

Outsmarting Obesity: A Doctor Reveals Why We Gain Weight, Why It Matters, and What We Can Do About It

Stewart Lonky

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Arguing that obesity is a disease requiring immediate attention at the individual, social, and industry levels, Outsmarting Obesity is an informative medical guide.

Stewart Lonky's candid medical guide *Outsmarting Obesity* explains the science behind weight gain in clear terms alongside realistic steps for achieving weight loss.

This book addresses the rise in obesity—43 percent of Americans are obese, it notes, up from 13 percent in 1960—details its causes, and then delivers a practical, four-step guide to taming weight gain. Anecdotes pair with science in the book's guidance toward sustained weight loss and exploration of the social norms and governmental regulations that stymie weight loss efforts.

Calling for a revised recognition of obesity that avoids blaming individuals, the text treats the problem as complex, pointing to contributors like environmental factors and toxic compounds, "obesogens," that disrupt the hormones that affect weight. And in discussing complicated topics like epigenetics, the book achieves everyday clarity, arguing that there is no single gene that leads to a person becoming fat; instead, multiple gene variants can result in a propensity for becoming overweight. Patient scenarios are introduced throughout the text to further illustrate behaviors that impact one's diet and health—as with a competitive bodybuilder, runner, and actress who experienced unexplained exhaustion and muscle soreness before toxic levels of a heavy metal from earlier contrast MRIs were identified in her body.

The principal message is that obesity is a disease requiring immediate attention at the individual, social, and industry levels. The book critiques the ready availability of affordable and unhealthy food in twenty-four-hour convenience stores, which it indicts with contributing to less mindful approaches to eating and poor nutrition. Elsewhere, the advertising and marketing of high-sugar and -sodium food products to children is highlighted as another area for concern. Entities including the FDA, USDA, and American Heart Association are also explored.

The application element of the text comes via its straightforward, four-part program to instill long-term lifestyle and behavioral changes in individuals. Whether highlighting six of the most concerning obesogen-containing products, including processed foods and household cleaners, or through a series of questions to help identify toxic behaviors like late-night eating habits and skipping meals, the program is made up of practical guidance for achieving weight loss success. Lists and tips augment its recommendations, made credible by Lonky's expertise as a nutrition scientist and exercise physiologist, as with types of binders, including fruit pectin and activated charcoal, to assist in removing toxins and recommendations like practicing mindful eating to allow the brain to realize the person is full.

Addressing the global rise in weight gain, the health and wellness guide *Outsmarting Obesity* suggests accessible means of overcoming weight challenges.

KATY KEFFER (December 7, 2024)

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