



A Battle Plan To Combat Battle Of The Bulge

(NAPSA)—Obesity. It's not just about the way someone looks. It is a serious public health problem. It is regularly reported that two-thirds of adults and 13 percent of children are overweight or obese. The Surgeon General reports there are now 300,000 obesity related deaths a year, second only to cancer.

There is no simple answer to the obesity puzzle, but experts agree that a balanced diet and daily physical activity will lead to good health.

"As a health care professional who counsels overweight and obese patients, I know that the most important things children and adults can do to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle are to eat a balanced diet and get at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day," says Lisa Mosing, MS, RD, a nutritionist from Fullerton, California.

Furthermore, most health care experts, including the Surgeon General and the American Academy of Pediatrics, recommend that all children receive at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity a day. However, very few people meet the recommendation. Sedentary activities, such as television viewing and playing video games are on the rise and have been linked to weight gain in children. Making the problem worse, most schools have cut back or eliminated their physical education programs.

In addition to physical activity, a proper diet is essential to good health. "I advise my patients to follow the food guide pyramid and not to deprive themselves of any particular food, such as candy, snacks or soft drinks," says Mosing. Chil-



RECOMMENDED FOR ALL CHILDREN: At least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity a day.

dren and adults should consume a wide variety of foods and beverages in moderation.

But, teens in particular may not have the information they need to choose a balanced diet. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports the average school student receives just five hours of nutrition education per academic school year.

"Schools can help combat obesity by improving the quality and quantity of nutrition education and implementing daily physical education," says Mosing.

A recent poll conducted by the National Association for Sport & Physical Education showed most parents want schools' help in combating weight gain and obesity. Over 75 percent of parents believe more physical education could control or prevent obesity and 76 percent want more nutrition education for their children at school.

Maintaining or losing weight is not easy, but the road map to a healthy lifestyle is clear. Eat a balanced diet and make a commitment to more physical activity.