

Brazil moves to combat rising obesity

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Brazil launched a campaign Tuesday to combat the ballooning waistlines of its population—a trend it said costs nearly \$250 million each year in treatment of obesity-related diseases.

"We have to pay attention to the quality of life, offer new ways such as [adequate nutrition](#) and physical activity," said [Health Minister](#) Alexandre Padilha.

"This is the time for Brazil to act in all areas, prevention and treatment for all ages and social classes," he added as he unveiled a University of Brasilia study on government spending on treatment for obesity-related diseases.

Basic health centers are providing instructions on how to prevent obesity and excess weight gain along with space for people to exercise and learn about healthy nutrition.

The government has also eased formalities for stomach-reduction surgery in the most serious cases.

To improve the diet of Brazilians, it has signed an agreement with the food industry to reduce the amount of sodium in processed foods.

[Overweight and obesity](#) figures are trending upwards in Brazil.

A 2011 report showed that the proportion of overweight people rose from 42.7 percent in 2006 to 48.5 percent in 2011. The percentage of

obese people meanwhile went up from 11.4 percent to 15.8 percent during the same period.

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