

# **Obese children suffer adults diseases** <sup>[1]</sup>

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## **Calificación:**



By Marga Parés Arroyo / [endi.mpares@elnuevodia.com](mailto:endi.mpares@elnuevodia.com) <sup>[2]</sup> [endi.ccom](http://endi.ccom) <sup>[3]</sup> Obesity, considered the epidemic of the XXI century, is affecting even the youngest ones, to the point that they are suffering from diseases that were only seen before in adults, like type 2 diabetes and hypertension. This was pointed out by Ricardo Fontanet, president of the Puerto Rican Society of Pediatrics, during the beginning of the “Healthful Beginning Week”. This activity is part of a campaign to orient on the risks of obesity and overweight in the children and adolescents. According what representative Gabriel Rodríguez Aguiló, president of the Commission of Health of the House of Representatives, explained, this campaign makes official the efforts that the food company Gerber began three years ago, in order to orient parents on how to feed their children in a healthy way. “This is part of the public policy to prevent the obesity in children”, said the legislator during an activity that made official the initiative and that was carried out in the hall Leopoldo Figueroa, in the Capitol. According to what he indicated, the problem responds to multiple factors, but it can be noticed more clearly in the schools of the public instruction system of the country. According to the legislator, in many schools a physical examination of the student at the beginning of the school year is not being required. Through this examination, it is possible to be warned if the student has a weight problem or is in risk of suffering it. If this would be the case, the student would be recommended a special diet. Risk of metabolic syndrome On the other hand, Fontanet emphasized that the main risk of obesity or overweight in an early age is the development of the metabolic syndrome. This is a set of clinical characteristics that lead to insulin

resistance and elevates the risk of developing diabetes, cardiac disease or stroke. "Obesity is not an aesthetic problem, is a medical problem", said the physician, who commented that the metabolic syndrome is been seen in people as young as 15 years. Obesity is defined as an excessive accumulation of body fat. The body mass index (BMI) can help detect the tendency to overweight. This index measures the relation between weight, age and stature, based on a table of expected growth, stipulated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Some of the causes of overweight, Fontanet mentioned, in addition to genetic factors, are bad eating and the lack of exercises or physical activity. In 1997 the World Health Organization declared that obesity had become a global epidemic and represented a serious threat to the public health. But it was in 2005 that the secretary of Health, Rosa Perez Perdomo, declared that the obesity is at epidemic level in Puerto Rico. More than half of the population of Puerto Rico is overweight, according to the Department of Health.

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