

Diet books are on the best-seller lists. Fitness videos are flying off the shelves. Fast-food restaurants are offering healthful alternatives. Yet with all the current emphasis on nutrition and well-being, why are the waistlines of our youth continually expanding?

“Young people first have to see to be,” said Dr. Rovenia “Ro” Brock, widely known as the host of BET’s “Heart & Soul,” the first-ever national health and fitness television show for African American women. “When parents don’t practice the healthful behaviors they are trying to instill in their children, it doesn’t work.”

According to the American Obesity Association, overweight and obesity in the U.S. occur at higher rates in minority populations such as African and Hispanic Americans, compared with white Americans. Among female youth, African American adolescent females ages 12 to 19 have the highest overweight and obesity prevalence – 45.5 percent and 26.6 percent, respectively.

“The biggest problem in the African American community is that we eat too much and move too little. Physical inactivity and the overconsumption of calories, fat, sugar and sodium head the list of nutrition concerns,” said Brock, who also is the author of the national bestseller *Dr. Ro’s 10 Secrets to Livin’ Healthy*.

Brock recommends proper nutrition in childhood and reinforcing healthful living practices through adolescence. “In infancy, introduce your children to vegetables before fruits, so that they develop a taste for the healthful before the sugar. And when kids get older, continue to pack vegetables and fruit in their lunch, as opposed to bags of chips.”

Encourage water rather than soft drinks, Brock said. “The widening girth of America has more to do with the high-fructose content in those mammoth soft drinks than with fat,” she added.

If your adolescent child is already overweight or obese, Brock encourages parents to positively reinforce them through encouraging words. “Too often I see parents speaking to their children in tones that are humiliating and dehumanizing,” she said. “Be nicer. Be kinder. We have to be role models to our children – role models of both health and positive behavior.”

The elimination of physical education from many public schools across the country is a growing concern, according to Brock. “Parents need to band together to have physical education added back into the curriculum,” she said.

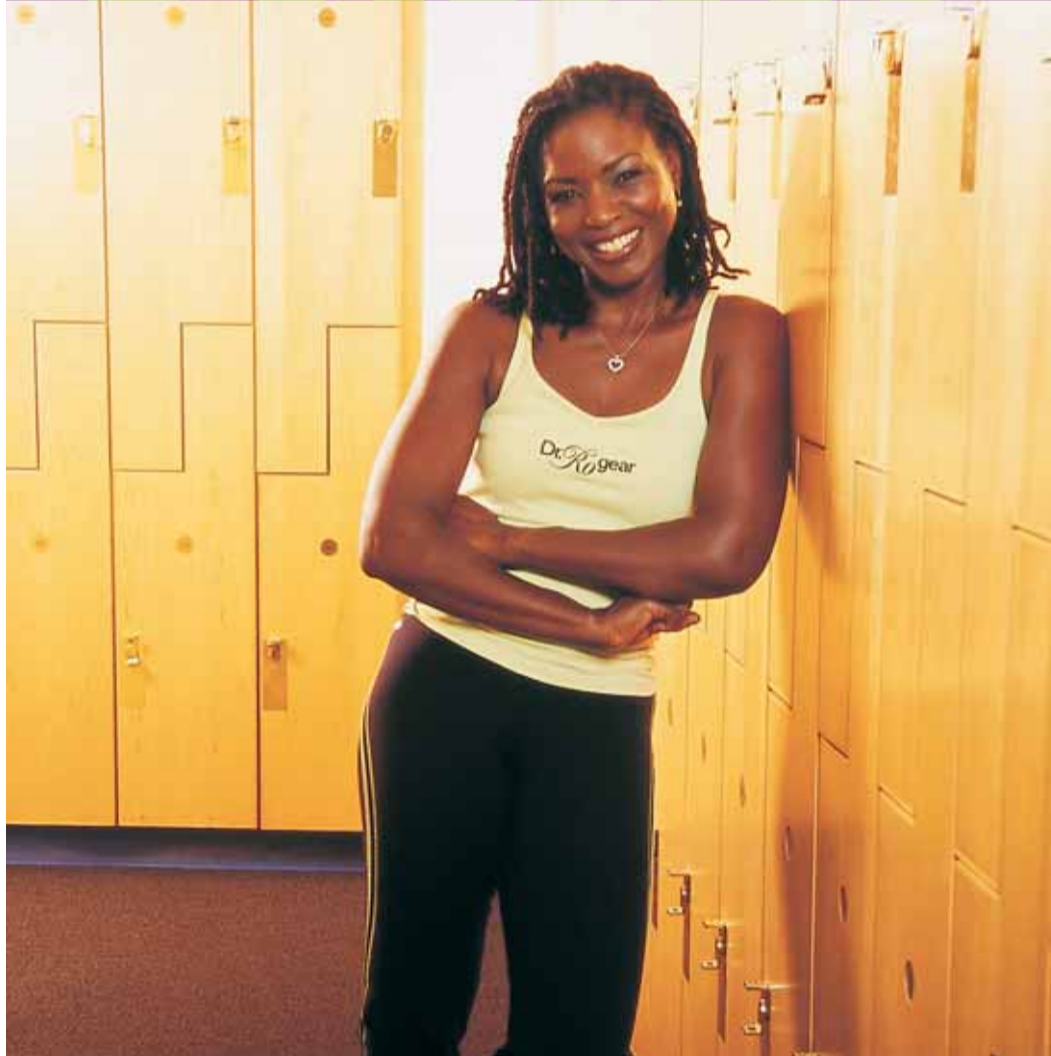
Inspired to help create healthy communities since her mother’s premature death from stomach cancer, Brock said, “I believe people want the information and want to live more healthful lifestyles – they just don’t know how to do it. It’s my job to translate complex information into information people can use to better their lives.”

