**OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY** are terms for ranges of weight that are greater than what is generally considered healthy for a given height. The terms also identify weight ranges that have been shown to increase the risk for certain diseases and other health problems.

In 2011, 30.7% of children ages 2–4 in the Indiana Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) were considered overweight or obese [Fig 1]. Additionally, 65.6% of Indiana adults were considered either overweight or obese [Fig 2]. This amounts to over 3 million Hoosier adults, which is equal to the population of the state of Iowa.

**Calculating weight status: Body Mass Index (BMI)**

- People’s weight status is determined by using their weight and height to calculate their BMI.
- For most people, their BMI is closely related to the amount of body fat they have.
- Because children’s body composition varies with age and sex, their BMI is determined using age- and sex-specific percentiles for BMI rather than the BMI categories used among adults.

**Adult BMI categories**

- Underweight: Below 18.5
- Healthy Weight: 18.5–24.9
- Overweight: 25.0–29.9
- Obese: 30.0 and above

**Child BMI categories**

- Underweight: Less than the 5th percentile
- Healthy Weight: 5th percentile to less than the 85th percentile
- Overweight: 85th percentile to less than the 95th percentile
- Obese: Greater than or equal to the 95th percentile

**Risk factors for becoming overweight or obese**

- Physical inactivity
- Unhealthy diet and eating habits
- Social and economic issues
- Family lifestyle
- Genetics
- Age
- Not breastfed as an infant

**Health consequences of being overweight or obese**

- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- High total cholesterol, low HDL cholesterol, and/or high levels of triglycerides
- Type 2 diabetes
- Coronary heart disease
- Stroke
- Gallbladder disease
- Osteoarthritis
- Sleep apnea and respiratory problems
- Some cancers (e.g., endometrial, breast and colon)
Economic consequences

**Indiana**
- During an average year, Hoosiers pay $3.5 billion in obesity-related medical costs.\(^8\)
  - 36.9% of these costs are financed by the public sector through Medicare and Medicaid.\(^8\)

**United States**
- In 2008, obesity-related health care costs were estimated at $147 billion.\(^9\)
  - This equals 9.1% of annual medical spending.\(^10\)
- If obesity rates remain level, there would be a $550 million savings in medical expenses over the next two decades.\(^10\)
- If obesity rates continue to rise following current trends, total health care costs attributable to obesity and overweight will more than double every decade by 2030.\(^10\)
  - This would equate to $860 to $956 billion, or 15.6% to 17.6% of total health care costs.\(^11\)

**References**

**Community resources**
- Calculate your or your child’s BMI at: www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi.
- To help Hoosiers and their families eat better, move more, and avoid tobacco visit INShape Indiana.
- Recommended Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity in the United States contains 24 recommended obesity prevention strategies focusing on environmental and policy level changes.
- Stories from the Field highlights what state programs, including Indiana’s, are doing to prevent obesity and other chronic diseases.
- Burden of Obesity in Indiana 2011 Report provides a roadmap for targeting interventions for at-risk groups and others in order to improve weight status, physical activity levels, and fruit and vegetable consumption.
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey posters illustrate the impact of overweight and obesity on Indiana high school students.
- For more information on what is being done in Indiana, visit the Indiana Healthy Weight Initiative website.

**References**

**Take Action: Steps you can take to prevent or manage being overweight or obese**
- **Maintain a proper diet and nutrition**
  - Eat more fruits and vegetables and less high-fat, high-sugar, and high-sodium foods.
  - Drink more water and fewer sugary drinks
- **Be physically active**
  - Adults should have 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity OR 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity each week.
  - Children should have 60 minutes or more of moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic activity each day.
  - Limit screen time (TV, computer and video games) for children to less than two hours per day.
- **Support Breastfeeding**
  - New mothers are recommended to continue breastfeeding for at least 12 months.