

Overweight and Obesity Briefing Document
Presented to the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities
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Overweight and obesity refer to ranges of weight that are generally considered unhealthy for a given height. For adults, the body mass index (BMI) is used to determine overweight and obesity ranges, because it correlates well with body fat percentage. BMI is calculated by dividing weight in kilograms by height in meters squared. **Overweight** is defined by having a BMI between 25.0 and 29.9 and **obesity** is defined by having a BMI greater than 30. For children and adolescents, overweight is generally defined as being above the 95th percentile for BMI, while children between the 85th and 95th percentile are classified as being at risk for overweight.

CRITERION #1: PREVALENCE / INCIDENCE

- In 2005, 23% of Washington adults were obese and another 36% were overweight; this translates to more than 2.5 million Washington adults.
- The age-adjusted obesity rates increased sharply from 10% in 1994 to 23% in 2005, a relative increase of 130%.
- Results from the 2004 Healthy Youth Survey found that 10% of Washington tenth graders were overweight and 13% were at risk of being overweight.
- From 2003-2005, 22% of Washington women who gave birth were obese prior to pregnancy and 49% of all women gained more weight during pregnancy than recommended.

CRITERION #2: SEVERITY

- Obesity is associated with many adverse health outcomes, including diabetes; colon, uterine, and breast cancer; respiratory problems; hypertension; elevated blood cholesterol; heart disease; stroke; and gall bladder disease, liver disease, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea, and decreased emotional well-being.
- Excessive weight gain during pregnancy increases the risk of obstetrical complications, giving birth to a high birth weight infant, hyperglycemia in the infant, and weight retention after pregnancy.

CRITERION #3: DISPARITY

- In Washington, from 2003-2005, American Indian and Alaska Natives and Blacks had the highest prevalence of obesity at 31.8% and 29.7%, respectively, followed by Hispanics (24.3%), whites (22%), and Asians and Pacific Islanders (11.5%). The Index of Disparity for obesity prevalence was 134%.
- From 2003-2005, there was no difference in obesity prevalence between Washington men and women.

The Index of Disparity is the average of the difference in rates between the racial/ethnic group with the "best" rate and all other racial/ethnic groups.

Keppel KG et al., Measuring progress in healthy people 2010. Statistical Notes, no 25. NCHS, 2004