

Overweight Key Factor in High Heart Attack Risk

Has anyone called you "fatty" lately? Or referred to you as "pleasingly plump?" Chances are if they have, you wouldn't know it anyway. But — do people have a reason to label you "overweight?"

Overweight is a common problem in 20th Century society. In fact, figures based on several recent studies, found in the Los Angeles County Heart Association's Southwestern Branch office, reveal that one-half of all American males 30 years of age and up are at least 10 per cent over their ideal weight.

and caloric intake. That is, an overweight individual is taking in more calories than his body needs. So, in eating, he doesn't need, that the person is stuffing himself with large quantities of food. Obesity is usually due to the daily consumption of a little more food than is needed, over a number of years.

The reason that so many people gain weight after age 30, is that they are not aware of a change in energy require-

ments usually accompanying middle age — fewer calories are needed for energy and proper weight maintenance. But eating habits are established, and continue to be the same, even though more calories are consumed than are necessary. Hence, we find weight gain.

Some of this weight gain is blamed on heredity — bone structure, general build — but here we must emphasize that genetic factors will only provide a "predisposition" for

obesity in families. Ultimate obesity must be acquired.

THERE IS much concern about the high incidence of obesity in children, since it has been well proven that overweight children tend to become overweight adults.

Here again, we find eating patterns to be the major contributor to obesity. In a recent study it was found that when one parent was obese, 40 per cent of children were, and when both parents were

obese, that figure doubled to 80 per cent.

We're aware of the problem, and now the question is, what can we do about it? Prevention is the only effective answer — the only effective means of eliminating the problem of obesity — the only effective way of reducing the risk of heart attack and other heart disorders that strike overweight persons so frequently.

And this program must be started in our children — pre-

vention for them — correction for ourselves.

LET'S BEGIN by taking a long hard look at our daily diet — is it high in calories — lots of animal fats — too many starches — not enough leafy vegetables and fruits? If prevention can begin now, this is the place to start — in everyday eating habits.

If dieting is necessary, and pounds must be eliminated, only a physician's suggested diet is safe. Fad diets that

take off many pounds quickly or constitute near starvation are not effective. They may even be harmful. Only diets with a long-range view toward "keeping" pounds off, and often correlated with a specific exercise program to tone muscles, will result in permanent loss of weight.

AND FOR added incentive, think of how truly delightful it will be to buy smaller sized clothes, look and feel better, be likely to suffer less from

backaches, constant fatigue, and to live longer enjoying the proper weight.

It is important to remember the role of overweight in heart disorders — don't overwork your own heart — or the hearts of your loved ones. By following a comprehensive plan of prevention or correction, whichever is most appropriate for your particular family, you can reduce the risk of heart attack. Remember, the heart you save may be your own.

YOU MAY think, with staggering statistics like these, that a lot of people are in the same boat — but that doesn't make it right and it doesn't make it good. It's important to dispel the fable that weight-gain in middle age is inevitable. It is abnormal for anyone to be 10 per cent or more over their desirable weight — at any age!

Determining "desirable" or "ideal" weight isn't an easy task, and to be accurate, it requires a physician's opinion. Generally, it can be said to be the weight at which a person looks and feels best, with the considerations of height, bone structure, and muscle development.

While "overweight" is an unflattering term, "obese" is down right derogatory. "Obesity" seems, in many minds, to be reserved for the person whose physique would qualify him for the circus side show. It isn't at all the case. There are two working definitions of obesity — an excess of 20 pounds above the ideal weight and the presence of an excessive amount of fat in the body — and they're both pretty revealing.

MEDICAL science has proven that overweight and obesity can have serious consequences on a person's physical well-being, not to mention the emotional hazards. Excess poundage contributes greatly to certain chronic diseases — diabetes, high blood pressure, and most important, heart and circulatory disorders.

Added fat interferes with the heart's mechanical efficiency — the heart must work extra hard to keep an overweight person going day after day. For example, the heart must pump blood through the 60,000 miles of blood vessels present in the average adult, and for each extra pound, has to nourish 2/3 of a mile more blood vessels.

BASICALLY, overweight results when there is an imbalance in energy expenditure

Oldsters To Picnic Tomorrow

A day of fun-filled activities is scheduled for oldsters during Torrance's first annual city-wide picnic for Senior Citizens, to be held at Sea-Aire Park, 22730 Lupine Drive, tomorrow.

Sponsored by the Torrance Recreation Department, the program will run from 12 noon until 4 p.m. During the afternoon, senior citizens can enjoy golf on the nine-hole course, games, singing, and contests.

In addition, a complete lunch will be served. Admission is 75 cents per person.

A shuttle bus will be available at locations throughout the city. Leaving Herma Tillim Memorial Building, 3614 Artesia Blvd., at 10 a.m., it will go to Walteria Park, 3855 242nd St. for a 10:30 a.m. pick-up. At 11 a.m. the bus will leave Albert Bartlett Adult Center, 1318 Cravens Ave., and at 11:20 it will leave the Recreation Center, 3341 Torrance Blvd. The last stop is scheduled at Naple and Carson at 11:45.

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