Fifteen times more troops were discharged from the US Army this year due to obesity than five years prior (AFP Photo: David F.)

Obesity is a Threat to US National Security

Boris Djuric November 22, 2014

Obesity is affecting the number of Americans eligible to serve in the military, the Department of Defense says.

(Newswire.net -- November 22, 2014) -- Baltimore, Maryland -- We are all aware there is a link between obesity and health issues such as cardio-vascular diseases. We recognize various ways in which obesity is changing our social standards and culture, from wider seats in the movie theatres to an overweight crush test dummies and dolls that represent majority of the population in America.

The World Health Organization (WHO) declares obesity as epidemic disease in the world, but in US, the statistic is alarming, as we all know.

What we don’t know, however, is that obesity in US is threat to a national security, as the Department of Defense says more than 70 percent of young people are unable to serve in the military.

Retired admirals from Maryland released a report, citing obesity as the number one reason young adults can’t serve in the military.

“I am very concerned about the reduced number of men and women who can meet all of the qualifications required to serve in our armed forces,” retired US Navy Rear Admiral Steven Tomaszeski said to CBS reporter Jessica Kartalija.

The report says that nearly one quarter, 25 percent of all Americans ages 17-24 are too overweight to serve. “Obesity is not only affecting those who can qualify for military service, it is also creating challenges for our active duty military,” Tomaszeski said.

The report shows that obesity is the leading medical reason why 70 percent of young adults in Maryland are unable to serve in today’s military, said Tomaszeski.

Another retired Rear Admiral stated in a report, not only that less young Americans are fitted to serve the military, but also since 2002, obesity rates in military have risen to a 61 percent.

“Thirty percent of eligible Americans. That’s all we have to draw from for our great armed forces. That’s a great concern,” said Tomaszeski.

As part of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, the retired Admirals are pushing to update nutrition standards in Maryland schools, according to CBS reporter Kartalija.

Jodi Evans, a youth advisory board member, said it is important for youth to have a voice in the fight against childhood obesity. “The healthy habits we develop today will become the healthy habits we maintain as adults," he said.

The retired admirals are members of Mission: Readiness, made up of more than 500 retired admirals and generals working to ensure our future natural security.

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