



## OBESITY AND COUNSELLING ON STUDENT EATING HABIT IN UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR: THE COUNSELLOR PRESPECTIVE

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**Abstract:** Obesity is an abnormal accumulation of body fat, usually 20% or more over an individual's ideal body weight. Obesity is associated with increased risk of illness, disability, and death. In University of Calabar Student eating habit is bad and the counsellor view it as a danger to the student body system. Therefore, counsellor are counselling the student on their eating habit. or most persons affected by obesity, however, the causes of their condition are more complex, involving the interaction of multiple factors. Indeed, the rapid rise in obesity worldwide is likely due to major shifts in environmental factors and changes in behaviour rather than a significant change in human genetics. For example, early feeding patterns imposed by an obese mother upon her offspring may play a major role in a cultural, rather than genetic, transmission of obesity from one generation to the next. Generally, obese persons have a shorter life expectancy; they suffer earlier, more often, and more severely from a large number of diseases than do their normal-weight counterparts. The counsellor view student eating management habit as very important to their health.

**KEY WORDS:** Obesity, Counselling , Student , Habit, Eating, Counsellor.

### INTRODUCTION

The majority of psychological interventions for overweight and obesity are cognitive behaviorally based, and are typically used in combination with lifestyle interventions. The focus of counseling is initial weight loss and sustained weight loss. Sustained weight loss is especially problematic—up to 95% of patients regain their weight within 5 years.<sup>10</sup> Some patients may be puzzled by the fact that they are eating less, but are not losing weight. This occurs when the brain senses reduced intake and attempts to compensate by decreasing energy. Counseling should address unrealistic patient expectations. Emphasize that even a small weight loss can have significant results; a 5% weight loss, for example, reduces type 2 diabetes risk by 60%.<sup>9,12</sup> Encourage patients to seek counseling. Patients engaged in cognitive behavioral therapy along with diet and exercise lose an additional 10.8 pounds compared with patients adhering only to diet and

exercise. Up to one-third of obese patients achieve long-term weight loss when interventions include diet, drugs, and counseling. The biggest challenge for a student in University of Calabar is to develop healthy eating habits, Regardless of whether students live with their parents or live separately from their parents, not everyone has healthy eating habits, A 600 ml bottle of regular soft drink contains about 16 teaspoons of sugar, the student in University of Calabar do not watch their eating habit, they take a 600 ml bottle about 16 teaspoons 4 times a day which causes harm to their body system. A healthy diet can improve and maintain optimal health. Optimal health can include aspects of mental and physical health<sup>[1]</sup>. The terms "healthy diet" and "diet for weight management" (*dieting*) are often related, as the two promote healthy weight management.<sup>[2][3]</sup> If a person is overweight or obese, changing to a diet and lifestyle that allows them to burn more calories than they consume may improve their overall health, possibly preventing

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diseases that are attributed in part to weight, including heart disease and diabetes[4]. Body Mass Index (BMI), which is simply weight adjusted for height, is a more practical and widely-used method to screen for obesity. Increased BMI is associated with an increase in adverse health effects. Central adipose increases the risk for cardiovascular and other diseases independent of obesity. Clinicians may use the waist circumference as a measure of central adipose. Men with waist circumferences greater than 102 cm (> 40 inches) and women with waist circumferences greater than 88 cm (> 35 inches) are at increased risk for cardiovascular disease. [1] Body mass index (BMI) is a simple index of weight – for – height that is commonly used to classify underweight, overweight and obesity in adults. It is defined as the weight in kilograms divided by the square of the height in meters (kg/m<sup>2</sup>). The BMI is also a very important indicator for measuring and determining stress related disorders in humans especially classes of hypertension and obesity status.

#### **Eating Disorders**

Eating disorders encompass more than anorexia nervosa. There is actually an entire range of mental health disorders related to eating, including binge eating disorder, bulimia, or a combination of several disorders. Eating disorders may occur with depression or anxiety, and mental health counseling can be very important in devising a treatment plan. An eating disorder is complicated, and includes emotional issues as well as habitual behaviors with food or exercise. Binge eating disorder, which can cause obesity, is not just about food. Over-eating is a symptom of something deeper that can be difficult to resolve on your own.

#### **Counselling and Obesity**

Counselling professionals historically, have had limited contact with the population for a variety of reasons(Ekeng, Arop, Ngwu, Obi &Ubi 2022). Obesity is epidemic and is the number one cause for poor health and premature death. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 66% of adults are overweight and 35.7% are obese. Obesity has been shown to increase Breast Cancer risk in postmenopausal women by 20% to 35%. Moreover, high body mass index has been found to be significantly associated with an increased risk of breast cancer in both postmenopausal and postmenopausal populations. In a very recent report on breast cancer, obese patients. Fat cells produce

inflammatory adipokines, resulting in chronic low-grade inflammatory responses that increase risk for life-threatening conditions including:

- Diabetes, high blood pressure, coronary artery disease, high cholesterol, elevated triglycerides, osteoarthritis. 80% of obese individuals suffer from 1 or more of these conditions.
- Endometrial, breast, and colon cancer
- Liver and gallbladder disease
- Sleep apnea, respiratory disease
- Gout, degenerative cartilage, bone disease
- Reproductive health complications
- Benign prostatic hyperplasia
- Urinary incontinence
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease

**Counselling Up** to 25% of patients are confused regarding diet information. 10 Weight counseling by primary care physicians is often lacking, leaving counseling to other health professionals. Effective counseling begins with patient education on several topics, including the effectiveness of popular diets. Some patients may be puzzled by the fact that they are eating less, but are not losing weight. This occurs when the brain senses reduced intake and attempts to compensate by decreasing energy expenditure.

