



OBESITY FACT SHEET

Cost of Obesity to You

Being overweight and/or obese can have serious effects on an individual's health. Here are some facts and statistics that show how being overweight or obese can impact your health:

A recent report from the Trust for America's Health averaged obesity statistics for 2008 and ranked Alabama second-highest in the nation for rates of adult obesity (31.5 percent). A similar report published by Trust for America's Health in 2007 also stated that Alabama was the second-highest for adult hypertension (33.5 percent); fourth-highest for diabetes (10 percent); and sixth-highest in rates of physical inactivity (29.6 percent). The state also ranked eleventh in rates for obesity in children ages 10-17 (16.7 percent).

The Obesity Action Coalition states that there are more than 30 medical conditions that are associated with obesity. The most prevalent obesity-related diseases include: high blood pressure; high cholesterol; diabetes; heart disease; stroke; gallbladder disease; osteoarthritis; sleep apnea and respiratory problems; and some cancers (endometrial, breast, and colon)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that approximately 20 percent of cancer in women and 15 percent of cancer in men is attributable to obesity.

According to the American Obesity Association, more than 75 percent of hypertension cases are reported to be directly attributed to obesity.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, obese individuals have a 50 percent to 100 percent increased risk of premature death from all causes as compared to those with healthy weights.

Obesity is a greater trigger for health problems and increased health spending than smoking or drinking. Individuals who are obese have 30 percent to 50 percent more chronic medical problems than those who smoke or drink heavily. The effects of obesity are similar to 20 years of aging.
(Roland Sturm, UCLA/RAND Managed Care Center for Psychiatric Disorders, The Effects of Obesity, Smoking and Drinking on Medical Problems and Costs, Health Affairs, March/April 2002.)

While being overweight and/or obese can negatively impact one's health, adopting a healthy lifestyle can improve an individual's chances against sickness and disease. According to the U.S. Surgeon General, weight loss, as modest as 5 to 15 percent of total body weight in a person who is overweight or obese, reduces the risk factors for some diseases, particularly heart disease. Weight loss can result in lower blood pressure, lower blood sugar, and improved cholesterol levels.