

# Junk food and soda use in Ohio



The 2011 *Ohio Health Issues Poll (OHIP)* found that 6 of 10 Ohio adults (62%) were either overweight (36%) or obese (26%). Ohio, like most states, has seen an increase in the rates of obesity over the last two decades. Cities and states across the nation have considered taxing unhealthy foods such as soda, candy and chips in an effort to reduce obesity and raise public health revenues. OHIP included several questions to learn about junk-food consumption and public opinion about junk-food taxes.

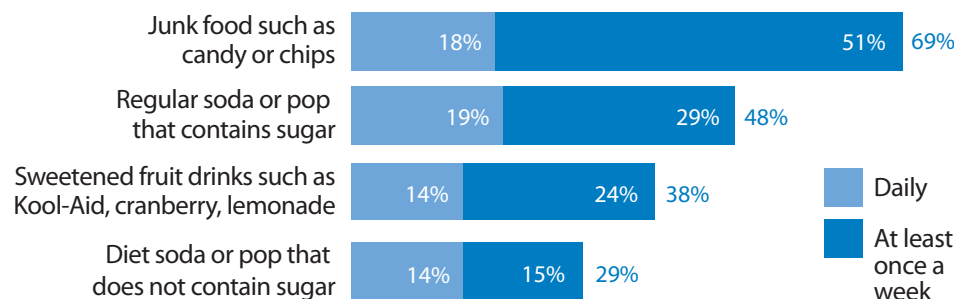
## Large majority eats chips or candy at least once a week

OHIP found that almost 7 of 10 Ohio adults (69%) eat junk food such as candy or chips daily (18%) or at least once a week (51%).

## Many Ohio adults consume sugary drinks

Nearly half of Ohio adults reported they drink soda or pop that contains sugar (48%), and nearly 4 in 10 (38%) drink sweetened fruit drinks such as Kool-Aid, cranberry and lemonade at least once a week.

### How often do you consume these foods or drinks?



## The young more likely to drink sugary drinks

Young adults drink more sugary drinks than older adults. More than 6 of 10 Ohio adults age 18 to 29 drink soda that contains sugar (69%) or sweetened fruit drinks (65%) at least once a week. Nearly 3 of 10 adults age 65 or older drink soda containing sugar (28%) or sweetened fruit drinks such as Kool-Aid, cranberry and lemonade (28%) at least once a week.

## The poor more likely to drink sugary drinks

Likewise, 72% of Ohio adults living at or below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG<sup>1</sup>) drink soda that contains sugar, and 56%

drink sweetened fruit drinks such as Kool-Aid, cranberry and lemonade at least weekly. That compares with fewer than half of adults living above 200% FPG who drink soda that contains sugar (42%) or sweetened fruit drinks such as Kool-Aid, cranberry and lemonade (33%) at least weekly.

## Ohioans oppose junk-food taxes

OHIP found a large majority of Ohioans oppose taxes on unhealthy foods. Nearly 7 of 10 Ohio adults

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<sup>1</sup> 100% of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG) in 2010 was an annual household income of \$22,050 and 200% FPG was \$44,100, both for a family of 4.

These findings unless otherwise noted are from The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati's Ohio Health Issues Poll (OHIP) conducted July 15-25, 2011, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. A random sample of 946 adults throughout Ohio was interviewed by telephone. This included 742 landline interviews and 204 cell phone interviews. In 95 of 100 cases, statewide estimates will be accurate to  $\pm 3.2\%$ . In addition to sampling error, there are other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects that can introduce error or bias.

oppose raising taxes on soda or pop that contains sugar (67%) or junk food such as candy and chips (69%).

### **Opposition to taxes more likely among poor**

OHIP found that 8 of 10 Ohio residents with lower household incomes opposed raising taxes on soda that contains sugar (80%) or junk food (82%). Only about 6 of 10 people with higher incomes opposed raising taxes on soda (60%) or junk food (64%).

### **Diet pop consumption**

Diet pop has been marketed as a low-calorie alternative to pop that contains sugar. There is very little research on the health effects of diet soda.

Nutrition experts recommend drinking water or milk instead of sweetened or artificially sweetened beverages.

OHIP found that nearly 3 of 10 Ohioans (29%) drink diet soda daily or at least once a week.

Older adults are more likely than young adults to drink diet soda. Nearly

4 of 10 adults 65 or older (38%) drink diet soda at least weekly, while only about one-quarter of adults 18 to 29 (24%) drink diet soda weekly.

Likewise, people with higher incomes are more likely to drink diet soda. More than one-third of adults living above 200% FPG drink diet soda at least once a week (36%). That compares with fewer than 2 of 10 adults (18%) living at or below 100% FPG who drink diet soda at least weekly.