

## The Price of Convenience

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I was watching a show about obesity in children on our Daytona Beach College's PBS station recently (channel fifteen), on which a pediatrician stated that when she was learning her art, she was told that there is no reason to look for type two diabetes in children, because it was almost unheard of. Now, many studies are finding that in the last decade, of the children diagnosed with diabetes, thirty to fifty percent have type two.[1] This is an alarming trend for a disease previously reserved for adults, and must stem from America's unhealthful and excessive diets, sugary drinks such as Coca-Cola and Kool-Aid, fatty foods as served at McDonald's and Burger King, and physical inactivity in American children. Parents who pass on such habits, and the prevailing advertising of unhealthful foods, are also causative factors.

There is more to it than over-eating and lack of exercising routines—modern life is easier and requires less physical activity. Even at the Daytona Beach College campuses, staff often offer to ferry students around on golf carts; a convenience that was not readily available in my grandparents' day. Dusty stairs give way to zooming elevators, Internet-enabled computers give us the capability to do our shopping and banking right from our chair, children choose to play modern video games such as Nintendo's *Wii Sports* instead of participating in *actual* sports, our young adults will spend ten minutes scouting out a close parking space at the local Wal-Mart, in their air-cooled cars with automatic shifting and power steering, and the iRobot Roomba, an artificially intelligent, autonomous vacuum cleaner, removes dirt from the floors of over two million households.[2] Another example: in our house, we do not have a working bathroom—our guests are offended that they have to make the thirty-foot trek to our outside bathroom, which is enclosed, furnished, and heated. In my Grandma's youth, she had to walk one-hundred feet out to a cold, rickety out-house! My, how spoiled our young whipper-snappers are.

So many gym memberships would not be needed if we were busied with the daily chores that have been whisked away by our new, wonderful technology. In our house, we sweep our linoleum, propel our vacuum cleaner, hand-wash our dishes, hang and iron our clothes (though admittedly, we have a drying machine for rainy days, at mom's insistence), chop our wood and burn it in our wood-burning stove for heat, and yes, even walk *outside* to the bathroom during the cold Florida winters. And we're all the better for it.

### Endnotes:

1. [http://ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/youth/youth\\_FS.htm#Statistics](http://ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/youth/youth_FS.htm#Statistics)
2. <http://www.robots.com/articles.php?tag=961>