## Rovenia Brock, Ph.D.

Nutrition and Fitness Expert

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# Fitness



## Nutrition

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### FACT

Approximately 30.4 percent of all U.S. adolescents (ages 12 to 19) are overweight and 15.5 percent are obese.

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STAGE OF LIFE – Teen

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><b>2</b> <b>Daylight Saving Time Begins</b> 1984: Georgetown coach John Thompson becomes first African American coach to win the NCAA basketball tournament.</p> <p><b>9</b> <b>Palm Sunday</b> 1898: Paul Robeson, actor, singer, activist, born.</p> <p><b>16</b> <b>Easter</b> 1862: Slavery abolished in the District of Columbia.</p> <p><b>23</b> 1856: Granville T. Woods, inventor of the steam boiler and automobile air brakes, born. 1872: Charlotte E. Ray is first black woman admitted to the District of Columbia Bar.</p> <p><b>30</b> 1952: Dr. Louis T. Wright honored by American Cancer Society for his contributions to cancer research.</p>	<p><b>3</b> 1826: Poet-oralor James Madison Bell, author of the Emancipation Day poem “The Day and the War,” born. 1990: Sarah Vaughan, jazz singer known as “The Divine One,” dies.</p> <p><b>10</b> 1943: Arthur Ashe, first black to win the U.S. Open and men’s singles title at Wimbledon, born. 1947: Brooklyn Dodger Jackie Robinson becomes first black to play major league baseball.</p> <p><b>17</b> 1983: Alice Walker wins Pulitzer Prize for fiction for <i>The Color Purple</i>. 1990: Ralph David Abernathy, civil rights leader, dies.</p> <p><b>24</b> 1944: United Negro College Fund incorporated.</p>	<p><b>4</b> 1968: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee.</p> <p><b>11</b> 1899: Percy Julian, developer of physostigmine and synthetic cortisone, born. 1966: Emmett Ashford becomes first black umpire in the major leagues.</p> <p><b>18</b> 1995: Margo Jefferson receives Pulitzer Prize for criticism.</p> <p><b>25</b> 1918: Ella Fitzgerald, “First Lady of Song,” born.</p>	<p><b>5</b> 1951: Washington, D.C., Municipal Court of Appeals outlaws segregation in restaurants.</p> <p><b>12</b> <b>Passover Begins (sundown)</b> 1983: Harold Washington becomes first African American elected mayor of Chicago.</p> <p><b>19</b> 1972: Stationed in Germany, Major Gen. Frederic E. Davidson becomes first African American to lead an Army division.</p> <p><b>26</b> <b>Administrative Professionals Day</b> 1888: Sarah Boone patents ironing board.</p>	<p><b>6</b> 1909: Matthew A. Henson reaches North Pole, 45 minutes before Robert E. Peary.</p> <p><b>13</b> 1950: Historian Carter G. Woodson, author of <i>The Miseducation of the Negro</i>, dies. 1997: Tiger Woods wins Masters Golf Tournament.</p> <p><b>20</b> 1894: Dr. Lloyd A. Hall, pioneering food chemist, born.</p> <p><b>27</b> 1945: August Wilson, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, born. 1968: Dr. Vincent Porter becomes first black certified in plastic surgery.</p>	<p><b>7</b> 1915: Jazz and blues legend Billie Holiday born. 1959: Lorraine Hansberry becomes first black playwright to win New York Drama Critics Award (for <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>).</p> <p><b>14</b> <b>Good Friday</b> 1775: First abolitionist society in U.S. founded in Philadelphia.</p> <p><b>21</b> 1966: Pfc. Milton L. Olive III awarded posthumously the Medal of Honor for valor in Vietnam.</p> <p><b>28</b> 1839: Cinque leads Amistad mutiny off the coast of Long Island, New York.</p>	<p><b>1</b> 1950: Blood research pioneer Charles R. Drew dies. 1989: Bill White elected president of the National Baseball League.</p> <p><b>8</b> 1974: Atlanta Braves slugger Hank Aaron hits 715th career home run, surpassing Babe Ruth as the game’s all-time home-run leader.</p> <p><b>15</b> 1964: Sidney Poitier becomes first black to win Academy Award for Best Actor for <i>Lilies of the Field</i>.</p> <p><b>22</b> 1922: Jazz bassist and composer Charles Mingus born.</p> <p><b>29</b> 1899: Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington, jazz musician and composer, born.</p>



Eating eight strawberries will provide you with more Vitamin C than an orange.

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