OBESITY FACT SHEET

1 WHAT IS OBESITY?

The World Health Organisation defines obesity as 'abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to health'. It can be measured in a number of ways, but the most common is 'BMI' (Body Mass Index), using your height and weight to work out if your weight is healthy. Additional measurements, such as your waist to height ratio can also be used.

2 OBESITY IS A DISEASE

Obesity is a disease and must be treated as one. There are many factors that can put people at higher risk of developing obesity, including biology, genes, mental health, access to healthcare and exposure to ultra-processed, unhealthy foods.
Obesity it is not due to a lack of will power.
Learn more about the different **roots of obesity** on the website.

3 OBESITY IS A RISK FACTOR

Living with obesity puts people at a higher risk from other diseases including heart disease, diabetes and some cancers. People living with obesity also have a greater risk of severe illness and even death if they contract COVID-19.

4 'EAT LESS, MOVE MORE' DOES NOT "FIX" OBESITY

People living with obesity are often told that the answer is to 'eat less, move more'. However, addressing obesity is not just a matter of diet and exercise. When we tell people to 'eat less, move more', we ignore other important factors. Although physical exercise plays an important part in overall health, it is not a significant factor in managing obesity. Rather than blaming individuals for their disease, we must encourage governments and policy makers to address the root causes.

5 WEIGHT STIGMA IS DANGEROUS

In many countries, people living with obesity are regularly blamed for their disease. Weight stigma suggests that obesity is due to individual failure, and puts responsibility on people living with obesity to 'fix' it. It can damage mental and physical wellbeing and prevent people from seeking necessary medical care.
While stigma may be different across the world, one thing is clear: experiencing discrimination due to weight does not help people to adopt healthier lifestyles. In fact, it can make it harder.

6 INDIVIDUALS ARE NOT TO BLAME FOR THEIR OBESITY

Obesity is often driven by forces outside of a person's control. This includes biological, genetic and environmental factors. A person's biology and genes can put them at greater risk. Our physical environment can impact our access to healthy food, suitable medical care and opportunities for a healthy, active life. Our environment can also affect our mental and emotional health, which in turn impact obesity.

7 OBESITY IS NOT JUST ABOUT WEIGHT

Treating obesity is about improving overall health, not just about losing weight. It is possible for a person with a higher BMI to be managing their disease and living at a 'healthy weight'.

8 OBESITY IS NO LONGER JUST A DISEASE OF RICH COUNTRIES

Obesity is rising fastest in countries with lower incomes. Many of these countries have to address both obesity and under-nutrition at the same time. Obesity is especially prevalent in poorer and more vulnerable communities.

9 CHILDHOOD OBESITY CAN AND MUST BE PREVENTED AND TREATED

Childhood obesity rates have nearly doubled every 10 years. It can profoundly affect childrens' physical health, social, and emotional well-being, and self esteem. It is associated with poor academic performance and a lower quality of life. It is often carried into adulthood, so prevention and treatment are vital to stopping a global rise in obesity.
Nutrition, physical activity and healthcare all play a role.

2X
PEOPLE
People living with obesity are twice as likely to be hospitalized if tested positive for COVID-19

60%
CHILDHOOD
Childhood obesity is expected to increase by 60% over the next decade, reaching 250 million by 2030.

$1
TRILLION
The medical consequences of obesity will cost over $1 trillion by 2025.

800
BILLION
800 Million people around the world are living with obesity

Learn more at **worldobesityday.org**

World Obesity Day 4 March 2021

EVERY BODY NEEDS EVERYBODY