



Renowned Professor Tags Obesity as Biggest Health Threat

By JASON G. HOWE

DOVER - Ask world renowned public health professor Mariano Giacchi about the gravest problem facing societies worldwide and his answer may come as a surprise.

It's obesity.

Not AIDS, malaria or avian bird flu - obesity.

"We are not talking about just the personal, physical level, but about the socio-economic and societal level all around the world, not just the west," Giacchi said during an interview in Dover Monday morning. "Obesity is the main epidemiological issue around the world. This is particularly true for children."

Giacchi - professor of biology and director of the Public Health program at the roughly 750-year-old University of Siena in Tuscany, Italy - spent Sunday night with an old friend, Rose Manes, a former Associate Professor of Health Records Administration at Bridgeport College in Connecticut.

"I feel like we've got a giant among us and people don't even know it," Manes said following the interview Monday. The duo planned to visit colleagues in Bridgeport, Conn., before Giacchi returns home.

In what time he had in Dover, though, Giacchi discussed his most recent study of what he considers the world's greatest looming health risk.

"This is an interjoining [sic] of ... causes," he said in a thick, Italian accent - pausing and shrugging to find the right words. "We have

found a correlation between [lower] education levels and poverty and low income. These people are more likely to be obese."

But his research, he says, is not meant to identify groups more likely to be at risk, but to help shape local, national and international policy dealing not only with what foods people consume, but how they burn off those calories.

The problem is bigger than children, most often those of poorer families, sitting in front of the television, where they are not only sedentary, but are more likely to not only eat, but consume junk food.

"This is a problem everywhere in the West, and in the world," he said.

It's marketing, to which children are more susceptible, particularly those parked in front of a TV or computer.

It's the empty calories children consume. It's the high fat and salt intakes. It's the lack

of parents at home - since many parents are either single, and working, or married, but both working - to guide their children's eating and exercising habits.

And it all feeds into a cycle that must be broken if today's youth are to develop free of not only the physical burden of being obese, but the financial costs that accompany obesity, he said.

"When you're talking about changing children, which is where our focus is, you need to work with them early. It needs to be habit," he said of not just healthy eating, but exercise. "The component people often forget is that physical activity must accompany the consumption of calories. You see? So with no way to work them off, you are missing half of the equation."

It is the same proposal he has published in several books, and a perspective he has pushed on the international stage for several years.

"We must work at this," he said of his efforts. "There is no other option."

Please Note

As we try to make a little contribution to the effort toward the environment, this issue of the Mansfield Wellness Newsletter will be the last one to go to press.

As of July, the electronic version will be the only one in circulation.

We thank you in advance for your support of this gesture for our forests.



Ask the expert - Olympic lifts

Q. What are the things to watch out for, posture-wise, when doing olympic barbell lifts (squats, snatches etc)?

Simon

A. It's certainly a good decision from your part to ask what the proper technique for all the Olympic lifts is. When properly executed, the safety of Olympic lifting has been documented in several studies. One study has shown that Olympic lifting has the lowest number of injuries per 100hrs trained compared to both bodybuilding and powerlifting .

The reason for this is Olympic lifts use a much



greater range of motion, which exposes the connective tissues, tendons, ligaments and muscle fibers to various angles and degrees of resistance. This helps the body become more functional, in that it can learn to cope with a variety of forces and activities without becoming injured.

For each and every Olympic lift, the technique is broken down in different specific phases as the lift progresses. Although we can certainly point out to you the right direction to go in terms of the key points to be careful about, the technical advices that we can suggest from this answer/article is limited in interaction. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you get your form evaluated with a Trainer, so you can master all the details in every phase of each lift.

The key points for perfect form of all the different phases for the lifts are:

1. Feet
2. Knees
3. Back
4. Shoulders

5. Head
6. Hands
7. Arms
8. Hips
9. Shins
10. Trunk

Pros and Cons of Olympic Weightlifting

Pros

- Large proportion of muscles used
- Enhances coordination, balance and core strength
- Provides a good total workout
- Good transfer to sporting activities

Cons

- Good technique required to be effective
- Good equipment may not be accessible
- Qualified coaches and instructors can be hard to find

Again, we're insisting on the fact that Olympic lifting could be beneficial for a large group of person, only with the condition of doing it with great details to form.

Nutrition

By Sofia Abdelkafi Dt.p at Mansfield Athletic Club

Nutrition encompasses all the phenomena that transport nutrients to the cells and export metabolic waste. It therefore includes all the physiological functions that nutrients need to use for the organism to grow, be sustained, and function, and for heat and energy to be produced.

The science of nutrition analyzes the relationships between food and health – it is the study of the composition of food, of their properties, and of how they are used by the organism, and the field of dietetics covers all of these food-related issues. Nutrition also takes into account individuals' behaviour with respect to food consumption.

The dietitian-nutritionist is a nutrition specialist who helps to integrate principles of healthy eating into your lifestyle and to adapt your eating habits to satisfy your physiological needs. This individual assesses your current eating habits by examining the structure of your dietary intake, your macronutrient intake (proteins, carbohydrates, and lipids), your micronutrients (vitamins, minerals, trace minerals, essential fatty acids amino acids, etc.), and ensures that this structure meets your needs.

