association, the American Dietetics Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The **Bee Fit 4 Kids** program is comprised of group and individual counseling sessions with two Registered Dietitians to aid dietary and lifestyle changes, an Exercise Specialist to improve physical activity habits, and a Psychologist who engages behavior modification to ensure a successful weight loss journey. Other resources available include four Board Certified Gastroenterologists and two Nurse Practitioners. After the 16-week program, all participants should see a reduction in BMI thus reducing their risk for future co-morbidities, if they follow the recommended guidelines set forth in the program.

The dietary practices of **Bee Fit 4 Kids** program encourages moderation rather than over-consumption and emphasizes healthful choices rather than restrictive eating patterns. Physical activity is encouraged through family time focused around fun and interesting activities. Families are educated and empowered through structured guidance to recognize the impact they have on their children’s development of lifelong habits of physical activity and nutritious eating.

We recommend that all Physicians proactively discuss and promote healthy behaviors for children at an early age and if needed, refer them to the **Bee Fit 4 Kids** weight management program so that we may all work to cease the sharp rise in childhood obesity. Please contact our office or visit our website for additional information regarding the **Bee Fit 4 Kids** weight management program. We will be happy to assist in answering all of your questions and we welcome your referrals. We are currently recruiting for our next session which is scheduled to begin on September 8, 2009.

New Staff Members



Tara L. Dempster, FNP

Education:
MSN – University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2008
BSN – University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2007
ADN – Southeastern Community College, Whiteville, NC, 2003

Board Certifications:
Family Nurse Practitioner, ANCC

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Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing
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Kathy F. Butcher, MPH

Education:
M.P.H. – San Diego State University, San Diego, CA
B.S. Exercise Science and Wellness Education- Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL

Professional Memberships:
Phi Kappa Phi, National Honor Society
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