

Challaned for flouting mask rules in Delhi and feel wronged? Get the facts right

PHOTOS: RAJ K RAJ/HT, SANCHIT KHANNA/HT



Obesity in Children and Adolescents

HINDUSTAN TIMES MEDIA MARKETING INITIATIVE

The prevalence of obesity is increasing in both children and adolescents, in both genders, and in various ethnic and racial groups. Many factors, including genetics, environment, metabolism, lifestyle, and eating habits, are believed to play a role in the development of obesity. However, more than 90% of cases are idiopathic; less than 10% are associated with hormonal or genetic causes. There is no single definition of obesity in childhood and adolescence.



Dr. ATUL N.C. PETERS
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During childhood and adolescence, excess fat accumulates when total energy intake exceeds total energy expenditure. Reduced energy expenditure is attributed to modern day sedentary life style. This is particularly associated with excessive television viewing, excessive computer use and insufficient physical activity.

Some hormonal dysfunction like that in ghrelin leptin hormonal axis may be the causative factor in as many as 10% of obese children, particularly in those who appear to manifest familial morbid obesity. Race and ethnicity are also associated with increased rates of obesity in children and adolescents.

Childhood obesity is predictive of adult obesity such as with 80% of teenagers who are obese continue to be obese as adults. This is associated with an increased incidence of Type2 diabetes, hypertension, gallstones, and hypercholesterolemia. There are serious chest conditions associated with childhood obesity and might develop obesity-hypoventilation syndrome, experience right-sided heart failure with right ventricular hypertrophy.

Acute complications of child-

hood obesity include, hyperlipidemia, accelerated growth and bone maturation, ovarian hyperandrogenism and gynecomastia, cholecystitis, pancreatitis, and pseudotumor cerebri.

Excess weight can cause numerous problems in children including orthopedic disorders, increased incidence of fatty liver, liver cirrhosis and kidney disease. Obstructive Sleep apnea and sleep-disordered breathing are common in children and adolescents with obesity which might lead to neurocognitive dysfunction. Gout and colorectal cancer rates are found to be increased among men who had obesity as adolescents as well as arthritis.

Also, emotional and psychosocial sequelae are also widespread in obese children. Social isolation, peer problems, and lower self-esteem are frequently observed. They might also require psychiatric assistance for eating disorders or severe depression. It involves a team involving nurse educators, nutritionists, exercise physiologists,

and counselors.

Parents must advise children to walk at least 20 to 30 minutes daily. Limit their television timings and must indulge in vigorous exercise with children. Low calorie balanced diet, in association with patient and parent education, behavioral modification, and exercise can limit weight gain in many patients with mild or moderate obesity.

According to Dr. Atul NC Peters, one of the pioneers of weight loss treatment in Delhi and among the top 10 obesity surgeons in India, various bariatric surgical procedures have been performed in "carefully selected" patients with a body mass index (BMI) >40 kg/m² who have severe comorbidities such as nonalcoholic fatty liver disease. It is important to consider several other factors before deciding whether a child or adolescent should undergo bariatric surgery like previous attempts at weight loss, and ability to adhere to follow-up care. Laparoscopic Sleeve Gastrectomy is the most widely performed procedure in childhood obesity nowadays. Evidence suggests that bariatric surgery can decrease the grade of steatosis, hepatic inflammation, and fibrosis in Non Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease. With more and more people opting for various bariatric surgical procedures, weight loss surgery cost in Delhi has been such that it is becoming affordable day by day and several finance and loan schemes are also available in special circumstances.

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With a steep rise in the number of coronavirus cases, the fine for not wearing masks in public areas has been increased from ₹500 to ₹2,000 in Delhi. And even after the surge in the fine amount, the number of challans issued by Delhi Police for mask violation, from November 20 to 25, stands at 6,130 which amounts to approximately ₹1.23 crore.

Several Delhi-NCR residents have shared their concern over being challaned for mask violation even when they were alone, and deem it as an unjust move to get framed for doing nothing wrong.

HOW AND WHERE HAVE DENIZENS BEEN FINED FOR MASK VIOLATION?

A lot of people seem unclear about when is it okay to not to wear a mask. Mahima Gupta, a Gurugram resident, says, "I was driving to Delhi alone in my car. My window was shut and I started to feel a little suffocated so I brought my mask down the nose for a while. And after few minutes, a cop asked me to stop my car and pay ₹2,000. I didn't argue, but later my friend told me that there is no fine for mask violation while driving alone in a car."

And when in a public place, even if alone, if you take down your mask for a fraction of a second, this is what happens: A shopkeeper from Khan Market tells us on condition of anonymity, "A customer who went out from the shop lowered the mask for barely two seconds, to clear the fog on her glasses. At that very moment, she got clicked by a cop and was issued a challan. She kept saying that she did so for a few seconds after ensuring no one was around her, but she was forced to pay."

COP TAKE
Sharing the legal point of view, Sanjay Bhatia, DCP, Central Delhi, Delhi Police, says, "We have advised our staff to not issue any challan if someone is driving alone, according to the spirit of the law. But in the letter of the law, one can't be in public place without a mask.

It's a legal violation."

HEALTH EXPERTS' SUGGESTION

Health experts feel it's okay to take down the mask if it's for a short while, but having a mask on is always better. Dr Arunesh Kumar says, "Face masks and gloves are the most important tools to save us from the pandemic, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. With cases increasing rapidly in Delhi-NCR, taking off your mask in public place or at a secluded place is not a good idea. We should wear it properly, fully covering the nose and mouth, secured with ties or ear loops, and having multiple layers of fabric. It's advisable to not touch the mask frequently after you've put it on as your hands can also be a carrier of the virus."

KNOW THE FINE PRINT OF MASK VIOLATION

WHO guidelines on the use of masks

- Make sure that mask covers your nose, mouth and chin.
- Wear a fabric mask unless you're in a particular risk group. This is especially important when you can't stay physically distanced, particularly in crowded and poorly ventilated indoor settings.
- Masks should be used as part of a comprehensive 'Do it all!' approach including: physical distancing, avoiding crowded, closed and close-contact settings, improving ventilation, cleaning hands, covering sneezes and coughs, and more.
- Masks should be worn by the general public in settings where it is not possible to maintain at least one metre distance from others.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK



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