



## **STOP THE WEIGHT CREEP!**

“Over two-thirds of adults are trying to lose weight or keep their weight under control. Thus, it is no wonder that every year in the U.S., consumers spend over \$30 to \$50 billion annually on products and services to help them in this endeavor,”<sup>1,2</sup> said Ms. Piemonte, Registered Dietitian and project manager for the Air Force’s Shape Your Future...Your Weigh!™. Even with this large investment of money spent by consumers, and despite availability of reduced fat and reduced calorie foods, Americans continue to gain weight.

Since 1980, there has been a sudden and accelerated increase in weight throughout the U.S. population. Currently, 64.5 percent of all Americans are considered overweight or obese, according to the Centers for Disease Control criteria.

“The active-duty Air Force population is not far behind,” said Ms. Piemonte. According to Dr. Tony Robbins and his team of researchers at Brooks AFB, TX, applying the same measurements to the active-duty Air Force population, 54 percent are considered overweight or obese. “While the American public has a higher proportion of obese individuals, (26 percent obese compared to 8 percent obese active-duty Air Force people), it is clear that excess weight beyond the healthy weight range leads to adverse consequences,” Dr. Robbins said. “‘Weight creep,’ the seemingly harmless 1.5- to 2-pound gain each year, contributes to both overweight and obesity conditions,” Ms. Piemonte said. “Over several years, this slowly accumulated weight gain reaches

significant proportions, impacting a variety of operational levels. Excess weight and its associated complications result in reduced mission readiness, increased medical care costs, days lost from work, reduced productivity, as well as loss of life.”

To address this seemingly harmless “weight creep,” Air Force Bases are introducing the Shape Your Future ... Your Weigh!™ campaign. Developed by a team of Air Force nutrition, fitness and wellness experts, the campaign serves a fourfold purpose:

- \* Expand the awareness of “weight creep”
- \* Provide multiple strategies to prevent or limit weight gain
- \* Empower individuals to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle
- \* Energize a community approach to preventing weight gain.

“Endorsed by top Air Force leaders, the Shape Your Future...Your Weigh!™ information and materials will be distributed through the health and wellness center to benefit all active-duty people, their families and eventually all beneficiaries,” Ms. Piemonte said. “A wealth of credible and well-researched educational materials and resources serves as the foundation of the campaign.”

For more information on the campaign, call your local HAWC. “Remember, consistently applying and using positive lifestyle behaviors such as healthful eating and physical activity can prevent unwanted weight gain,” Ms. Piemonte said. “Be informed, it’s up to you.”

References:

1. Serdula, M. K., Mokdad, A. H., Williamson, D. F., Galuska, D. A., Mendlein, J. M., & Heath, G. W. (1999). Prevalence of attempting weight loss and strategies for controlling weight. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 282 (14), 1353-1358.
2. Friseur, L. (1997). *Losing it: American's obsession with weight and the industry that feeds on it*. Button, New York, NY.