Emerging Issues

Obesity

- Obesity is a health issue with a complex web of causes and co-morbidities. Generally speaking, obesity is the result of social, cultural, and physical environmental factors patients experience throughout their lives, genetic factors, and the interaction between those factors.

- The environment where patients live, learn, work and play can increase or decrease risk of obesity. For instance, a community without safe areas for kids to play will make it harder to be physically active, which will increase risk for obesity.

- Studies have shown that trauma experienced during childhood, as well as experiencing racism in daily life, are part of the complex set of causes of obesity.

- Epigenetics is increasingly seen as a mechanism for obesity passing down through generations, as well as adult obesity and co-morbidities.

- Increasing evidence shows a connection between maternal nutrition during pregnancy and adult obesity.