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Eric Gang, A Legal Advocate on Why Fixing Veteran Obesity Starts With Changing the Military Diet

By Jon Stojan – Contributor | August 14, 2025



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Gang & Associates

Eric Gang, founder of [Gang & Associates LLC](#) and a nationally recognized veterans' attorney, has spent decades reviewing the medical records of former servicemembers, often spanning 40 to 50 years. With this unique vantage point, Gang has uncovered patterns that many healthcare providers simply don't have the time or access to see. Chief among these is a long-standing and growing issue: obesity in the veteran population.



Eric Gang

Obesity has long been a silent epidemic in the veteran population. But its impact is not limited to personal health. As per [research](#), the cost of obesity to the U.S. military was estimated at \$124 billion annually. This number doesn't just reflect medical costs; it signals lost readiness, recruitment challenges, and national security concerns. In fact, about one-third of Army reserve recruits fail to meet [BMI standards](#).

Gang explains that many of the legal cases he takes on are not straightforward. "People don't use lawyers like me for easy cases," he often says. Instead, his clients are frequently veterans struggling with chronic conditions that developed decades after their service, conditions like sleep apnea, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease. These cases are challenging to win because of the time gap between service and symptom onset.

He points to the dietary habits to be changed during military service as a contributing factor. Young recruits should avoid processed foods, sugars, and saturated fats. Because these individuals are young and physically active, they don't see the signs of impact throughout the service. However, once they leave the military and their activity levels decline, the results become evident.

"We are seeing an explosion in sleep apnea," Gang notes, "and sleep apnea's biggest risk factor is being overweight." The cost to the VA in managing obesity-related diseases, including psychiatric disorders, which often correlate with or stem from obesity, is staggering.

VETERANS DISABILITY INFO

Veterans Disability Info

To address these challenges, Gang & Associates embraces a holistic legal model. Beyond securing disability benefits, the firm seeks to help clients improve their overall well-being. This commitment is embodied in the firm's nonprofit arm, the [Disabled Veterans Resource Center](#), which provides health and lifestyle seminars led by a retired Air Force physician. The goal, Gang explains, is not only to provide financial relief but also to leave clients "in a better place", physically, financially, and emotionally.

Eric Gang believes that the current healthcare system should not only focus on symptom management. In contrast, his firm tracks long-term medical histories and identifies the slow and preventable progression of disease. "I've seen clients go from 175 pounds at discharge to 280 pounds decades later," he says. "And the system just treats the diabetes and heart disease without addressing what caused it in the first place."

In his view, the military should promote lasting health habits. "You have a captive audience for a few years," Gang points out. "Educate them about nutrition and provide a diet that promotes long-term health." He believes that if healthier patterns are established during service, veterans are more likely to continue them later in life, reducing both individual suffering and strain on the VA.

Gang's advocacy extends to national dietary policy. He calls for public health reform guided by science rather than agricultural and food industry lobbying. "The broccoli lobby doesn't stand a chance against the hotdog industry," he says. "But we need to stop making decisions based on taste and start prioritizing nutrition."

He's quick to clarify that he is not advocating for government control over individual diets. Rather, he wants veterans and the public to have accurate, science-based information. "It's not really freedom if people are making choices based on skewed data," says Gang.

At Gang & Associates, the work goes far beyond law. The firm routinely refers clients to financial advisors after winning large settlements, and they are exploring ways to provide free in-house health coaching through their medical staff. "There's more to life than money," Gang emphasizes. "And all the money in the world doesn't mean much if your health is falling apart."

Veterans are often seen as a microcosm of the broader American population. If so, Gang says, their health struggles should serve as a wake-up call. "We believe this is a national security issue," he states. "And if we are serious about honoring our veterans, we need to start by addressing the root causes of their health problems, starting with what's on their plate."

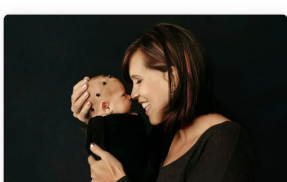
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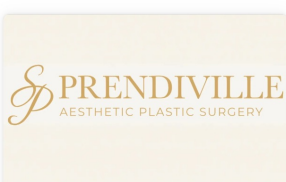
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