

How to Get Healthy!

Weight gain has turned into more of an epidemic over the years because of the negative consequences that can lead toward obesity or an unhealthy lifestyle in an American's life. Obesity is recognized as a medical condition in which body fat has accumulated excessively to the extent that it is causing health problems. Obesity is commonly caused by excessive calorie intake, lack of physical activity, and genetics. It is becoming more noticeable early on in the younger generations because of the high use of televisions and video games and lack of motivation to exercise. This fact sheet will validate the epidemic of obesity on a national level, as well as offer solutions to change the unhealthy lifestyle most people may be facing.

What is obesity? ¹

Ultimately, being overweight or obese results from an energy imbalance. This involves eating too many calories and not getting enough physical activity. Regular physical activity is important for good health and it's especially important if you are trying to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight. Nearly two-thirds of the United States population is overweight. There are many ways to determine if a person is overweight, but experts believe that a person's body mass index (BMI) is the best way to assess an adult's weight in relation to his or her height.

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a measurement tool used to determine excess body weight.

Overweight is generally defined as a BMI of 30 or more (usually < 203 lbs).

How to calculate your BMI:

$$\frac{(\text{Weight in Pounds})}{(\text{Height in Inches}) \times (\text{Height in Inches})} \times 703$$

Effects of obesity¹

Obesity is proven to have more serious health consequences than just an increase in weight. Being overweight increases the risk of premature death, multiple diseases, and other serious health conditions. Research has shown that as weight increases to reach the levels referred to as "overweight" and "obesity," the risks for the following conditions also increase:

Coronary heart disease

Type 2 diabetes

Cancers (endometrial, breast, and colon)

Hypertension (high blood pressure)

Dyslipidemia (high cholesterol; elevation of fats in the blood)

Stroke

Liver and gallbladder disease

Sleep apnea and respiratory problems (abnormal breathing while sleeping)

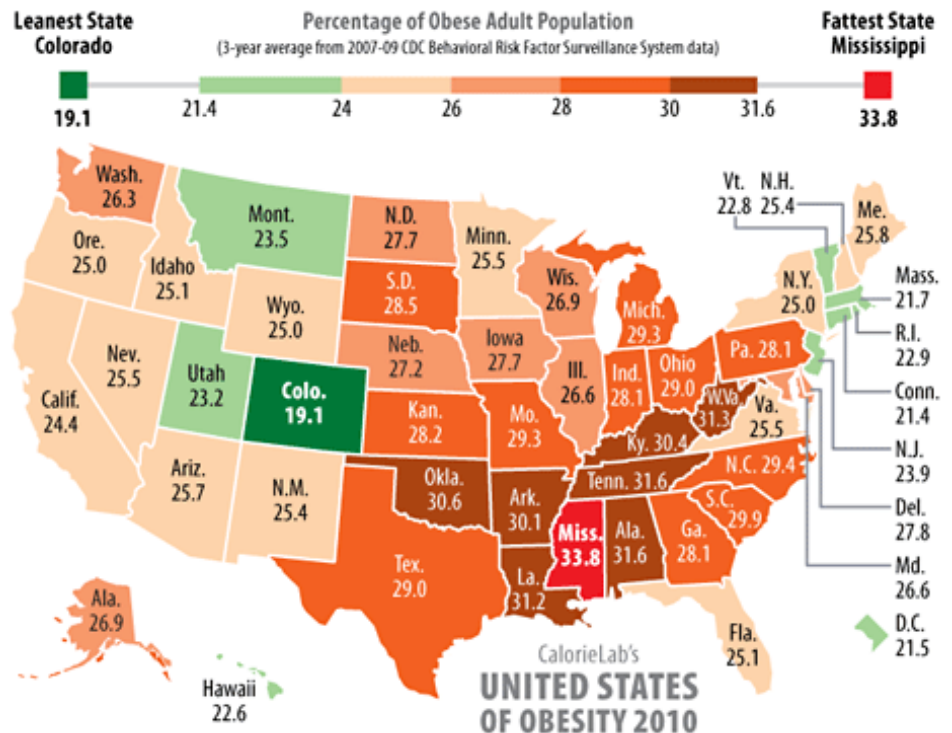
Seeking for help?

