Obesity Facts

Childhood Obesity

Why are we concerned? Children with high Body Mass Index (BMI) are at risk of having elevated lipid concentrations and blood pressure during childhood. They are also more likely to become obese as adults. This puts them at risk for chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancers. Childhood obesity is not only a national issue, but also a concern in Texas.

Current Obesity Rates (BMI > 30)

**OBESITY IN THE UNITED STATES: ADULTS**

National obesity rates show 35.7% of all adults 20 years and older are classified as obese. The following percentages of demographic groups are classified as obese:

- 35.5% Men
- 35.8% Women
- 34.3% Non-Hispanic Whites
- 49.5% Non-Hispanic Blacks
- 39.1% All Hispanics
- 40.4% Mexican Americans

**OBESITY IN THE UNITED STATES: CHILDREN**

Approximately 23 million children are obese or overweight. Rates of childhood obesity in the U.S. have tripled since 1980, from 6.5% to 16.9% among 2-19 year olds. The following percentages among age groups are classified as obese:

- 12.1% of 2-5 year olds
- 18.0% of 6-11 year olds
- 18.4% of 12-19 year olds

**OBESITY IN TEXAS: ADULTS**

Texas has the 10th highest adult obesity rate in the nation at 30.4%.

**OBESITY IN TEXAS: CHILDREN**

Texas is tied for the 7th highest adolescent (ages 10-17) overweight and obesity rate in the nation at 20.4%. Research from the Center’s School Physical Activity and Nutrition surveillance study found the following percentage of obese children:

- 23.5% of 4th grade children
- 17.5% of 8th grade students
- 17.3% of 11th grade children

Obesity is striking poor and minority children at high rates.

- 35% of Hispanic 4th grade boys are obese
- 20% African American
- 14% white

Success Stories

The Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living’s SPAN study found a significant decrease in the obesity rates for children in the El Paso region from 2000-2002 to 2004-2005, from 25.8% to 18.8%. Students in the Travis County Dell Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) community program had an 8.3% decrease in obesity prevalence from spring 2007 to spring 2008, compared to a 1.3% decrease in students enrolled in the CATCH BasicPlus program.

What is BMI?

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a number calculated from a person’s weight and height and provides a reliable indicator of body fatness for most people.

REFERENCES

2. Ogden CL et al., JAMA 2012.
5. Hoelscher et al., Obesity 2009.
6. Hoelscher DM et al., Obesity 2010. 18 suppl 1, S36-44.

Last updated September, 2011