



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Lose Weight, Add Healthy Years

Prevalence of Obesity Among Adults by Household Income and Education – United States, 2011-2014

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[Announcer] *This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

[Dr. Kathleen Dooling] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Kathleen Dooling.

People with obesity are at increased risk for many diseases and chronic conditions. Achieving and maintaining a normal weight is a key factor in a healthy lifestyle.

Dr. Cynthia Ogden is with CDC's National Center for Health Statistics. She's joining us today by phone to discuss obesity. Welcome to the show, Cynthia.

[Dr. Ogden] Hi. Thanks for having me.

[Dr. Dooling] Cynthia, how is obesity defined?

[Dr. Ogden] Well, obesity is defined using body mass index, which is your weight adjusted for height, and in particular, it's your weight, in kilograms, divided by your height in meters squared. And the cut point for adults is 30, and so, if you have a BMI above 30, you're considered to have obesity. And that translates to about 174 pounds for somebody who's 5'4" and 203 pounds for somebody who's 5'9".

[Dr. Dooling] How many people in the U.S. have obesity?

[Dr. Ogden] Well, in 2015-16, about 40 percent of adults had obesity, and that translates into 83 million people, and we've seen an increase in obesity in recent years in adults.

[Dr. Dooling] Is obesity more common in any particular group of people?

[Dr. Ogden] Yes. Obesity is more common in some groups, in particular, it's more common among middle-aged adults, among African American women, and among Hispanics. You know, what's really interesting is to think about and to look at obesity differences by income and education, and they're not always what you would think. Obesity is more common among lower income *women*, but that's not true for men; there's actually no difference in obesity between higher and lower income men. Adults with a college degree tend to be less likely to have obesity than those with less education, but there are differences between race-ethnic groups.

[Dr. Dooling] What health problems can result from having obesity?

[Dr. Ogden] Obesity is related to many chronic conditions or health problems, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, and mental health challenges, such as depression. Obesity can also lead to premature death.

[Dr. Dooling] Give our listeners some strategies to avoid obesity.

[Dr. Ogden] Obesity is primarily a result of an imbalance in how much we eat and how physically active we are. And so, if we think about our diet and our physical activity as separate things, we can consider a healthy diet—one that's high in fruits and vegetables and low in added sugar and, in particular, less than 10 percent of our calories are recommended to come from added sugars, and we can see that on the food labels now. And on the physical activity side, it's recommended that we get 150 minutes a week of moderate physical activity or 75 minutes a week of vigorous physical activity.

[Dr. Dooling] Where can listeners get more information about a healthy lifestyle?

[Dr. Ogden] Listeners can go to helath.gov for much more information.

[Dr. Dooling] Thanks, Cynthia. I've been talking today with Dr. Cynthia Ogden about obesity. Eating a diet that's high in fruits and vegetables and low in added sugar, combined with regular physical activity, is the best way to stay in shape and avoid obesity. If you're struggling with your weight, talk with your health care provider about strategies that are best for you.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Kathleen Dooling for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.