Illness & Injury

Obesity among adults and youth

Obesity is the second leading cause of preventable death in Oregon, causing an estimated 1,500 deaths each year. Obesity is a major risk factor for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. People who are obese have annual medical costs $1,429 higher than people who are not obese.

In 2012, 26.7% of Oregon adults were obese. That proportion has more than doubled since 1990.

Source: Oregon Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

Starting in 2010, estimates are not comparable to earlier years.
Between 2001 and 2013, obesity increased 38% among Oregon eighth-graders, from 7.3% to 10.1%.

If Oregon remains on the 2001 to 2013 trajectory, medical care costs to treat obesity-related diseases will rise, and children born today will have shorter lives on average than their parents. Comprehensive strategies designed to improve diets and increase physical activity among Oregon’s population are urgently needed to address this problem.
Additional Resources: 2012 Oregon Overweight, Obesity, Physical Activity and Nutrition Facts

About the Data: Data sources are the Oregon Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Systems (BRFSS) for adults and the Oregon Healthy Teens Survey (OHT) for youth. BRFSS is a telephone survey conducted annually among non-institutionalized adults age 18+. Since 2010, the Oregon BRFSS data have included cell phone respondents as well as those reached by landline, and data weighting methods have changed. Therefore, caution should be used in interpreting changes over time. OHT is a pencil and paper or online survey conducted every two years among Oregon 8th and 11th graders within schools.

Body Mass Index (BMI) is calculated using height and weight. For adults, obese is defined as having a BMI of 30 or greater. For children and teens, after BMI is calculated, the number is plotted on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) BMI-for-age sex-specific growth charts to obtain a percentile ranking. Obese is defined as a BMI at or above the 95th percentile.

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Date Updated: August 1, 2014

Oregon State Health Profile