

# The Heavy Burden Of Obesity

- Obesity is not just a matter of personal health. Our individual weight problems have become a collective national health crisis.
- Two-thirds of adults in the U.S. are overweight or obese
- Obesity-related diseases cost the U.S. economy at least \$120 billion annually, equivalent to \$400 for every American!
- Twenty cents of every health care dollar spent in the U.S. today is spent caring for people with diabetes. With rates of diabetes beginning to soar, so will costs.
- Obesity affects economic productivity, as the obese worker is more likely to suffer health problems and miss more days of work.
- Obese workers incur medical costs more than 30% higher than average, and medication costs more than 75% higher than average!
- It is estimated that almost 40 million days of lost work nationally are attributable to obesity. This number will only increase.
- The burden of obesity on our society will become heavier over the next several decades.
- Obese children are more likely to grow up less well-educated and therefore become less productive workers, a problem in our increasingly technological workplace.
- While our workforce becomes more overweight, less productive, and incurs more medical costs, it will also be expected to accept greater responsibility for retirees as the worker to retiree ratio dramatically shrinks over the next 25 years.
- Decreased productivity increases the cost of doing business, a cost businesses will most certainly pass on to consumers in the forms of higher prices and lower quality of goods and services
- The potential impact on the local, state, and national economies of higher obesity-related health care costs, less productive workers, and a shrinking worker to retiree ratio is enormous.
- Business and community leaders should be as alarmed by the economic consequences of the obesity epidemic as medical professionals are by the health consequences
- Federal deficits are skyrocketing today, even while we are expecting health care costs to explode over the next two decades due to the obesity epidemic and the retiring baby-boomer generation.
- The burden of the obesity epidemic could well be the weight that sinks any hope of a brighter future for our nation.

## Did You Know?

There are unintended costs of obesity that we *all* pay for:

- Heavier airplanes, burning more fuel, increasing ticket costs & emissions
- Mortuaries are increasing casket widths
- Food manufacturers are increasing canister widths
- Clothing manufacturers are increasing clothing sizes.
- Hospitals & ambulances are increasing gurney and stretcher widths