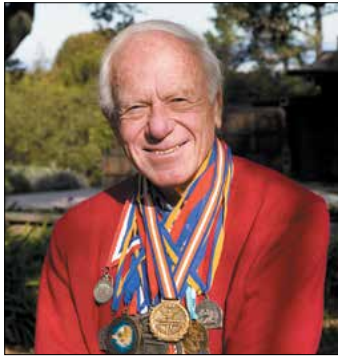


Obesity, Gluttony or Sloth?



By Walter M. Bortz, II, MD

This title was used as the lead of a major paper in the British Medical Journal a few years ago. The answer was “both” but sloth carried a higher exponential.

Now, a little later our awareness of the obesity epidemic is even more emphatic.

It has even been conjectured that within a few years there will be no more lean people left.

A Stanford colleague of mine, Uri Ladabaum, recently weighed in on the topic (sorry for the pun).

In a paper that he published in the American Journal of Medicine, he reviewed the results of two batteries of our national NHANES Survey, 1988 and 2010.

These data are our best source of information about our lifestyle changes. He found that our leisure time physical activity decreased markedly in the interval with little change in total caloric consumption.



This leads to the conclusion that our electronically driven lifestyle is rendering our legs vestigial and the consequent lethargy provokes a bulging waistline for most of us.

Here's a radical idea: Do we need to impose a fat tax? “Pay by the pound” to cover medical bills?

Let me know what you think.

Dr. Walter M. Bortz, II is one of America's most distinguished scientific experts on healthy aging and longevity. He spent his entire career at Stanford University where he holds the position of Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine. An active marathoner, he has written seven books including “Dare to Be 100” and “Next Medicine.” To learn more, visit walterbortz.com or email: DRBortz@aol.com.

Editor's Note: For more insight on how the body ages over time, Dr. Walter M. Bortz has written an excellent book on the topic: “Dare To Be 100.” Available from Amazon.com.

OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY IN AMERICA

- More than two-thirds (68.8 percent) of adults are considered to be overweight or obese
- More than one-third (35.7 percent) of adults are considered to be obese
- More than 1 in 20 (6.3 percent) have extreme obesity
- Almost 3 in 4 men (74 percent) are considered to be overweight or obese
- The prevalence of obesity is similar for both men and women (about 36 percent)
- About 8 percent of women are considered to have extreme obesity

Data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2009–2010

Secrets of Longevity

