

## The global perspective: an increasing rate of change in obesity and key determinants

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Global energy imbalance and related obesity levels are rapidly increasing. The world is rapidly shifting from a dietary period in which the higher-income countries were dominated by patterns of degenerative diseases (while the lower and middle world were dominated by receding famine) to one in which the world is increasingly being dominated by degenerative diseases. This presentation documents the high levels of overweight and obesity found across higher- and lower-income countries, and the global shift of this burden toward the poor, as well as toward urban and rural populations. Among the interesting shifts examined are the differential trends in child and adult obesity and burden of obesity across the world. These issues are examined in detail. Dietary changes appear to be shifting universally toward a more energy-dense and sweeter diet with reduced complex carbohydrate intake. Activity patterns at work, leisure, travel, and in the home are equally shifting rapidly toward reduced energy expenditure. Large-scale declines in food prices (e.g., beef prices) increased access to supermarkets, and urbanization of urban and rural areas are key underlying factors. There is limited documentation of the extensiveness of the increased effects of the fast food and bottled soft drink industries in this shift, but some examples of the heterogeneity of the underlying changes are presented. The challenge to global population community is clear.