



Facing heart disease at age 5. Obesity affecting ever-younger kids

Posted by Susan Zimny

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“When I was 5 I had the highest triglycerides and it was so dangerous. I don’t want to be unhealthy and get those high triglycerides again.”

Maya, 7



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Up until a few years ago, Maya ate like most American children—lots of kid-friendly foods like pizza and chicken nuggets and not a whole lot of fruits and vegetables. She was a little overweight, but nothing that seemed too out of the ordinary. But at age 5, Maya’s doctor discovered that her triglyceride levels were a shocking 861 mg/dL (normal is less than 150 mg/dL). High triglycerides are linked to high cholesterol and heart problems—health issues that used to be limited to adults, but are increasingly seen in today’s children, thanks to the growing problem of childhood obesity.

Maya’s family realized they needed a new ordinary. With medical supervision, the family made lifestyle changes without making sacrifices, and daily exercise and healthy eating are now their new normal.



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“Even though there are

*medications to control cholesterol levels, they're unsafe for children.
So at that point we changed our entire lifestyle."*

Maya's mom

Maya is one of five children who share their stories and advice for kids and parents at BeSmartBeWell.com.

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MEDIA CONTACT: Ross.Blackstone@HCSC.com
ALL OTHER INQUIRIES: susan@besmartbewell.com

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