

Obesity Crisis

A person is considered obese if his or her body mass index (BMI), which is calculated from weight and height, is 30 or higher. BMI offers a reasonable indicator of body fat and weight categories that may lead to health problems. Obesity increases the risk factor for heart disease, certain types of cancer and type 2 diabetes.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention has monitored the nation's obesity trends for more than 20 years. The CDC receives information through its Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System that captures the data collected annually by state health departments.

Some alarming trends

- In 1989, every state had an obesity level under 15%; in 2009 no state had an obesity level under 15%
- In 1999, no state had an obesity level at 25% or greater; in 2009, 33 states had obesity levels at 25% or greater (with nine states at 30% or greater)
- In 2009, only one state (Colorado) and the District of Columbia had obesity levels less than 20%
- Indiana's obesity level jumped from the 15%-19% range in 1999 to 25%-29% in 2009

Obesity Levels Among U.S. Adults 2009

(BMI ≥ 30, or about 30 pounds overweight for 5-foot, 4-inch person)

