



How Ohioans view their weight

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), being overweight or obese increases a person's risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, and certain types of cancer.

Like much of the nation, Ohio has seen a consistent increase in obesity rates. The 2011 **Ohio Health Issues Poll (OHIP)** found 1 in 4 Ohio adults (26%) are obese, up from 22% in 2000.¹

Research has shown that as obesity rates increase in a community, people think that a heavier weight is actually normal. If adults do not think they are overweight, they are not likely to work on losing weight.

To understand Ohio adults' perceptions of their weight, OHIP asked people their actual weight and height, as well as their perception of their weight status (overweight, underweight or about right).

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data (BRFSS). (2000). Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/>

Some who are overweight don't think they are

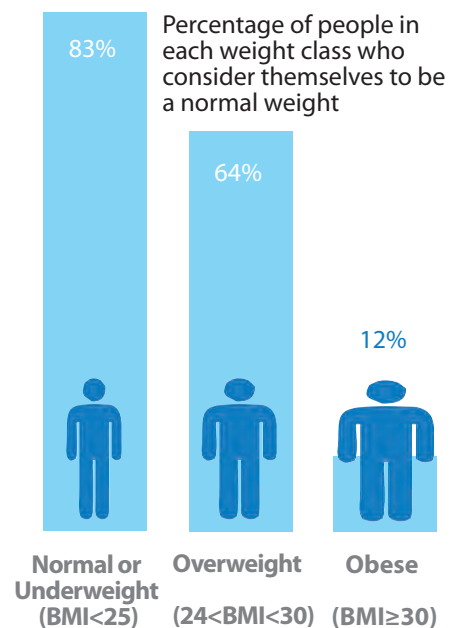
OHIP found that 4 of 10 Ohio residents (40%) thought they were overweight. But when respondents' BMI was calculated, 6 of 10 residents (62%) were found to be overweight or obese. In general as BMI increases, more Ohio adults think they are overweight, but more than 1 in 10 obese adults think their weight is normal (12%).

Fewer than half of obese adults advised to lose weight

Healthcare providers are among many people in the community who could change people's perception of their obesity status. In the past 12 months, 4 of 10 people (40%) whose BMI puts them in the obese category were told to lose weight.

It is unlikely that all obese adults in Ohio had contact with a healthcare provider in the last year. However, based on research in the Cincinnati area, we would expect that at least 8 in 10 (80%) had some contact with a healthcare provider in the last year.

Real vs. perceived weight



Calculating BMI

Weight ranges for being overweight and obese are calculated using the Body Mass Index (BMI). Based on BMI, a person who is 5 feet 4 inches tall would be considered overweight at 150 pounds and obese at 180 pounds. Similarly, a person who is 6 feet tall would be considered overweight at 190 pounds and obese at 220 pounds.

OHIP asked for height and weight during the survey, and BMI was calculated for each respondent. Overweight is defined as a BMI of 25-29.9; obese is defined as a BMI of more than 30.

A BMI calculator can be found at <http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>.

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.

For more information about OHIP, please visit www.healthfoundation.org/ohip.html