

# US adults aren't getting taller, but still putting on pounds

December 20 2018, by Mike Stobbe

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You don't need to hang the mistletoe higher but you might want to skip the holiday cookies.

A new report released Thursday shows U.S. adults aren't getting any taller but they are still getting fatter.

The average U.S. adult is overweight and just a few pounds from obese, thanks to average weight increases in all groups—but particularly whites and Hispanics.

Overall, the average [height](#) for men actually fell very slightly over the past decade. There was no change for [women](#).

One factor may be the shift in the country's population. There's a growing number of Mexican-Americans, and that group tends to be a little shorter, said one of the report's authors, Cynthia Ogden of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The findings come from a 2015-16 [health survey](#) that measures height and weight. More than 5,000 U.S. adults took part.

CDC records date back to the early 1960s, when the average man was a little over 5 [feet](#), 8 inches tall and weighed 166 pounds. Now, men are almost 1 inch taller and more than 30 pounds heavier. But today's average height of 5 feet, 9 inches is about a tenth of an inch shorter than about a decade ago.

The average woman in the early 1960s was 5 feet, 3 inches and 140 pounds. Now, women are a half-inch taller and about 30 pounds heavier, on average. The average height is about the same as it was a decade earlier: 5 feet, 4 inches.

Other survey findings:

—In the last decade, the average weight of men rose about 2 pounds, to 198. For women, it rose 6 pounds, to nearly 171.

—Men have 40-inch waistlines, on average. Women's waistlines are a little under 39 inches.

—The [average height](#) of black men and white men has been holding about steady, at a little under 5 feet 10.

—Mexican-American and Asian-American men are roughly 3 inches shorter than whites and blacks, on average. There was a similar height gap in women.

In 2016, about 18 percent of the nation's population was Hispanic, up from about 13 percent in 2000, according to U.S. Census figures. Mexican-Americans account for nearly two-thirds of the Hispanic population.

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