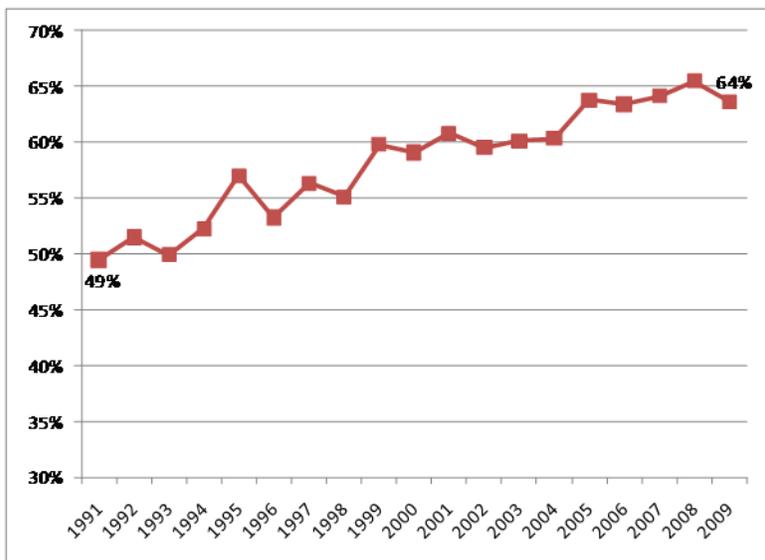


Heart Disease and Stroke Facts: Heart Attack and Stroke and Obesity in Alaska

Obesity in Alaska

Obesity is a serious health concern in Alaska. In 2009, approximately 64% of adults were overweight¹. Overweight and obesity are alarming because both conditions increase the risk for health problems, including chronic diseases.



Since 1991, the percentage of adult Alaskans whose reported height and weight meet the definition of overweight or obese has increased by 15%. Other concerns include:

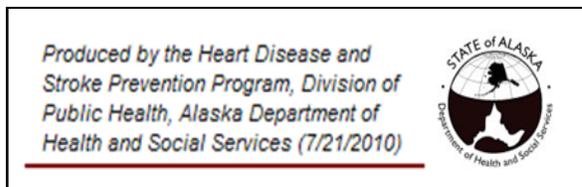
- 27% of Alaskan high school students are overweight or obese; 11% are classified as obese²
- Obese adults are twice as likely to report their health status as fair or poor as opposed to good or excellent when compared to normal weight adults (21% vs.10%)¹

How is Obesity Defined?

For general purposes, obesity is based on the body mass index (BMI). The BMI calculation is based on individual's weight and height. An online BMI calculator is available at :

http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/adult_bmi/english_bmi_calculator/bmi_calculator.html.

Adults are considered obese if their BMI is greater than 30 while considered overweight if their BMI is greater than 25.



What Causes Obesity

The primary causes of overweight and obesity in most people is an imbalance between nutrition and physical activity.³ We watch too much television, drink too much soda and juice, and eat too few fruits and vegetables. Poor infant and early childhood nutrition also contribute to the increasing rate of obesity.

Obesity and Cardiovascular Disease in Alaska

- Heart diseases was the 2nd leading cause of death in Alaska in 2006⁴
- Heart disease accounted for over 1/3 of the total hospitalization costs for Alaska in 2007 at \$515 million⁵
- Stroke was the 4th leading cause of death in Alaska in 2006⁴
- Stroke is a leading cause of functional impairments, with 15-30% of stroke victims being permanently disabled⁶
- Overweight people have a 34% greater risk of heart failure than those of normal weight. Obese people have over twice the risk (a 104% increased risk!).⁷
- Over 75% of high blood pressure can be directly attributed to obesity.⁸
- Abdominal obesity is a significant predictor of heart disease and stroke in women.^{9,10}
- Men with abdominal obesity (a high waist to hip ratio) are over two times more likely to have a stroke.¹¹



How to Beat Obesity

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention state the best evidence suggest targeting the following areas to control obesity:^{12,13}

- increase physical activity
- decrease television viewing
- increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables
- decrease the consumption of sugary beverages
- reduce the consumption of high calorie foods
- increase breastfeeding in more people, for a longer time, and with less formula supplement

¹Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System; ²Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS); ³US Department of Health and Human Services. The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity. Rockville, MD: HHS, Public Health Service, Office of the Surgeon General; 2001.; ⁴Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics; ⁵The Burden of Heart Disease and Stroke in Alaska: Mortality, Morbidity, and Risk Factors, available at: http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/chp/pubs/burden_Dec09.pdf; ⁶American Heart Association. *Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics-2004 Update*; ⁷Kenchaiah S, Evans JC, Levy D, Wilson PW, et al. Obesity and the risk of heart failure. *N Engl J Med* 2002;347(5):305-13; ⁸Krauss RM, Winston M. Obesity: impact on cardiovascular disease. *Circulation* 1998;98:1472-1476; ⁹Rexrode KM, Cary VJ, Hennekens CH, et al. Abdominal adiposity and coronary heart disease in women. *JAMA* 1998;280:1843-1848; ¹⁰Folsom AR, Prineas RJ, Kaye SA, Munger RC. Incidence of hypertension and stroke in relation to body fat distribution and other risk factors in older women. *Stroke* 1990;21:701-706; ¹¹Walker SP, Rimm EB, Ascherio A, et al. Body size and fat distribution as predictor of stroke among US men. *Am J Epidemiol* 1996;144:1143-1150; ¹²Dietz WH. Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Annual Update. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Teleconference, December 11, 2008.; ¹³Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Preventing Chronic Diseases: Investing Wisely in Health. Preventing Obesity and Chronic Diseases through Good Nutrition and Physical Activity. Revised August 2008. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/publications/factsheets/Prevention/pdf/obesity.pdf>. Accessed 5/22/2009.