

# Adult obesity in US 'unacceptably high,' report finds

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This is an image of a weight scale. Credit: CDC/Debora Cartagena

Poor eating and exercise habits have kept obesity rates high in the United States, said a report Thursday that found increases in six states and no decreases across the nation.

The problem is particularly acute among the poor and in the African-American community, said the "State of Obesity" [report](#) by the Robert

Wood Johnson Foundation and the Trust for America's Health.

"Obesity rates are unacceptably high, and the disparities in rates are profoundly troubling," said Jeffrey Levi, executive director of TFAH.

He blamed the increase on fast food popularity, poor nutrition choices and the failure to get enough exercise.

The report found statistically significant increases in the [obesity rates](#) in six states—Alaska, Delaware, Idaho, New Jersey, Tennessee and Wyoming.

In every American state, at least one in five people is obese.

The highest obesity rates were seen in Mississippi and West Virginia, each at 35.1 percent.

The report found that the lowest obesity rate was in Colorado, at 21.3 percent.

"Meanwhile 30 years ago, no state was above 15 percent," Levi told reporters. "So the rise was dramatic and quick."

The report mentioned some encouraging data from last year that showed obesity declining among preschoolers from low-income families in 18 states.

However, more than one in 10 youths become obese as early as the ages of two to five, and five percent of US children are severely obese, it said.

Among blacks, adult obesity rates were 40 percent or higher in 11 states, and at least 30 percent in 41 states.

When it came to whites, just 10 states had obesity rates of more than 30 percent.

Obesity was more common among the poor.

The report found 33 percent of adults earning less than \$15,000 per year were obese, compared to 25 percent earning \$50,000 or more per year.

The report has been issued annually for the past 11 years.

The authors noted that the year-to-year increase was worse in 2005, when [obesity](#) rates rose in every state except one.

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