



New York State Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Brief

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System is an annual telephone survey of adults developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conducted in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and several United States Territories. The New York Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System is administered by the New York State Department of Health to provide statewide and regional information on behaviors, risk factors, and use of preventive health services related to the leading causes of chronic and infectious diseases, disability, injury, and death.

Overweight and Obesity

New York State Adults, 2024

Introduction

Obesity risk factors are complex, involving health behaviors, stress, sleep, health conditions, medications, genetics, and environmental factors. Environmental factors include access to healthy, affordable foods and beverages, and access to safe places for physical activity.¹ Many adults with obesity also have chronic conditions like diabetes and heart disease.¹

Health Equity

Disparities in obesity are often driven by [social determinants of health](#), including racism, poverty, and affordable and quality housing.² Obesity disproportionately affects certain groups in the United States, including non-Hispanic Black adults, Hispanic adults, and adults with lower education levels.¹

Body Mass Index, a measure used to categorize weight status, has limitations.³ It relies on a calculation based on a person's height and weight, not overall health or body fat, and can be influenced by factors such as ethnicity, sex, and age. Despite these limitations, it remains a tool for exploring trends and making comparisons across time, regions, and population sub-groups.

To advance health and health equity in New York, communities can:

- Focus public health interventions (policy, system, and environmental changes) on risk factors for chronic diseases (poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and social determinants), a key focus of the Department's [Prevention Agenda](#) and [Health Equity Plan](#).
- Shift public health messaging away from 'obesity' and toward 'promoting healthy behaviors by improving the environments shaping them.' This can help reduce stigma.



Key Findings

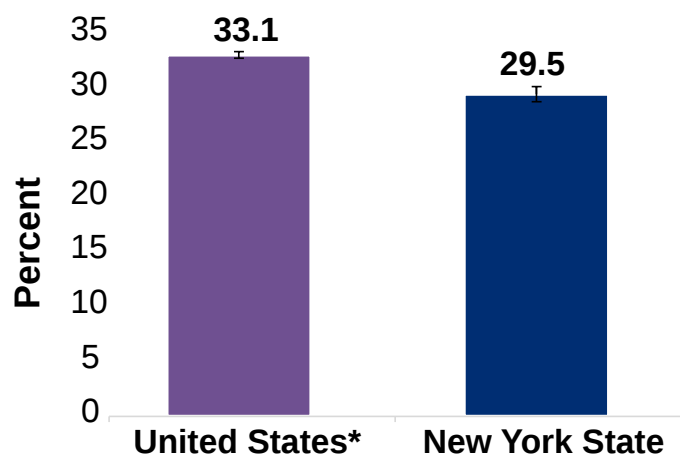
- Approximately 2 out of every 3 adult New Yorkers have either overweight (35.1%) or obesity (29.5%). These two conditions affect 8.8 million adults in NYS.
- Disparities in obesity prevalence exist based on age, race and ethnicity, annual household income, educational attainment, disability status, and place of residence.
- Obesity is more prevalent among adults living with a disability (37.1%), adults living in a rural county (35.5%), and adults living outside of New York City (32.0%).
- Obesity is less prevalent among adults aged 18-24 years (19.5%), adults who are Asian or Pacific Islander/ Native Hawaiian (14.7%), adults with an annual household income of \$75,000 or greater (27.7%), and adults with a college degree (23.5%).



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Figure 1. Obesity Among United States and New York State Adults, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2024



*Median percent: includes data from all State, the District of Columbia and several Territories

Figure 2. Weight Status Among New York State Adults, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2024

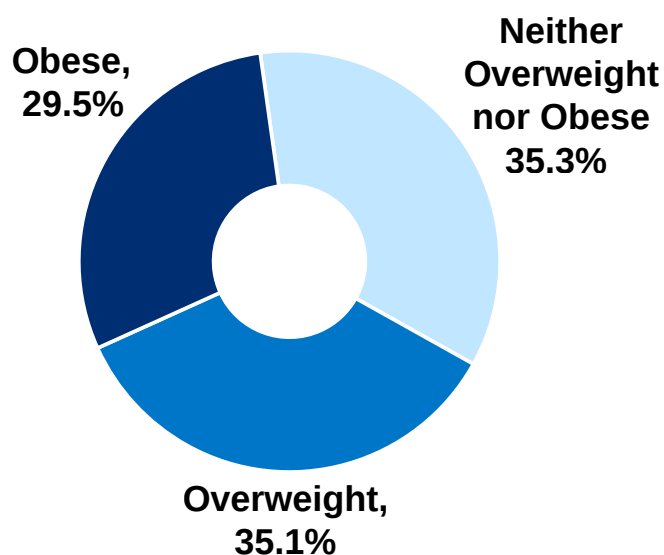


Figure 3. Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity Among New York State Adults, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2015-2024

