

# The pot belly generation

We live in a time when new heights of all that's good and bad are being reached. An unhealthy lifestyle and off the charts eating habits is no different. Having a pot belly is anything but a trend yet every other person seems to have one.

The pot belly, also known as 'central obesity', is an indicator that one is in dire need of a change in their life.

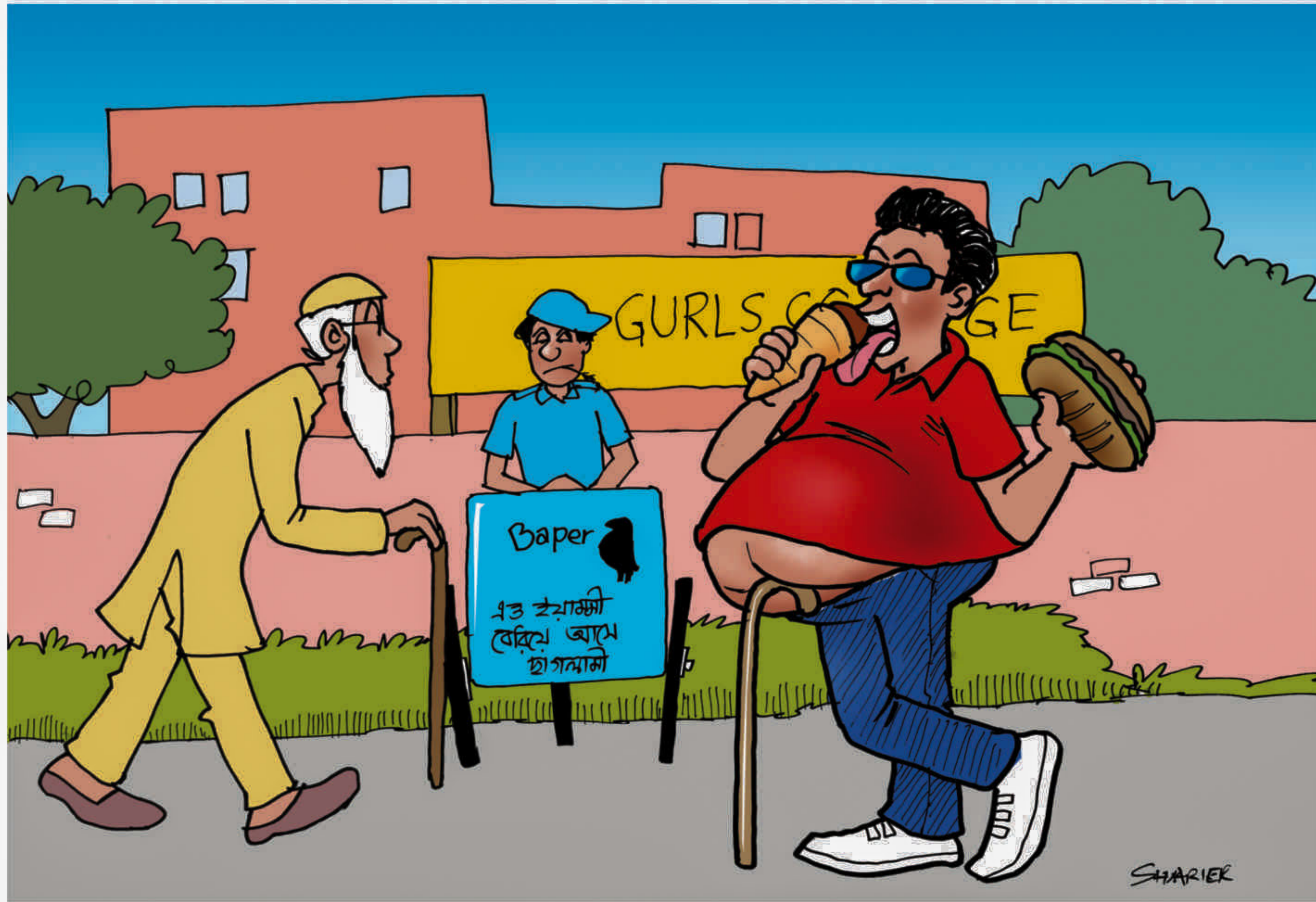
Children these days are more into playing consoles and prefer staying away from outdoor activities. The case for adults is not much different either. Our hectic lives do not allow us to have much free time and the little time that we get, we spend on relaxing and sleeping. We live in the age of convenience and hence opt for processed, canned or fast food. Moreover, thanks to the digital age, even grocery shopping can now be done online!

It's almost like we are too lazy to care that we are becoming bigger and bigger. LS has spoken to Syeda Farhana Mahmood, Nutritionist and Dietician, of Uttara Crescent Hospital to help us understand the implications of this.

Mahmood tells us among the top causes of a pot belly, number one is genetics. We inherit our bone structure and hence we cannot change it; that obviously is no excuse for taking your body for granted. Eating and sleeping habits also play a crucial role. Also, the type of food and the number of times we eat need to be right. Controlling the level of stress in our daily lives also needs to be in check because often times this leads to stress-eating.

Pot bellies can ultimately lead to having fat accumulate around the organs in our body. Mahmood says first and foremost, we need to control what we eat. If we are not burning more calories than we are consuming, our weight is likely to increase. Staying away from excess sugar is a must; this includes desserts as well as fizzy drinks.

Besides keeping tabs on our food intake, exercising is highly recommended. Walking, jogging, swimming or cycling



ensures a full body workout but since we are concerned about having too much fat around our waist, abdominal workout should not be ignored either. She points out that skipping breakfast is one of the biggest mistakes most people make. By doing so our metabolism slows down and we also end up having a heavier lunch than we would have had otherwise. Therefore, like most other experts, she suggests that having smaller, frequent meals throughout the day is the kind of eating habit we

should try to develop.

According to Mahmood, children are easier to guide as they pick up things from their surroundings. Hence, having a healthier eating practice at home will help them to stick to it in the future. The adults, on the other hand, are always too set in their own ways and so the realisation that the time to make certain changes has arrived must come to them on their own.

People tend to put on weight eventually with age but having a pot belly is a sign

that diseases such as high blood pressure, hypertension and diabetes may be just around the corner.

Losing weight and getting fit feels amazing. Having self-love includes not taking our health and body for granted. Start small: incorporate vegetables and green tea in your diet and go for walks. Let us fix our habits so that the next generation can follow our footsteps.

By Maaesha Nuzhat Nazmul

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