Proper eating is important because it results in:

- A stronger, more resistant body;
- Maintaining a healthy weight;
- Having the necessary nutrients for the organism to function properly;
- Ensuring the optimal level of energy and concentration;
- Optimizing memory functions;
- Maximizing how the digestive system works;
- Improving the aging process;
- Preventing and/or treating numerous illnesses such as:
 - Cardiovascular disease (due in large part to nutritional imbalance and physical inactivity)
 - Cancers (close to one-third of all cancers are related to nutrition, physical inactivity, and obesity)
 - Hypertension
 - Osteoporosis
 - Type-2 diabetes
 - Anemia
 - Digestive system problems such as irritable bowel syndrome, malabsorption, inflammatory pathology, dyspepsia, etc.
 - Food allergies
 - Fatty liver
- And the list goes on!

It is important to remember that healthy eating

works hand in hand with the food choices we make throughout the day, everyday. It is the aggregate of the food items we consume that determines the quality of our eating habits and not the nutritional value of a food item in particular or even a meal. The nutritionist will give you the tools you need to take charge of your eating habits and will enable you to achieve well-being and health.





Guillaume Gagnon, acupuncturist at Mansfield Health Clinic

ALLERGIES

Twenty percent of the Canadian population suffers from allergies. The WHO (World Health Organization) classifies seasonal allergies, as well as asthma and sinusitis, as respiratory system pathologies that can be effectively treated through acupuncture.

ACUPUNCTURE AND ALLERGIES

Traditional Chinese medicine sees allergic reactions as an organism's inability to adapt to its environment. According to the energy concept of organs and their functions, a weakness in the lungs** or the liver** could account for these allergic reactions.

The lungs** are the first organs in contact with allergenic substances. They are on the front lines, so to speak. If they are weakened, they will be sensitive to these substances. The liver** is endowed with the function of enabling the organism to adapt to its environment (the role of the immune system, according to Western medicine). If it is hindered, its activity will be slowed down, resulting in an exaggerated response to the allergens with the appearance of the previously described symptoms.

The acupuncturist considers the specific strengths and weaknesses of each individual when he draws up his client's energy balance. The treatment shifts the patient's energy to achieve a balance and relieve him of the allergic symptoms.

How does acupuncture work?

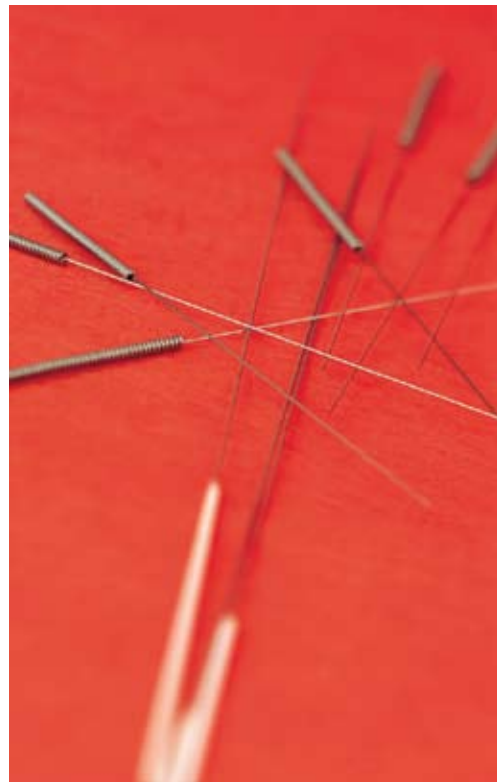
By stimulating the energy of the lungs** and by regulating that of the liver**, the treatment of acupuncture has two main objectives:

- In the acute phase: relieves allergy symptoms.
- In the prevention phase: regulates the immune system to prevent future manifestations.

It is therefore advised that one consult with an acupuncturist prior to allergy season to achieve optimal results.

** Describes here the "Pulmonary System" and the "Liver System" according to traditional Chinese medicine and not only the biological organ of the lungs and the liver.

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The Chefs' Corner

by Derek Dammann, Executive Chef at the DNA Restaurant

Barbequed Octopus with Grilled Escarole and Mint

If you are feeling adventurous about trying to cook something new for a dinner party this summer, then maybe think about giving octopus a try. Not only is this recipe delicious, it's an easy way to impress your friends.

For whatever scientific reason, adding a cork to the cooking water works to make this cephalopod tender. The blanched octopus can sit for an hour in the marinade-but no longer, or the acidity may cause it to toughen.

Makes 4 Servings

- 1 3-pound OCTOPUS, sac, beak and eyes removed (have the fishmonger do this)
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

- grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 1 tbsp hot red pepper flakes
- 1 bunch oregano, leaves only, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 heads escarole
- 1/2 cup fresh mint leaves

1. Place the octopus in a large pot, add cold water to cover and a cork, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a low boil and cook until tender, 35-40 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water, and drain again. Cut lengthwise in to 8 pieces. (The octopus can be prepared up to one day in advance; cover and refrigerate.)