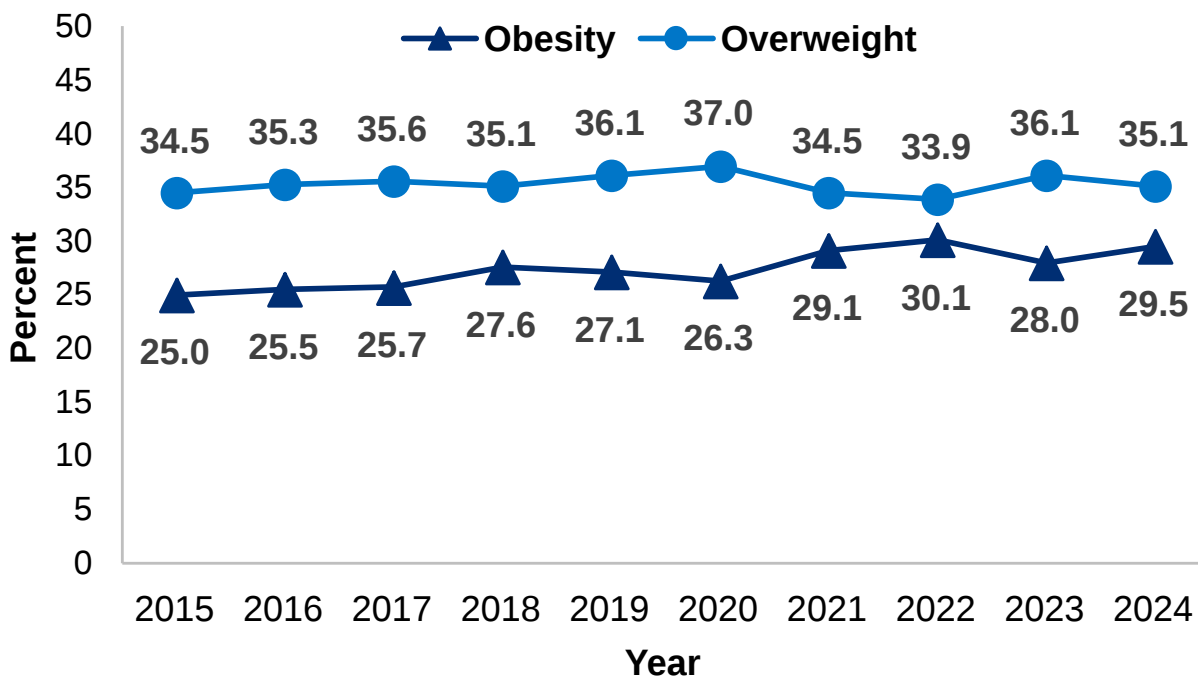


Table 1. Overweight and Obesity^a, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2024

