

Obesity: America lightens up, but just a little

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The percentage of Americans who are overweight or obese fell slightly in the third quarter of this year, but they still make up a majority of the population, a Gallup poll showed Friday.

Some 36.6 percent were a normal weight, up a percentage point from a year earlier, while 35.8 percent were overweight, down from 36.0 percent, and 25.8 percent were obese, down from 26.6 percent.

[Black Americans](#), the middle-aged and those earning less than \$36,000 a year remained most likely to be obese -- but even in those categories, said Gallup in a statement, the trend was either stable or declining.

"Although the majority of Americans are still overweight or obese, it is an encouraging sign that [obesity rates](#) are trending downward in the US and among demographic subgroups," the pollsters said.

Gallup based its findings on random telephone calls to 90,070 adult [respondents](#) in the three months to September 30. The margin of sampling error was plus or minus a percentage point.

It defined obese as someone with a [body mass index](#) of 30 or more, overweight as 25 to 29.9 and normal as 18.5 to 24.9.

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