

Childhood Obesity: Your Options

By Amy Bentley



Dr. Cecilia Vaquero Solans
CHOC Pediatric
Gastroenterologist

Dr. Vaquero Solans completed her pediatric residency training at the Hospital General de Niños in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She also was a fellow in pediatric nutrition at North Shore University Hospital, Cornell University Medical College in New York, and completed a fellowship in pediatric gastroenterology and nutrition at the Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. She is interested in all pediatric digestive diseases with a special emphasis in nutrition, growth and obesity.

Dr. Vaquero Solans' philosophy of care: "I like to provide excellent care to all my patients in a comprehensive vision of body and mind, considering the individual patient and the family. I have a great interest in the care of the underserved groups and children with autism, other special needs and the Spanish-speaking population is very dear to me."

EDUCATION:

Universidad de Buenos Aires, Facultad de Medicina, Buenos Aires, Argentina

BOARD CERTIFICATIONS:

Pediatrics Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition

1 in 3+

NUMBER OF
CHILDREN AND
ADOLESCENTS
IN THE U.S. WHO
WERE OVERWEIGHT
OR OBESE IN 2012



COMING TO TERMS WITH OBESITY

"Looks can be deceiving. It can be hard for parents to tell if their child is obese," says Dr. Vaquero Solans. "Parents who are overweight or obese might not ask about their children's weight. It is the duty of the physician to talk about that. Ask your pediatrician about your child's weight. We use specific body-mass index charts for children. BMI differs for each age and gender, because they are growing. Ask your pediatrician for an assessment."

PREVENTING AND TREATING OBESITY

"Prevention really starts during pregnancy. Mom should have a healthy weight gain while pregnant and keep as active as she can considering her condition," says Dr. Vaquero Solans. She also pointed out that childhood obesity is not a problem that can be solved by medication. "Changes in lifestyle are the best. It's a combination of healthier diet and promoting physical activity. Nutrition counseling by the pediatrician, a specialist or a dietitian will help."



GET MOVING

Exercise helps keep kids fit and should be a part of every child's daily routine, says Dr. Vaquero Solans, who encourages parents to set a good example. She offered these tips to make exercise a lifestyle habit for kids that starts in infancy:

- Start with the baby. Place him on his tummy so he will be encouraged to move around more.
- Older children should have at least one hour a day of exercise. "This does not need to be all at once. It can be short bursts of activity of something intense 15 minutes at a time four times a day."
- Don't let children age three or older sit in a stroller. They are old enough to walk.
- Take the kids to the playground or on a walk regularly.
- Involve the kids in sports or activities like dance when possible.

7 PERCENTAGE OF
CHILDREN AGES 6-11
IN THE U.S. WHO
WERE OBESE IN 1980

Almost 18

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN
AGES 6-11 IN THE U.S. WHO
WERE OBESE IN 2012



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