Obesity is common, serious, and costly

CDC works to ensure that all Americans have access to easy, affordable options for healthy eating and active living.

Ever cringe when you step on the scale? Now, think of the entire country stepping on that scale. Imagine the Weight of the Nation. Obesity is a common, serious, and costly health problem, and CDC is working to control and prevent it.

Obesity is common. *Healthy People 2020*, which outlines the nation's health goals for 2020, has set a target obesity prevalence of 30.6% for adults and 14.6% for children. However, according to the most recent NHANES data in 2009-2010, about 36% of U.S. adults ages 20 and over were obese, and about 17% of children ages 2-19 years old were obese.

Additionally, some adult populations are more affected by obesity than others. Non-Hispanic blacks are most likely to be obese (44.1%), followed by Hispanics (37.9%) and non-Hispanic whites (32.6%).

Obesity is serious. Research has shown that obese people are at higher risk for developing heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, some cancers, high blood pressure, stroke, and sleeping and breathing problems among other conditions. Some of these are the leading causes of death in the U.S.

In addition to being at risk for developing some of these same health problems, children tend to also experience social and psychological effects like discrimination and low self-esteem. Moreover, obese children are more likely to become obese adults.

Obesity is costly. Obesity and its associated health problems have a significant economic impact on the U.S.

health care system. In 2008 dollars, medical care costs for obesity were about $147 billion. On average, medical spending for obese people was $1429 (42%) greater than spending for people of normal weight in 2006.

CDC is working to make the healthy choice the easy choice. Initiatives are helping to change states and communities into places that strongly support healthy eating and active living. CDC currently funds states and communities to help saves lives and protect people from the problems of obesity and other chronic diseases through efforts that support changes in the places where Americans live, learn, work and play.

CDC Recommended
Obesity Prevention and Control Strategies

- Promote the availability of affordable healthy food and beverages
- Support healthy food and beverage choices
- Encourage breastfeeding
- Encourage physical activity or limit inactivity among children and youth
- Create safe communities that support physical activity
- Encourage communities to organize for change

For a more detailed list of CDC recommended strategies visit:
www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr5807.pdf

Resources are available to help address obesity in your state, community, or tribe.
To learn more, please visit:
www.cdc.gov/obesity
@CDCObesity
#WON12 to join the conversation
www.cdc.gov/WON
www.weightofthenation.org

CDC works 24/7 saving lives, protecting people from health threats, and saving money through prevention.