



*Route 66 to medical literature*



*DFGSM3 Free Ride - Saloon*

### « Obesity and Diabetes in the Developing World —A Growing Challenge»

NEJM 356;3 January 18, 2007, <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/reprint/356/3/213.pdf>

#### **(The problem)**

Overweight and obesity entailing diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular and renal diseases are threatening children and adults in the developing world with a Western lifestyle involving less physical activity and consumption of cheap energy dense food.

#### **(The origins)**

The relationship between obesity and poverty is complex. In a very poor country poverty is associated with underweight. In a middle-income developing one it increases the risk of obesity as intrauterine growth retardation results in low birth weight conferring a predisposition to obesity leading to insulin resistance and metabolic syndrome.

#### **(The different diseases)**

Diabetes is surging in places where a traditional lifestyle has been abandoned. In Asians this may be due to a predisposition to abdominal obesity leading to metabolic syndrome and impaired glucose intolerance. It threatens to reach pandemic levels soon, with devastating consequences in children.

Hypertension due to obesity leads to a higher risk of cardiovascular diseases which could be terrible in developing countries where hypertension is already higher than in the Western world. The effect of diabetes on complications of cardiovascular diseases is worse in most ethnic minority groups than in the white population in Western countries as well as the developing world.

The upsurge of smoking in these countries is also exacerbating mortality related to obesity, diabetes, and hypertension.

The incidence of diabetic nephropathy is sharply increasing too particularly in regions where end-stage renal disease is a death sentence while these countries are unable to cope with such an epidemic.

#### **(The possible solutions)**

Changes in lifestyle are efficient and urgently needed. Political changes are required as well as the production of affordable healthy foods, education programmes encouraging exercise, and the cooperation of both food manufacturers and rights-oriented consumer groups.

**271 words + subtitles (10)**

<http://medicalenglish.univ-nantes.fr>