

Fit vs Fat: The role of balanced nutrition in combating obesity in Southeast Asia

Chin-Kun Wang, Ph.D.

*President, International Society for Nutraceuticals and Functional Foods
Council member of the Federation Association of Asian Nutrition Societies
Distinguished Professor, Chung Shan Medical University
Fellow, International Academy of Food Science and Technology
Honorary President, Nutrition Society of Taiwan
Member of Herbalife Nutrition Advisory Board*

For some years, the overweight and obesity epidemic have developed into serious health issues in several Southeast Asian countries, largely due to the changed dietary behavior and meal patterns. It is very critical to prevent the advancing health challenges and to combat obesity as it is closely associated with many metabolic diseases (e.g. diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, cancer). There are many known ways to fight against obesity, of which balanced nutrition is considered to be safer and perhaps, more suitable for most population groups. Reducing calorie intake and strengthening of the body muscle could be better solutions to obesity among affected population.

Calorie intake calculation and high quality protein support are important during weight management. Soybean proteins (SPs) are respected for their positive and functional impacts on human health. Consumption of SPs has resulted in hypocholesterolemia, prevention of cardiovascular diseases and osteoporosis and reducing the risk of some cancers. Due to good accessibility, SPs are popular in Asia for maintaining people's muscle and protein requirement. Many studies have clearly demonstrated that the intervention of reduced calorie intake, containing balanced nutrition with SPs, has significantly decreased certain metabolic syndromes. To sum up, a good combination of balanced nutrients and reduced calorie intake could be effective in body weight management in the fight against obesity.