

Minnesota sees significant drop in obesity rate

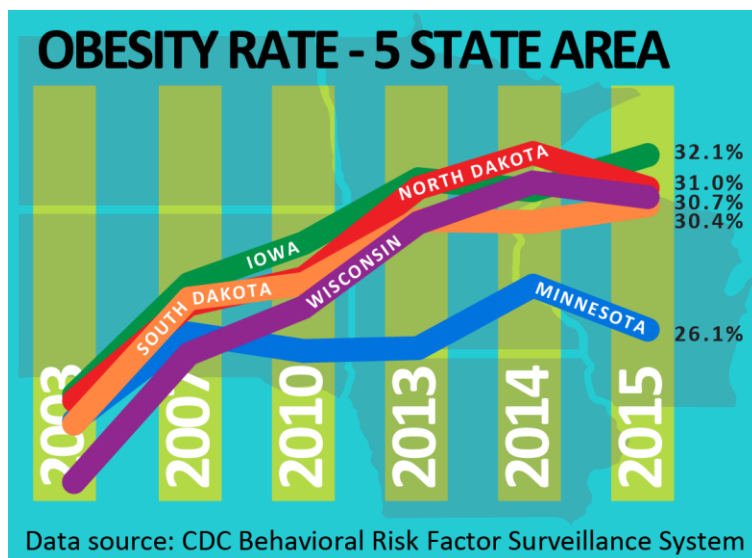
State's adult obesity rate remains lowest in the region

The state's adult obesity rate saw a statistically significant drop between 2014 and 2015, from 27.6 percent in 2014 to 26.1 percent in 2015, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Minnesota was the only state in the region, including North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa, to succeed in keeping its obesity rates firmly below 30 percent. According to data released by the CDC, [neighboring states' rates](#) ranged from 30.7 to 32.1 percent.

The CDC released the 2015 state- and territory-specific data on adult obesity prevalence using self-reported information from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). All states had more than one in five adults (20 percent) with obesity.

“Minnesota's obesity rate is markedly lower than our surrounding states and we were still able to achieve a greater decrease in 2015 than our neighboring states,” said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Dr. Ed Ehlinger. “Achieving healthy weight for all Minnesotans is one of the key objectives for our Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) and its community and private sector partners. By working together we've been able to increase opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity for all Minnesotans in every corner of the state.”



Obesity rates have a major impact on health care costs for chronic diseases such as diabetes. In 2008, Minnesota policymakers responded to skyrocketing health care costs, driven in part by rising obesity rates, by enacting SHIP as part of Minnesota's bipartisan health care reform legislation. Since that time, Minnesota's obesity rate held steady until it ticked up from 25.5 percent to 27.6 percent in 2013 to 2014. The latest CDC findings confirm that Minnesota has returned to its historically low obesity rate that remains steady on a year-to-year basis even as other states and the U.S. as a whole continues on an upward trend.

According to combined data from the CDC, the adult obesity rate for African Americans in Minnesota was 29.9 percent, which is lower than the national figure of 38.1 percent.

In Carver County, SHIP strives to make the healthy choice the easy choice for all residents. Carver County Public Health is currently working with 76 partner sites, including various schools, worksites, food shelves, and childcare providers, to make healthy eating and active living opportunities more readily available.

As a result of these SHIP partnerships, residents at Riverview Terrace and Auburn Homes in Chaska now have community gardens to grow their own produce. Children in 24 schools throughout the county benefit from school wellness councils, healthier lunchroom offerings and opportunities to be active during the entire school day. Food shelf clients now have healthier options, such as more fresh fruits and vegetables. Over thirty childcare providers have the tools to prepare more nutritious foods for meals and snacks and include physical activity as part of their curriculum. Six worksite partners are working on employee wellness activities that will reach over 2,900 employees.

Many factors play a role in obesity, making it a complex health issue to address. Throughout Minnesota, communities are working together through SHIP to expand healthy eating and active living opportunities by using multiple strategies, across multiple setting and sectors. These efforts support and leverage the work of a variety of partners such as community groups, schools, employers, farmers, chambers of commerce, hospitals and health care facilities, city planners, county boards, tribal officials and more.

Please call Carver County Public Health at (952) 361-1329 for more information. Carver County Public Health works to promote and protect the health of all county residents in order to make Carver County a place for a lifetime of good health.

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