

Childhood Obesity



Risk Factors

- **Genetics/family history**

Individuals with a family history of obesity may be genetically predisposed to gaining weight.

- **Poverty/low income**

- **Race/ethnicity**

Prevalence of obesity is higher among American Indian and/or Native Alaskan, non-Hispanic Black, and Hispanic children.

- **Poor nutrition/dietary habits**

Eating foods with too much saturated fat or added sugar can increase the risk for obesity.

- **Sedentary lifestyle and screen time**

Increases the risk of other diseases:

- **Hypertension and cardiovascular disease**

- **Type 2 diabetes**

Childhood obesity quadruples the risk of developing glucose intolerance and type 2 diabetes.

- **Cancer**
- **Asthma**
- **Sleep Apnea**
- **Obesity in adulthood**

Obesity is defined as weight that is higher than what is considered healthy for a given height.

Body mass Index (BMI) is a measure of body fat in relation to an individual's height and is often used as a screening tool for obesity.

Overweight for children: BMI greater than the 85th percentile but below the 95th percentile for all children and teenagers of the same age and sex.

Obese for children: BMI greater than or equal to the 95th percentile.

Facts

- In 2017—March 2020, nearly 20% of all children and adolescents (aged 2—19) had obesity.
- In 2019, 15.5% of all high schoolers in the United States and 15.9% of high schoolers in California had obesity.

Resources

Dietary Guidelines for Americans
www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines

BMI Calculator for Child and Teen
www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/bmi/calculator.html

For more information and data go to www.SDHealthStatistics.com

Community Health Statistics Unit:
619-692-6667

Prevention

- Help children develop healthy eating habits by ensuring children eat plenty of vegetables, fruits, whole-grain products, drink lots of water, and limit consumption of sugary drinks and saturated fats.
- Ensure children get at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day.
- Reduce sedentary time, including time watching television or playing video games.
- Get enough sleep. Children ages 6 to 12 are recommended to get 9 to 12 hours per night.
- Support efforts to increase places where people can be active, such as school facilities for public use or walking trails.
- Establish supermarkets or farmers markets in underserved areas.

