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Battling Childhood Obesity through Smart Eating

By Protica Research

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Finally, a positive solution regarding America's difficult and costly campaign to stem childhood obesity is emerging. For the thousands of children and their families who are currently battling with childhood obesity, this good news is long awaited.

Indeed, the risk factors for childhood obesity read like a checklist of ailments that only a generation ago would never have been linked to children and diet: heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and of course, social ridicule and alienation [i]. This latter consequence of childhood obesity -- ridicule and alienation -- has the dual effect of damaging a child both physically and emotionally far beyond childhood, and possibly for the rest of his or her natural life.

For years, medical experts have called for a multi-faceted strategy to address this epidemic. It has been clear that any long-term solution must be fought on four major fronts: physical activity, sedentary behavior, socioeconomic status, and eating habits [ii].

Yet there is room for another pillar; or, at the very least, the identification of another component that must be a part of any lasting solution. This fifth pillar, or undiscovered component, is smart nutritional supplements.

Many obese children have been told repeatedly by well-intentioned dieticians that eating smart is the key to overcoming this scarring condition. This is easier said than done; especially when emotional eating or an unobserved food addiction [1] may fuel adverse eating habits.

Yet being told to "eat smart" is oftentimes not enough. Children must be provided with foods that are nutritionally sound, and foods that they actually enjoy eating. It is this latter criterion that most well-intentioned experts and caregivers overlook. This is explained below.

Most obese children are neither unable to learn, nor willfully disobedient. Some of these children even have remarkable support from their well-adjusted families who dutifully remove the usual suspects of chips, soft drinks, chocolate bars, and other damaging foods from the home. Yet many of these same

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children continue to gain weight and march ever closer to the litany of health defects noted above.

These children are not sadistic, and they are not attempting to kill themselves through eating; though some do because of the stigma associated with their condition. Indeed, many obese children are cognitively aware of the danger to which they are subjecting their bodies. Yet they continue to snack away in secret, or binge on foods when they get the chance, thereby undoing whatever minor gains might have been achieved in the previous few days or weeks.

The problem is one of food selection. Generally speaking, children of all weights and shapes will not eat something that they do not like. For obese children who have typically had unfettered access to highly stimulating foods such as gravies and sugar-loaded soft drinks, the willpower to eat unpalatable foods is undeveloped. Indeed, the dietician may snack away on carrots and celery while talking to an

obese child about the importance of eating smart. For the obese child, carrots and celery are foreign foods for which there is no known preference.

This fifth pillar, or new component, is therefore one that provides obese children with nutritional supplements that they will eat. As stunningly obvious - even axiomatic - as this seems, it has been lost on many experts until recently.

Thankfully, as noted above, there is a solution emerging. It is one that meets this demand for tasty, healthy foods. Forward-thinking companies that understand their consumers are creating low-calorie, highly nutritious foods fortified with life-sustaining vitamins and protein. More importantly: they are tasty, and are often packaged in colorful containers that are "teen-friendly". Companies including MetRx™, Experimental and Applied Sciences™, Protica Research™, and others develop products that fit well within these requirements. Granted, a healthy diet does not start or end with nutritional supplements. A healthy diet employs nutritional supplements to complement and fortify real foods.

Indeed, children and families affected by the obesity epidemic in America are cautiously optimistic at this point; after all, they have been promised solutions in the past. However, thanks to the next generation of nutritional supplements, there is an expectation that this optimism will steadily grow with every success story, and every child that recovers from the potentially devastating impact of obesity.

ABOUT PROTICA

Founded in 2001, Protica, Inc. is a nutritional research firm with offices in Lafayette Hill and Conshohocken, Pennsylvania. Protica manufactures capsulized foods, including Profect, a compact, hypoallergenic, ready-to-drink protein beverage containing zero carbohydrates and zero fat. Information on Protica is available at <http://www.protica.com>

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REFERENCES

[i] Source: "The Problem of Overweight in Children and Adolescents". The US Department of Health and Human Services.

http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/fact_adolescents.htm

[ii] Source: "Childhood Obesity". American Obesity Association.

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Parenting & Dealing With Childhood Obesity

By Michele Oberton

One of the leading problems effecting today's youth is that of childhood obesity. One of the most important parenting tips that could ultimately save a child's life is to deal with the problem early and yet with great sensitivity. The truth is that dealing with this delicate parenting issue early may help to save a child from dealing with obesity and other related illnesses in later life.

Over the years, the presence of obesity in children has dramatically increased. Many experts attribute the surge to over exposure to video games, television and computers. Others suspect that the increasing problem stems from poor eating habits and still others believe it may be a little bit of both.

Among other problems, obese children are at higher risk for developing diabetes and heart related illnesses. Health professionals are commonly worried that children who battle with weight early in life may face obesity later in adulthood, which could have a very negative impact on their health.

A child who is overweight or has recently been diagnosed with obesity, should not be singled out from the family as being the only one needing to make a change in their lifestyle. This is one of the most important parenting techniques to use when dealing with childhood obesity and is also one that will greatly impact a child's self-esteem. If parenting isn't done properly in this situation, the child may forever feel inferior or begin to identify themselves by how much they weigh, which is an unhealthy possibility. It is important that the entire family join together and participate in healthier meals, less television time and increased levels of activity, including walking.

Among the best parenting remedies used to combat obesity is preparing more fruits, vegetables and less foods that are high in fat. Positive parenting techniques will involve having healthy snacks available for your family and encouraging them over junk foods. Additionally, set a schedule for the

Battling Childhood Obesity through Smart Eating

family to take a brisk walk or spend some time doing some type of physical activity, including a game of basketball, softball, volleyball, etc. Anything that will get your child up and moving instead of spending all of his/her time in front of the television or video game will be to their benefit and will lend to the positive impact of good parenting. And finally, be vocal during your child's medical visits. This includes asking the doctor questions about any concerns that you may have, as well as taking his/her advice when it comes to the health of your child.

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