

is scant hope they'll identify the crippling effects that countless mixtures of various drug combinations will have on Americans that take vials of pills for every ill.

It's not only adults who are on a crash course to prescription drug destruction. A Brandeis University study found that drug prescriptions for the treatment of depression, anxiety and mood or attention disorders in teenagers (14 to 18) increased by 250 percent between 1994-2001. And, the greatest leap in psychotropic drug prescriptions occurred after 1997 when the Clinton administration permitted direct-to-consumer drug advertising.

In addition, it's estimated that some 20 percent of teens get high on prescription painkillers and cough medicines ... more so than on illegal drugs such as Ecstasy, cocaine, crack or LSD.

### FOOD ADDICTS

Also following in their parents' footsteps, one-third of children and teens – about 25 million kids – are overweight, and in three years 20 percent are likely to be obese ... which increases their risk of developing diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, sleep problems and other disorders. A third of US adolescents are unfit, and with schools cutting back on activities and computer sedentary lifestyles increasing, they too will enter adulthood in worse shape than generations before them ... and destined to look to drugs, rather than self restraint, for relief.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that one-third of Americans are now obese ... double the number in the early 1980s. In 2005, 31 states registered an increase in obesity, and infants are now 59 percent more likely to be overweight than they were two decades ago.

**Trendpost:** Teen/adolescent and adult diet programs, weight loss books, DVDs, fitness equipment and slim-

down exercises ... along with drug treatment facilities and programs will find strong market growth and consumer demand for decades.

*As America ages, becomes heavier and more infirm, there will be strong demand for ergonomic furniture, beds, bathrooms, services, equipment, scooters and facilities to deal with the immobile and unmovable.*

*With the up-and-coming overweight and drug dependent generations in worse health than their boomer parents and grandparents, the demand for a wide variety of health related jobs, including those in insurance and pharmaceutical sectors, will continue unabated. With 1.7 million new jobs having been added to health related sectors since 2001, medicine/product and health directed educational opportunities for trade, college and nursing schools (distance learning and brick and mortar) will also proliferate.*

**Editor's Note:** A peek into consumers' shopping carts filled with salty and sweet snacks, soft drinks, sugar coated cereals, and an assorted variety of highly processed factory manufactured foods confirms the old adage, "You are what you eat." The greatest threat to the future stability of the United States is neither terrorism nor globalism ... it's the physical and mental health of the nation.

*With about 130 million Americans using prescribed medication every month, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US consumers take far more medicine per person than anywhere else in the world. Thus, with total health spending projected to constitute 20 percent of the GDP by 2015 (up from 16 percent in 2005) ... and 30 to 40 percent of all new US jobs created over the next 25 years to be in health care ... the "wellness," "sickness," and "aging" business will be big business for decades to come. ■*



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