#### **Student Eating Habit in University of Calabar**

Eating habits are one of the biggest changes student in University of Calabar experience, because for most of our lives our parents set out when and what we eat. To start with, there's no Mum or Dad to tell you what you can and can't eat, and at first – it feels great. The freedom of being able to eat whatever you want whenever you want can be quite a buzz at first. Poor eating habits in students can also be down to dis-organized routines, the big loans that deceive you into thinking you're rich, changes in sleeping patterns and the inability to cook a decent meal! So take caution, as poor eating habits have been proven to impact on your academic performance with poor concentration, memory and motivation. Food choices play a central role in effectively safeguarding the health of a population. It is widely known that healthy eating habits in younger consumer groups, are a key factor in preventing obesity and the many chronic illnesses related to it. This is true especially with respect to the student in University of Calabar. Skipping breakfast is a taboo no matter what diet you are on. Not



getting a healthy meal in the morning means you won't have the energy to last

until lunch. This will push your body to exhaust your natural reserves and will put every system under a lot of stress. Add to that the fact that your blood sugar level will go down, which creates a risk of fainting and accidents. Low blood sugar also means reduced cognitive ability. First of all, understand that junk food is any product that contains lots of 'empty calories'. It means that it mostly consists of carbs, sugar, and fat, instead of essential nutrients. Eating junk food is one of the most common negative eating habits among University of Calabar student. Distracted eating means chomping down something while you are working, watching movies, etc. If you do this, your mind concentrates on the more important task, so you don't control how much food you consume. Of all negative eating habits, this has the easiest solution. You just need to remove all food from the place where you work. This will also improve your productivity as your brain won't get distracted.

#### Healthy Eating Habits And Lifestyle

A healthy lifestyle To ensure a healthy lifestyle, WHO recommends eating lots of **fruits and vegetables, reducing fat, sugar and salt intake and exercising**. Based on height and weight, people can check their body mass index (BMI) to see if they are overweight. human body requires energy to perform all the basic functions of the body like; breathing, digesting food, keeping it warm, helping repair the body, inducing growth and maintaining a healthy immune system. The energy substances are already there in the form of nutrients in a variety of food. A calorie is a basic unit of energy that we get from the food we eat. In other words, you can say that calorie is a fuel which is stored and burnt by our body as per requirement or habit we have cultivated. The component of psycho-social health in overall quality of life and well-being (Effiom, Ngwu, Arop & Ugbe 2022).

#### Advantages of healthy eating habits

- By following healthy eating habits, The first advantage you can see is lowering the risk of heart diseases.
- It will help you to boost your mood and reduce the stress levels, and also will help you to perform all daily physical activities well.
- Food with good nutrition combined with physical activity will help you to lead a healthy weight

and lifestyle and reduces the risk of chronic diseases like cancer.

- Diets rich in fibre such as vegetables and fruits may reduce the risk of obesity, health problems and type 2 diabetes.
- Healthy eating habits, overall, helps you gain the benefit of weight loss, stroke prevention, building better mood, efficiency, and better memory.

#### Steps to Healthy Eating Habits

- First, you need to understand, how much calories your body needs to perform basic metabolic functions and daily physical activities using online calorie calculators.
- You need to understand and know the type of food and how many calories per gram, it contains.
- Apart from Calorie concern, it would help if you even focused on the portion control and choosing nutrient-rich foods which are of prime importance. Your food should be the mixture of carbohydrates, protein, fat, minerals and vitamins. You need to choose the portion very wisely and as per your body's essential requirement only.
- Have the habit of keeping more fruits, low-fat dairy products, fresh vegetables, whole-grain foods in your diet plan.
- Cultivate the habit of having home-made food at home or work.
- Don't skip or delay your meals, as later on you will end up eating too much or choosing an unhealthy snack.
- Take a small plate and serving in the beginning, chew your food well; this time, consuming process will help you eat the right amount of food your body requires.
- Drink water instead of high-sugar drinks.
- Resins or fibre-rich foods will help you feel full and achieve satiety value so you would eat less and consume fewer calories.

#### Conclusion

Many people do not realize how damaging obesity can be to the body and for your overall health. Obesity is something that is increasingly on the rise today and will continue to rise unless we do something about it like informing people of how bad it really is and encouraging people to live a health-enhancing lifestyle. A healthy diet and exercising two to three times a week is key to not becoming obese. Let's change the trend of obesity



by living healthy lives and building towards a healthy lifestyle. **Obesity is indeed a major health concern** because the health complications are very serious. Factors influencing obesity are both modifiable and non-modifiable.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1- Prevention and early treatment of overweight and obesity using lifestyle modifications, diet control and other means of therapy.

2- Early detection and treatment of any cancers in obese patients and in those with metabolic syndrome and diabetes mellitus, being more susceptible to certain cancer.

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