



CBS News Reports: Where America Stands on Obesity.

Seth Doane's Blog:

The statistics are startling. As many of you know, sixty-seven percent of Americans are now overweight or obese. In the last thirty years, adult obesity rates have ballooned from fifteen percent in 1980 to thirty-four percent in 2006. Meanwhile, rates of obesity among children have more than tripled.

It's a growing problem that CBS News thought was important to highlight in our special series, "Where America Stands." As you see in this video, in my report on "The CBS Evening News with Katie Couric," I traveled the country from Connecticut to California and from Texas to Michigan to look at the factors contributing to the epidemic and explore possible solutions. We thought it was important to canvass the country to gauge the problem and put a human face on the issue. We found a number of obstacles that prevented healthy lifestyles and made poor nutrition choices the norm.

At Yale University author and researcher Kelly Brownell, who is also an Obesity Society member, told us he'd give the country the grade of "F" when it comes to fighting obesity saying, "We are a very heavy nation and the problem is getting worse." Brownell added, however, that there are promising signs that the country may finally be ready to tackle this problem.

Brownell likens the battle against obesity to the fight against tobacco. While there has been progress made in the fight against tobacco (including taxes, public education, and restrictions on advertising) the fight against obesity continues.

In Houston, Texas, cardiologist John Higgins of Memorial Hermann Hospital led me through a screening of middle school students. The results revealed heart conditions and hypertension at levels much more common in adults.

And in Michigan, we hear the heart-wrenching tale of families who are battling obesity. "Where America Stands" will look to dissect this nearly \$150 billion dollar burden to our healthcare system and examine the effort to find solutions for this epidemic which affects so many of us.

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