



Bay Area Houston
Gastroenterology Associates

Obesity and the GI Tract

Do you know the gastrointestinal diseases that are associated with obesity?

Some of the most common, general medical diseases and risks associated with being overweight or obese include arthritis, type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer and premature death. You won't be surprised to know that many of the common gastrointestinal diseases that are seen in individuals with a normal BMI are seen up to 2 to 3 times more commonly in individuals who are obese. Many of these gastrointestinal diseases like gastroesophageal reflux (GERD), liver disease and cancer significantly reduce the quality and longevity of your life.

Maintaining Your Gastrointestinal Health

While gastrointestinal diseases and disorders are seen more commonly in overweight and obese individuals than in normal weight individuals, there are no current recommendations for extra testing of organs in the absence of gastrointestinal symptoms or pre-existing laboratory abnormalities.

Weight loss is a recommended strategy to prevent the symptoms related to some gastrointestinal diseases such as GERD and hiatal hernia, and to decrease the risk of progression of diseases such as nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), recurrent colorectal adenomas and colorectal cancer.

The American College of Gastroenterology recommends that all average risk Americans age 50 and older undergo colorectal cancer screening with **colonoscopy**. African Americans should begin screening at age 45. Since colorectal cancer and precancerous polyps are more common in overweight and obese individuals extra efforts should be made for these individuals to have colonoscopy at the age of 50 years, if not sooner. Talk to your doctor.

Digestive Disorders Associated with Obesity

Esophagus

GERD Symptoms

Erosive Esophagitis

Barrett's Esophagitis

Esophageal Cancer

Gallbladder

Gallstones and Cancer

Pancreas

Cancer

Colon

Precancerous Polyps and Cancer

Liver

Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease

Advanced Hepatitis C-related Disease

Cirrhosis and Liver Cancer

