

Obesity: A Growing Trend

Obesity is the most prevalent nutritional disorder among children and adolescents in the United States. Obesity is a serious health concern and the prevalence of obesity is growing in all age groups. An estimated 19-30% of Tennessee school students are overweight. Children start making decisions and developing lifestyle habits at a young age, and unhealthy lifestyle choices can lead to excess weight gain. Additionally, children who are overweight have a 70% chance of becoming overweight as adults.

Childhood obesity predisposes to insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes, hypertension, fatty liver, pancreatitis, hyperlipidemia, liver/renal disease, and reproductive dysfunction. The percentage of children and teens that are overweight has more than doubled in the past 30 years. Today, about 17 percent of American children ages 2-19 are obese. Becoming overweight does not happen overnight. It happens over time when the energy we take in by eating is not in balance with the energy we burn from physical activity.

Many factors, including genetics, environment, metabolism, lifestyle, and eating habits are believed to play a role in the development of obesity. Early and appropriate intervention is valuable in decreasing the risks for the growing health concerns linked to childhood obesity. Parents are the primary role models for children. **GI for Kids, PLLC**, has developed a family-based pediatric weight management program called **Bee Fit 4 Kids** to help overweight children and their families make better lifestyle and dietary choices by encouraging physical activity and healthy eating. Our program encourages children to do their personal best and reach their individual goals for weight loss/weight management and physical activity.



**East Tennessee
Children's Hospital
Gastroenterology and
Nutrition Services**

is comprised of a multi-disciplinary staff to include Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Psychologists, and Registered Dietitians. We are currently recruiting for the **Bee Fit 4 Kids** program. All patients must have a referral and medical clearance from their primary care physician prior to enrolling in the program. We are now accepting most insurance. The referral form and additional information can be found on our website **Bee Fit 4 Kids** at www.BeeFit4Kids.com or accessed through www.giforkids.com.

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