- Always contact your regular physician if you feel your weight-gain is interfering with your daily life. Family physicians tend to be more personal and they can provide a basic insight about the consequences with your weight-gain.
- Dietitians and Nutritionists help guide patients into the right direction of eating healthy. They recommend dietary substitutions, manage weight loss progress, and evaluate the severity of their current weight conditions. Dietitians can provide resources to patients that some would not be capable of finding on their own.⁸
- Cardiologists should be seen if severe weight-gain becomes an issue. They would be able to evaluate the conditions of your heart it is currently suffering and also assess you risk for heart future disease and complications because of weight-gain.⁹

Obesity: State rankings ¹

These states have been deemed as the top five most obese states in the country based on collected data from monthly telephone interviews with U.S. adults. (Picture is from calorielab.com)

1. Mississippi – 34.4%
2. Louisiana – 33 %
3. Tennessee 32.3 %
4. Kentucky– 31.5 %
5. Oklahoma – 31.4 %



Planning your Diet²

The best way to ensure that you are maintaining a healthy diet is to keep and follow a food journal or food diary. Many people do not realize what they eat throughout the day. Keeping a food journal will help them organize a well-balanced diet. According to a case study recorded by Kendall Krause, M.D., dieters have lost, on average 13 pounds because they were able to see the flaws of their diet.

Writing down every calorie or meal, is a better accurate way for people to track how much they are consuming throughout the day. They become more aware of the healthy foods they eat as well as tracking the negative, unhealthy ones. This can lead to a dramatic difference in one's diet because they are more conscious of calorie intake instead of just consuming useless calories.

Dieting Do's³

Focus more on the positives or the “do's” of a diet and you will find that it is easier to stick to your newly changing lifestyle.

- Do plan to lose weight for the long-term and live a healthy life.
- Do exercise daily to maintain a healthy weight in order to keep a realistic goal of weight loss. Get involved in an activity that is easy and fun to do like walking or riding a bicycle.
- Do consume more fruits and vegetables than saturated fats. Five servings of fruits and vegetables are the recommendation to maintain a healthy weight.¹
- Do eat until you are hungry not until you're stuffed. It takes 15 minutes for your brain to register that you are full, so eat slower.

Dieting Don'ts³

- Don't starve yourself or skip meals. Research from Jorge Cruise, Chief Diet and Fitness Expert, shows that weight loss from starvation comes from muscle tissue and not from fat.⁶
- Don't eat meals before you go to sleep. At night, your metabolism slows down and if you still have food in your stomach it is harder to digest it and it will most likely be stored as fat.
- Don't give up on your diet or give into temptations. If you slip on your diet, don't get discouraged just get back on track.
- Don't skip breakfast. Most people that eat breakfast everyday are more likely to lose more weight than those who do not.

Healthy Eating Habits⁴

People want to be healthy, but generally do not know where to start or choose the wrong foods for their diet, thus, leading them to obesity in the first place. Yes, most foods are common sense (e.g. fruits, vegetables, lean meats) but preparing them and portion control become a problem, in most cases.

- Simplify your meals. Be more concerned with fresh produced, lean meats, and cooking. If it comes in a box—stay away from it! It usually is processed, extremely unhealthy, and loaded with saturated fats. Over time choosing fresh meals will come naturally, and this will become your healthy lifestyle. There are various recipe websites that are simple and allow you to enjoy a healthy meal.
- Drink water! Water helps flush out toxins in our systems and can actually suppress appetites. It is common to mistake thirst for hunger; stay well-hydrated. Sodas will make you thirstier and more tired because of the sugar contents.
- Nothing is “off limits.” While processed foods should be eaten at a minimal, completely banning them will make you want them more. If you have a temptation for an unhealthy snack, indulge in a small portion to satisfy the craving.
- Smaller and slower meals. Smaller portions throughout the day (up to five or six) leave you more satisfied because your metabolism is constantly working. Making your energy levels increase. Eating slowly actually makes you fuller quicker because you can trick your stomach how much you are putting in it (like getting full with water).

Exercise! 5

Just like eating healthy, exercise takes dedication. Interval training is the most common and easiest way to begin an exercise routine. This type of training requires doing a set of exercises, then rest for up to two minutes then doing them again. If you still feel that working out is a chore for you, try joining a fun zumba or spin class.

Fit watch offers simple exercises that can be performed inside or around your home:

- spending time outside with family
- walking for at least 20-30 minutes
- jumping jacks
- crunches
- dancing while listening to music

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