

Title: No easy solution for a complex problem- Maintaining healty body weight and preventing overweight and obesity

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In recent decades the prevalence of obesity has increased to reach epidemic proportions, this despite the fact that the condition is completely preventable and treatable. Worldwide obesity has nearly tripled between 1975 and 2017. The condition is no longer limited to adults or to populations in developed countries. In 2016 more than 340 million children and adolescents between the ages of five and nine years were overweight or obese, and in 2020, 39 million children younger than 5 years of age were overweight or obese. Furthermore, the majority of the global population live in countries where overweight and obesity kills more people than underweight. What is this condition? What causes it? Which complications are associated with the excess body weight? Most importantly why do so many people suffer and die from a preventable, treatable condition? One can simplify obesity to a positive enery balance due to a higher energy intake compared to the energy expenditure of the individual. The solution to this simplified problem seems simple – reduce energy intake and increase energy expenditure. However, the truth is that obesity is much more complex than a mere energy imbalance and for this reason the solution is not as simple as it seems. This presentation will aim to investigate the complexity of obesity as a health problem and briefly look at some ways to manage, prevent and treat obesity.

Biography

Professor Marlise van Staden has completed her PhD at the age of 32 years from the North West University. She is the Head of the Department of Physiology and Environmental Health at the University of Limpopo in South Africa. Her research area is chronic degenerative diseases (including obesity) and child health. (Up to 100 words)

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