

Report reveals nearly 31 percent of Hoosiers obese, ranking Indiana as eighth worst

October 16 2012, by Marc Ransford

(Medical Xpress)—Nearly 31 percent of the adult population of Indiana reports being obese, ranking the state eighth worst nationally in terms of percentage of population severely overweight, says a new study by Ball State University.

[The Burden of Adult Obesity in Indiana](#), a study by Ball State's [Global Health](#) Institute (GHI), found [obesity rates](#) rose by 0.7 percent in the last year. The national rate has dropped slightly from 27.5 percent in 2011. Data for the study was provided by the Centers for Disease Control.

People are classified as obese when their [body mass index](#) (BMI), a measurement obtained by dividing a person's weight in kilograms by the square of the person's height in meters, exceeds 30.

"The percentage of adults who are obese has steadily increased over the past 20 years for both Americans and Hoosiers," said Kerry Anne McGeary, GHI director, and Phyllis A. Miller, professor of [health economics](#). "Obesity poses a major risk for serious non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders and cancer."

She also pointed out that an [obese person](#) in the United States spends about \$1,400, or roughly 42 percent, more each year on health care than a healthy-weight person. [Overweight and obesity](#) are the fifth leading risk for global deaths, resulting in 2.8 million deaths per year.

Ball State's research also found that in Indiana:

- 30.9 percent of males report being obese compared to 30.8 percent of females.
- Among adults under 65, the percentage who report being obese increases with age, while obesity levels decrease for those with higher levels of education.
- 13.3 percent of adults who report obesity also have cardiovascular disease as compared to 7.2 percent of adults who reported a healthy weight.
- 42.2 percent of African-American adults are obese, compared to 34.7 percent of Hispanic adults and 29.5 percent of white adults.
- 18.7 percent of adults who report obesity also report having diabetes compared to 4 percent of healthy weight adults.

McGeary also points out that while obesity is preventable, medical costs associated with the condition are skyrocketing. In 2008, the annual direct medical cost of obesity in the U.S. was estimated to be as high as \$147 billion, rising to nearly 10 percent of all medical spending.

"By 2030, the majority of states could have obesity levels above 50 percent and Indiana could hit that 50 percent level well before then," McGeary said. "If the average BMI of the population could reduce by just 5 percentage points by 2030, millions of people could avoid obesity-related diseases and billions of dollars would be saved."

Provided by Ball State University

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