

## Module 2 Lesson 6

### Transcript

Hey friends, in today's lesson we're talking about yet another topic that is less than 15 years new in science and the study of obesity. I love this new stuff. We're talking about obesogens. When it comes to the environmental factors that clients can change to improve their health, reducing exposure to obesogens is that the top of the list. In this lesson you'll learn what obesogens are and where you'll find them and the connection between obesogens and health and why this is important for you as health providers to understand. Obesogens are chemicals that disrupt the endocrine system and are linked to obesity. As a reminder, the endocrine system comprises glands that make up the hormones that regulate metabolism, growth and development, reproduction, sleep, mood and more. So if the endocrine system is out of whack, there's potential for lots of other functions in the body to go haywire too.

There are literally thousands of chemicals found in this country. Thousands. It's crazy. In the food supply, in textiles, cleaning agents and in the air and water. Some are toxic and cause problems ranging from immune disease to cancers. Specifically, we're thinking obesogens may be in things we come in contact with every single day. So examples are air pollution, BPA in plastics like water bottles, cigarettes smoke, flame retardants, PCBs, like industrial chemicals in lakes, adhesives and paints, pesticides, fallates, the chemicals used to make fabric softer, PVC piping. I do want to make the point that obesogens alone are not making us fat. You know that a poor diet and lack of physical activity are mostly responsible for that. But obesogens may make us more sensitive and susceptible to obesity, especially in young children who are still growing and developing. So it's really important for our kids and babies to be exposed to fresh air, organic materials and fabrics and minimal harmful chemicals.

The goal is to get them to eat healthful fruits and vegetables, limit their exposure to plastics and to never microwave plastic, of course. Avoid things like furniture that's treated with flame retardants and choose products that are free from fragrances and harmful chemicals as much as possible. We note that people living in inner city communities and exposed to poor air quality, more pollution and more chemical exposure are more inclined to obesity. While much of this comes from lower quality diets linked to lower socioeconomic status, the childhood obesity rate may be in part exacerbated by obesogens. I'm not saying that adults don't need to worry about obesogens as well, we do. Our immune systems, organs and bodies are more resilient though to obesogens because we're bigger and more mature. But we should still do our part to limit exposure and exposing others as research continues in this area. I think we're going to be learning a lot more here.

Have clients take a good look at the environments they live in and look for places where they can make easy swaps. Tossing plastic containers and replacing them with glass, choosing natural cleaning and beauty products and opting for organic foods are simple places to start. And remember, even little steps make a difference. Little changes make an impact. To review what we just learned, obesogens are chemicals that disrupt the endocrine system and are linked to obesity. Common obesogens include pollution, BPA, smoke, pesticides, PCBs and fallates. Obesogens are not solely responsible for obesity, but they do make our bodies more susceptible to it. You, you can do this. You can help clients identify obesogens they are exposed to in their daily lives and find more natural and not difficult swaps for them to make. You can make a difference in people's lives here. I will see you in the next lesson.