2. Preheat the grill.

3. In a large bowl, stir together the olive oil, lemon zest and juice, red pepper flakes, oregano and black pepper. Add the octopus pieces and marinate for at least 10 minutes or up to one hour.

4. Remove the octopus from the marinade, reserving the marinade, and place on the grill. Cook, turning once, until crisp and lightly charred, 5-7 minutes per side.

5. Meanwhile, trim any flimsy outer leaves from the escarole and cut lengthwise in half.

Rinse well to remove any grit, and pat dry. Place cut side down on the grill and cook until lightly charred, 7-8 minutes. Turn and cook until lightly charred on the other side, about 5 more minutes. Transfer to a platter and set aside.

6. When the octopus is cooked, return it to the marinade. Allow to cool slightly, then using scissors, cut the octopus into bite-sized pieces, letting them drop back in to the marinade. Spoon the octopus and the marinade over the escarole, tear the mint leaves over it and serve family style.



The Cost of Weight on Business

By David R. Butcher

Epidemic or not, the rate of obesity in the U.S. has skyrocketed in recent decades. Those extra pounds can be as bad for an employer's bottom line as they are for a person's health and waistline.

In the last 30 years, the rate of obesity in the United States has more than doubled. In a 1976-1980 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, the prevalence of obesity among adults aged 20-74 years was 15 percent. In 2003-2004, NHANES found that number had increased to 32.9 percent.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 32 percent of adults in the U.S. are overweight and 34 percent are obese, as defined by the World Health Organization. Likewise, a recent Conference Board report entitled *Weights and Measures: What Employers Should Know about Obesity* determined that 34 percent of American adults currently fit the definition of "obese."

Maintaining healthy weight is important to workers themselves and should also be a high priority for employers who value their employees' health. Yet those extra pounds can be as bad for an employer's bottom line as they are for a person's health and waistline.

Over the past decade, the extra weight Americans are carrying has weighed heavily on the airline industry alone. According to a study in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* (via Newswire), the increase in the average passenger's weight required airlines to use an extra 350 million gallons of fuel at a cost of \$275 million each year - and that was based on prices in 2000, when jet fuel cost 79 cents per gallon, compared to roughly \$1.80 in February 2007.

Last year, a Duke University Medical Center study of the health records of more than 11,000 university employees found that obese workers filed twice the number of workers' compensation claims, had seven times higher medical costs from those claims and lost 13 times more days of work from work injury or work illness than other workers. The analysis, published in April 2007's *Archives of Internal Medicine*, covered a diverse group of workers, such as administrative assistants, groundskeepers, nurses and professors.

Among American workers participating in corporate health and wellness assessments, obese workers had a substantially higher prevalence of metabolic, circulatory,

musculoskeletal and respiratory disorders. In other words, overweight and obese workers are more at risk for many preventable - and costly - diseases, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, arthritis and stroke.

The average medical claims costs per 100 employees were \$51,019 for the obese and just \$7,503 for the non-obese, according to the Duke University analysis.

Today, obese employees cost U.S. private employers an estimated \$45 billion annually in medical expenditures and work loss, The Conference Board claims. Obesity is associated with a 36 percent increase in spending on health-care services, according to the research firm. If accurate, that is more than smoking or problem drinking.

The reality is that preventing obesity is considerably cheaper than treating people once they become obese. After all, as HR Hero points out, health care spending in the U.S. is expected to reach \$4 trillion in 2015, or 20 percent of the gross domestic product.

The Conference Board says wellness programs to address the obesity issue can get return on investment (ROI) of up to \$5 per \$1 invested. (The Wellness Council of America estimates that a \$1 investment in a wellness program saves \$3 in health care costs.)

Among the report's findings:

Estimates of ROI for wellness programs range from zero to \$5 per \$1 invested. ROI aside, these programs may give companies an edge in recruiting and retaining desirable employees. Meanwhile, some say it may be more effective just to award employees cash and prizes for weight loss rather than devote

resources to long-term wellness programs.

Of course, intervening on individual risk factors such as obesity opens up employers to other types of costly claims.

"There is evidence that as weight goes up, wages go down. Employers should be fully aware of any potential discrimination risk before addressing employees' weight, whether for the employee's own good or that of the company," notes a statement from the not-for-profit research organization. Although, today Michigan is the only state that bans discrimination based on weight.

Reported MSNBC last year:

The workplace is becoming an increasingly harsh environment for overweight employees. Experts say more obese employees are feeling slighted by managers and co-workers.

MSNBC pointed to a Yale University survey of about 2,000 overweight women, of which 53 percent polled said co-workers stigmatized them and 43 percent said their employers stigmatized them. "Being stigmatized translated into not being hired, being passed over for promotions, losing a job, or being teased or harassed because of their weight," according to the news report.

"How employers communicate a wellness or weight-loss program is as important as how they design it," The Conference Board determined. "Companies should involve employees in planning health initiatives, rather than working from the top-down, and should make sure personal privacy is protected."

Employers, then, need to "weigh the risks of being too intrusive in managing obese employees against the risks of not managing them."

