
AOTA's Societal Statement on Obesity

Obesity is the result of complex social, behavioral, cultural, environmental, physiological, and genetic factors. In the United States, 65% of adults and one-third of the children and adolescents are overweight secondary to diet and sedentary lifestyle (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS], 2006c). Obesity is the leading modifiable risk factor contributing to early mortality; type 2 diabetes; cardiovascular disease; metabolic syndrome; breast, prostate, and colon cancer; gallbladder disease; sleep apnea; musculoskeletal disorders; and associated limitations in physical activity (Bungum, Satterwhite, Jackson, & Morrow, 2003; Manson, Skerrett, Greenland, & VanItallie, 2004). Within the United States, millions of people struggle and fail to achieve a healthy weight using current methods (Manson et al., 2004). Occupational therapy's holistic and unique focus on occupation and daily life activities offers structured intervention and support for the management of obesity across the life span regardless of ability. Consistent with the first goal of *Healthy People 2010* (DHHS, 2000, 2001, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c), The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) supports primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention for the management of obesity. The AOTA is firmly dedicated to serving the needs for community health, increasing life expectancy, and improving the quality of life for all people.

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