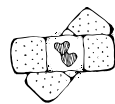


## Nursing Note



Jeri Cress, Sunset Nurse

### CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Most parents recognize childhood obesity as a problem, but many fail to see it in their own children. It is particularly troubling because the extra pounds often start kids on the path to health problems that were once confined to adults, such as diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

Researchers defines childhood obesity as BMI in the 95th percentile or higher for the child's age and sex. If the BMI starts in the 85th percentile for the child's age and sex, it is considered overweight.

A website to calculate BMI is: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/bmi-calculator/NU00597>

#### Suggestions to combat childhood obesity:

- ◆ Encourage healthy eating habits for the whole family. Include fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain products as part of a healthy diet.
- ◆ Watch portion size. For instance, a cup of cereal should be the size of a tennis ball, 3 ounces of cooked meat is the size of a deck of cards, and a pancake is the size of a compact disc.
- ◆ Limit sugary drinks, sugary foods, and saturated fat.
- ◆ Emphasize activity. Kids and teens should get at least a daily hour of moderate intensity physical activity such as playing tag, jumping rope, playing soccer, swimming, or dancing
- ◆ Curb sedentary time. Reading and doing homework is fine, but limit kids' time watching TV, playing video games, or surfing the web to no more than 2 hours per day. The American Academy of Pediatrics doesn't recommend any TV time for kids age 2 or younger.