

The High Costs of Obesity

Obesity is epidemic in the United States; its rate has doubled in 10 years. At least 15 percent of the adult population in every state is obese. In 29 states that number jumps to at least 20 percent, and in three states obesity is a problem for more than 25 percent of adults. Being overweight among children and youth has climbed to the 15 percent range.

Being overweight or obese increases the risk for heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes and cancer. And these chronic diseases are the leading causes of death, illness and disability. Obesity carried a \$75 billion price tag in medical expenses in 2003. Taxpayers foot the bill for half of that through Medicare and Medicaid.

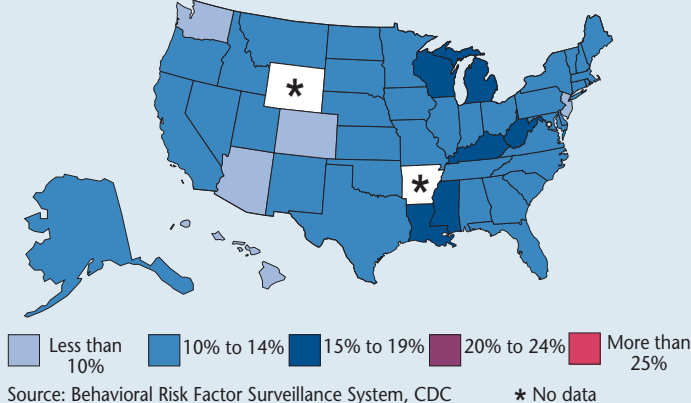
Estimates of medical expenditures caused by obesity range from \$87 million in Wyoming, which includes \$15 million in

Medicare expenditures and \$23 million in Medicaid, to \$7.7 billion in California, with \$1.7 billion each in Medicare and Medicaid expenditures.

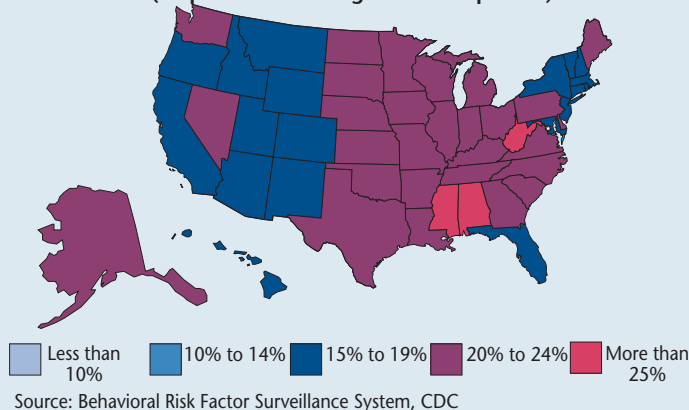
These climbing costs and dramatic increases in obesity among children have caught the attention of state lawmakers.

States are creating obesity task forces, joining community efforts to improve nutrition and fitness and encouraging walkable communities. Lawmakers are setting physical education requirements, developing policies for nutrition education, and ensuring that foods and beverages sold in schools meet nutritional standards. Some lawmakers have introduced legislation to limit liability of food vendors to reinforce personal responsibility for behaviors that lead to obesity. For more information, visit www.ncsl.org/programs/health/phyactobesity.htm

OBESITY TRENDS AMONG U.S. ADULTS 1992 (30 pounds overweight for 5'4" person)



OBESITY TRENDS AMONG U.S. ADULTS 2002 (30 pounds overweight for 5'4" person)



ESTIMATED MEDICAL COSTS ATTRIBUTABLE TO OBESITY (2003 DOLLARS IN MILLIONS)

States	Total Costs Related to Obesity (Millions)	Medicare Obesity Related Costs (Millions)	Medicaid Obesity Related Costs (Millions)
Alabama	\$1,320	\$341	\$269
Alaska	195	17	29
Arizona	752	154	242
Arkansas	663	171	180
California	7,675	1,738	1,713
Colorado	874	139	158
Connecticut	856	246	419
Delaware	207	57	66
District of Columbia	372	64	114
Florida	3,987	1,290	900
Georgia	2,133	405	385
Hawaii	290	30	90
Idaho	227	40	69
Illinois	3,439	805	1,045
Indiana	1,637	379	522
Iowa	783	165	198
Kansas	657	138	143
Kentucky	1,163	270	340
Louisiana	1,373	402	525
Maine	357	66	137
Maryland	1,533	368	391
Massachusetts	1,822	446	618
Michigan	2,931	748	882
Minnesota	1,307	227	325
Mississippi	757	223	221
Missouri	1,636	413	454
Montana	175	41	48
Nebraska	454	94	114
Nevada	337	74	56
New Hampshire	302	46	79
New Jersey	2,342	591	630
New Mexico	324	51	84
New York	6,080	1,391	3,539
North Carolina	2,138	448	662
North Dakota	209	45	55
Ohio	3,304	839	914
Oklahoma	854	227	163
Oregon	781	145	180
Pennsylvania	4,138	1,187	1,219
Puerto Rico	NA	NA	NA
Rhode Island	305	83	89
South Carolina	1,060	242	285
South Dakota	195	36	45
Tennessee	1,840	433	488
Texas	5,340	1,209	1,177
Utah	393	62	71
Vermont	141	29	40
Virginia	1,641	320	374
Washington	1,330	236	365
West Virginia	588	140	187
Wisconsin	1,486	306	320
Wyoming	87	15	23
TOTAL	\$75,051	\$17,701	\$21,329

*Source: The North American Association for the Study of Obesity using figures from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 1998 to 2000 to estimate 2003 costs. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Obesity Research, Vol. 12, No. 1, January 2004.

BODY MASS INDEX

Obesity is having a very high amount of body fat in relation to lean body mass, or a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher for adults. An adult BMI of 25 to 29.9 is considered overweight. To find your BMI go to <http://nhlbisupport.com/bmi>