	Neither Overweight nor Obese ^b		Overweight ^c		Obese ^d	
	% ^e	95% CI ^f	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
New York State [n=43,913]	35.3	34.5 - 36.1	35.1	34.4-35.9	29.5	28.8-30.2
Sex^g						
Female	39.9	38.8-41.1	30.1	29.0-31.2	30.0	28.9-31.0
Male	30.8	29.8-31.9	40.0	39.0-41.1	29.1	28.2-30.1
Age (Years)						
18-24	54.7	52.2-57.2	25.8	23.7-28.0	19.5	17.5-21.4
25-34	38.9	37.0-40.7	31.8	30.0-33.5	29.4	27.7-31.1
35-44	30.8	29.0-32.6	35.4	33.5-37.3	33.8	32.0-35.6
45-54	27.9	26.0-29.9	36.7	34.7-38.7	35.4	33.4-37.3
55-64	27.4	25.5-29.3	38.3	36.4-40.2	34.3	32.4-36.1
65+	36.1	34.4-37.7	38.5	36.9-40.1	25.4	24.1-26.8
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian or Alaska Native	25.0	18.0-31.9	28.1	20.5-35.8	46.9	37.5-56.4
Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	56.0	52.4-59.5	29.3	26.1-32.4	14.7	12.1-17.3
Black, non-Hispanic	28.5	26.4-30.6	35.4	33.2-37.7	36.0	33.9-38.2
Hispanic	27.4	25.8-29.1	37.6	35.9-39.4	34.9	33.2-36.7
Multiracial, non-Hispanic	39.7	34.2-45.2	32.5	27.4-37.5	27.9	23.4-32.3
White, non-Hispanic	35.7	34.8-36.7	35.2	34.3-36.2	29.0	28.1-29.9
All other racial groups combined, non-Hispanic ^h	36.4	30.4-42.4	34.6	28.4-40.7	29.0	22.6-35.4
Annual Household Income						
Less than \$25,000	33.5	31.4-35.6	31.5	29.6-33.5	35.0	32.9-37.0
\$25,000-\$49,999	33.0	31.2-34.8	35.6	33.9-37.4	31.4	29.8-33.0
\$50,000-\$74,999	32.7	30.5-34.9	33.6	31.5-35.7	33.7	31.6-35.7
\$75,000 and greater	35.4	34.2-36.7	36.9	35.7-38.1	27.7	26.6-28.8
Missing ⁱ	40.7	38.7-42.7	34.8	32.8-36.7	24.5	22.9-26.2
Educational Attainment						
Less than high school	30.0	27.3-32.7	34.7	32.0-37.3	35.3	32.7-37.9
High school or GED	34.0	32.4-35.6	34.1	32.6-35.6	31.9	30.4-33.3
Some college	31.4	29.8-33.0	35.1	33.6-36.7	33.5	32.0-35.0
College graduate	40.3	39.2-41.5	36.1	35.0-37.3	23.5	22.6-24.5
Disability^j						
Yes	31.4	29.9-32.9	31.5	30.2-32.9	37.1	35.6-38.5
No	36.6	35.7-37.5	36.7	35.8-37.6	26.7	25.9-27.5
Urban-Rural^k						
Rural	30.3	27.3-33.3	34.2	34.4-35.9	35.5	32.5-38.6
Urban	35.4	34.6-36.3	35.2	34.4-35.9	29.4	28.7-30.1
Region						
New York City	39.3	37.9-40.8	34.7	33.3-36.1	26.0	24.7-27.2
New York State exclusive of New York City	32.5	31.7-33.4	35.4	34.6-36.3	32.0	31.2-32.8

Notes: ^aBased on categories of body mass index (BMI), calculated as weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters. ^bNeither overweight nor obese is defined as a BMI of less than 25. ^cOverweight is defined as a BMI of greater than or equal to 25, but less than 30. ^dObesity is defined as a BMI of greater than or equal to 30. ^e% = weighted percentage; ^fCI = confidence interval; When comparing estimates, the 95% confidence interval (95% CI) provides the statistical range containing the true population percentage with a 95% probability. Although a 95% confidence interval is not a test of statistical significance, categories whose 95% confidence intervals do not overlap can be considered significantly different. ^gBased on the respondent's sex at birth. If sex at birth is missing, then the respondent's sex is based on gender identity at time of the interview. ^hAll other race groups combined, non-Hispanic includes Other race only, non-Hispanic. ⁱMissing category included because more than 10% of the sample did not report income. ^jAll respondents who reported at least one type of disability (cognitive, mobility, vision, self-care, independent living, or deafness). ^kBased on county of residence and the 2013 National Center for Health Statistics' Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties

References



1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Adult Obesity Facts. Accessed April 13, 2026. <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/adult-obesity-facts/index.html>
2. New York State Department of Health. Health Equity. Accessed April 13, 2026. https://www.health.ny.gov/community/health_equity/
3. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2023. BMI and Beyond: Considering Context in Measuring Obesity and its Applications: Proceedings of a Workshop—in Brief. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/27185>

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Questions



1. About how much do you weigh without shoes?
2. About how tall are you without shoes?

In this report, weight status is based on categories of body mass index, calculated as weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters. Neither overweight nor obese is defined as a body mass index of less than 25. Overweight is defined as a body mass index of greater than or equal to 25, but less than 30. Obesity is defined as a body mass index of greater than or equal to 30.

Suggested Citation



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Program Contributions



New York State Department of Health

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