

# HEALTH



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## For Your Health

As our children and grandchildren go back to school, it's a reminder of all that has changed since they departed for summer vacation. They face new classes, new books, new teachers and likely even new friends.

But the back-to-school season is also a great time to introduce new habits. While the lazy days of summer may inspire barbecues and visits to the ice cream truck, fall is a great time to foster healthy habits in our young ones' everyday lives.

Few Americans would be shocked to learn that our country is the most obese in the world. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about one-

BY LARRY LUCAS

third of American adults are obese. While this statistic is troubling, more concerning is the effect the obesity epidemic is having on our children. Approximately 17 percent of children and adolescents aged 2-19 years – 12.5 million – are obese. What's more, this number has almost tripled since 1980.

Childhood obesity means a lot more than a larger soccer uniform. The condition can lead to serious health complications. Obese children are more likely to have high blood pressure, high cholesterol and respiratory conditions like asthma. Obese children and adolescents also have a greater risk of social and psychological problems, such as bullying and poor self-esteem, which can last into adulthood.

Obese children, like obese adults, are at a higher risk for diabetes as well, and unfortunately, African Americans are at an even higher risk than their white counterparts. While type 2 diabetes has traditionally affected adults over the age of 40, because of the increase in obesity among children, more and more people are being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes during youth.

The CDC describes type 2 diabetes as "a sizable and growing problem among U.S. children and adolescents." Type 2 diabetes can lead to even graver health conditions such as blindness, kidney failure and heart disease.

Fortunately, obesity is preventable—and developing healthy habits during childhood and adolescence can help combat future health risks throughout adulthood. We all know that diet and exercise are the two pillars of a healthy lifestyle, but sometimes making these choices is easier said than done.

There are simple steps you can



## Fostering Healthy Habits

take at home, such as cutting out sodas and other sugary drinks, to reduce empty calories and sugar intake. Similarly, pay attention to the amount of exercise your children are receiving. Try to limit the number of hours they spend in front of the TV, and instead, encourage them to play outside and enjoy the crisp autumn air.

Unfortunately, obesity has already led to further health complications for some, and diet and exercise may not be enough. In such cases, it's important to effectively treat those health issues. Rest assured that our nation's biopharmaceutical researchers are hard at work every day to develop new treatments for children with diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol and other diseases linked to obesity.

The revolutionary drug treatments our biopharmaceutical industry develops and produces are only helpful if children can access them. Patients who have trouble affording their medication can turn to the Partnership for Prescription Assistance. PPA can help patients connect to patient assistance programs that may provide the medicines they need for free or nearly free. Patients who are interested in learning more can visit [pparx.org](http://pparx.org) or call 1-888-4PPA-NOW.

Through treatment and prevention it is possible for us to reduce the prevalence and effects of obesity in America. Making easy changes to our children's diets and adding in some exercise can transform a new back-to-school routine into a set of lifelong healthy habits.

Larry Lucas is a retired vice president for the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.



Dr. Billy R. Flowers (above center) and his skilled staff are ready to help those in need.

## THE SPINA COLUMN™

An ongoing series of questions and answers about America's natural healing profession.

### Part 1. CHIROPRACTIC: For the best in natural healing, hearing is believing.

**Q**: How did Chiropractic care come about?

**A**: Spinal manipulations have been practiced for over 2,500 years. Hippocrates, the "Father of Medicine," advised: "look well to the spine for the cause of disease." But modern Chiropractic came of age back in 1895. In Davenport, Iowa, a patient came to Dr. D.D. Palmer complaining of back pain. This patient had also been nearly deaf since suffering a back injury 17 years earlier. Dr. Palmer noticed a bump on the patient's back, which he suspected was related to a dislocated vertebra. To relieve the patient's

pain and reposition the vertebra, Dr. Palmer placed him on a table and pushed down on his back, performing a spinal manipulation or "adjustment." He performed this adjustment three days in a row. By the third day, not only had the patient's back pain disappeared, his hearing reappeared. Today's Chiropractors know that the central nervous system (housed within the body's spinal column) provides the energy, which governs all bodily functions.

By making sure that the spinal column is in correct alignment, Chiropractors eliminate any possible interference, which would prevent the central nervous system from keeping the body functioning the way nature, intended.

To find out how Chiropractic might be able to help you or for answers to any questions you might have about your health, please feel free to call us at the phone number shown below.

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