

The Obesity Epidemic: A Jewish Perspective

Obesity is now the leading actual cause of death in America, with about 2/3 of Americans overweight or obese. This talk addresses the issue from both a public health and Jewish perspective, emphasizing what we learn from classical Jewish sources and how the Jewish community needs to respond.

Public Health

- What are the health ramifications of being overweight/obese?
- Why have obesity rates doubled in adults and tripled in adolescents?
- What are the implications for health and health care costs in America?

Classical Jewish Law and Thought

- Whose body is it, anyway? What does that mean in a practical sense?
- Healthy diet and exercise – just a good idea, or a religious obligation?
- What does Maimonides, famed as scholar and physician, say on the subject?

Jewish Community

- What research is there on obesity in the Jewish community? (including recent study by Dr. Singer)
- How can we have a war on obesity that doesn't attack the obese?
- What is the Jewish community doing about fighting obesity?
- What do we *need* to be doing? How can we get there?



Mendel Singer, Ph.D., is an associate professor of public health at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. He has done award-winning research in obesity, been honored by the county board of health for work in the Jewish community, and has 50 publications in medical journals. Dr. Singer has also published in journals of health law and Jewish law. He is the founding director of the Jewish Community Health Initiative, www.JewHealth.org, a pioneering effort at adapting health promotion methods to the Jewish community.

Follow his Jewish health blog at: www.clevelandjewishnews.com/opinion/blogs

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