

青少年肥胖問題

青少年肥胖問題一向都受到關注，疫情後，因為活動量減少，肥胖問題更有上升趨勢。肥胖對青少年的身、心也影響，需要正視處理。要界定青少年是否超重或肥胖，可透過衛生署的「身高別體重圖表」來評估。體重按身高調整後，超過體重中位數的 120% 定義為超重或肥胖。若身高超過 175 厘米的男生或身高超過 165 厘米的女生，則需改用體重指標（BMI）來評估體重，體重指標達 25 或以上即屬肥胖。

別以為兒童肥胖問題只會帶來外觀上或生活上的不便，肥胖症可引致200多種不同類型的疾病，所以兒童有機會年紀輕輕，就患上高膽固醇、高血脂、高尿酸、高血壓等長期病。而青少年在發育期間，細胞分裂最旺盛，如果攝取太多熱量導致過胖，體內會製造更多脂肪細胞，即使長大後也會一直存在體內，變成容易增胖的體質。

當兒童出現這些症狀，亦會令他們增加容易患上心血管疾病，如冠心病及心臟衰竭的機會。另外，肥胖也會增加患上腸胃及呼吸系統疾病的風險，包括脂肪肝、膽石、睡眠窒息、哮喘等。除了自身器官外，肥胖的身軀也會對骨骼造成負擔，加速膝蓋退化，導致足踝容易扭傷。肥胖也可導致荷爾蒙改變和內分泌失調，出現性早熟等症狀。

要改善問題，可以先從飲食入手，注意糖分和油份的攝取。建議平日適量攝取碳水化合物，大約2-4碗穀類，減少精製糖做的甜品、蛋糕、小食、汽水、果汁等飲品。減少進食高脂肪食物包括油炸、汁醬、肥肉、動物皮層等食品，同時增加攝取蔬菜和水果以增加纖維量及飽肚感，減少額外進食。另外也需要配合運動，增加消耗和新陳代謝，減少脂肪積聚。

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OBESITY IN TEENS

The overweight problem is usually the most concerning among Hong Kong youngsters. The situation is even worse after the Covid epidemic due to a low activity level. Overweight affects both physical and psychological health, and we have to address it.

We can use the growth chart from the Health Department to assess whether a youngster is overweight. If the weight relative to height is over 120% of the median, they will be classified as overweight. For boys over 175 cm or girls over 165 cm, we will use Body Mass Index (BMI) for assessment. A BMI over 25 will be classified as overweight.

Overweight not only affects our appearance and causes inconvenience in our daily lives, but it also relates to over 200 health problems. Thus, youngsters may suffer from hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, and gout at a young age. Cell reproduction is rapid at this stage, and fat cells grow quickly. This increases the chance of obesity as they grow older and also raises the risk of cardiovascular disease and coronary disease. Overweight also puts stress on our digestive and respiratory systems, leading to a higher risk of fatty liver, gallstones, sleep apnea, and asthma, among others. Excess weight adds stress to the joints, accelerates joint deterioration, and causes twisted ankles. Hormones may also be affected, inducing early maturation in childhood.

To prevent issues, it's better to start with dietary control, limiting sugar and fat intake. The optimal intake of carbohydrates is around 2-4 bowls for youngsters. Reduce high-sugar foods like desserts, cakes, snacks, soft drinks, and juices. Limit high-fat foods such as fried items, foods with sauces, fatty meats, and animal skin, etc. Meanwhile, add high-fiber foods like fruits and vegetables to increase satiety and help reduce overeating. Lastly, engaging in more exercise helps boost metabolism and reduce fat deposits.

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