

BRFSS Brief

Number 1502

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an annual statewide telephone survey of adults developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and administered by the New York State Department of Health. The BRFSS is designed to provide information on behaviors, risk factors, and utilization of preventive services related to the leading causes of chronic and infectious diseases, disability, injury, and death among the noninstitutionalized, civilian population aged 18 years and older.

Overweight and Obesity

New York State Adults, 2013

Introduction and Key Findings

Obesity and overweight are currently the second leading cause of preventable death in the United States (US) and may soon overtake tobacco as the leading preventable cause of death.¹ By the year 2050, obesity is predicted to shorten life expectancy in the US by 2-5 years.² Obesity is a significant risk factor for many chronic diseases and conditions including type 2 diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, stroke, heart disease, certain types of cancer, and osteoarthritis.³⁻⁶ Increasingly, these conditions are being seen in children and adolescents.^{7,8}

Creating community environments that promote and support healthy food and beverage choices and physical activity is a major goal in the effort to prevent and reduce the burden of chronic disease and a focus of the New York State Department of Health Prevention Agenda 2013-2017. Maintaining healthy weight should start early in childhood and continue throughout adulthood.

Key Findings

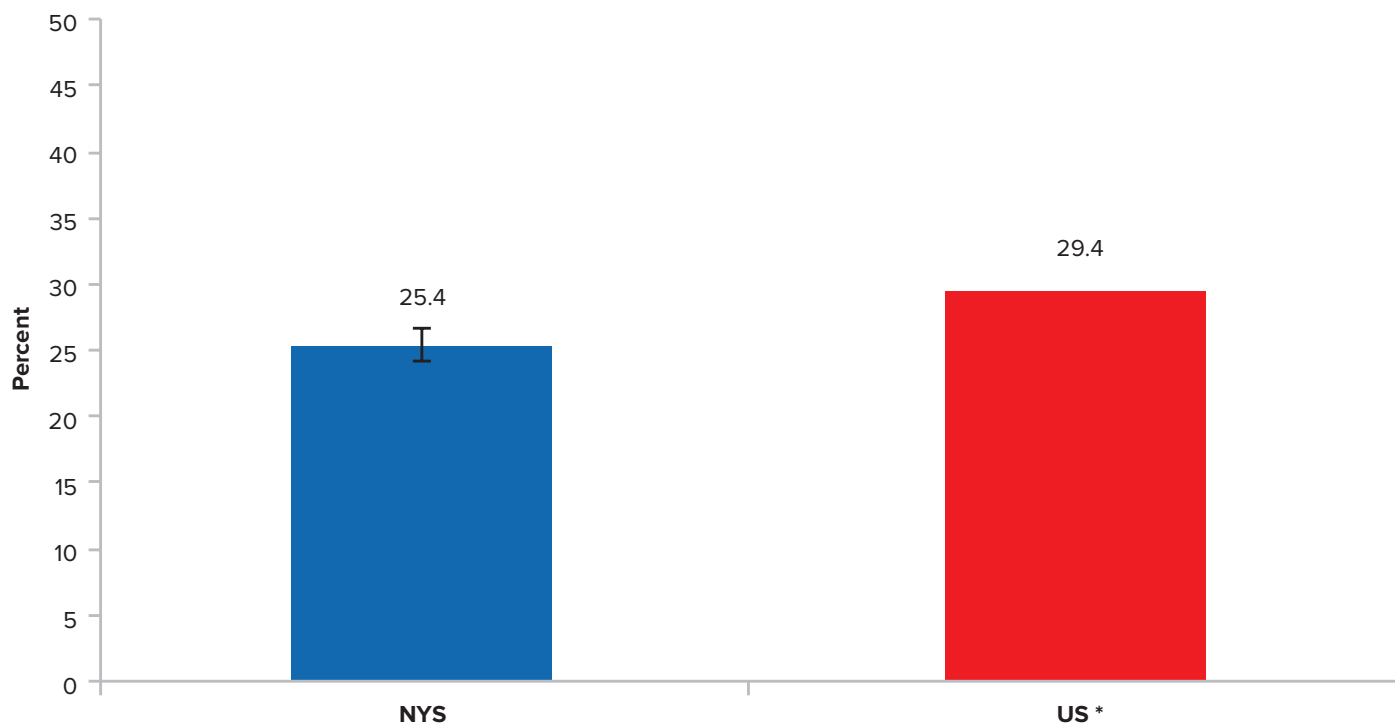
One-quarter (25.4%) of adults in New York State (NYS) are obese and another 36% are overweight, an estimated 8.9 million residents. The rate of obesity is higher among adults who are non-Hispanic black or Hispanic (34.2% and 30%, respectively), earn an annual household income less than \$25,000 (31.9%), have less than a college education (29.0%), or are currently living with a disability (38.4%).

BRFSS questions

1. About how much do you weigh without shoes?
2. About how tall are you without shoes?

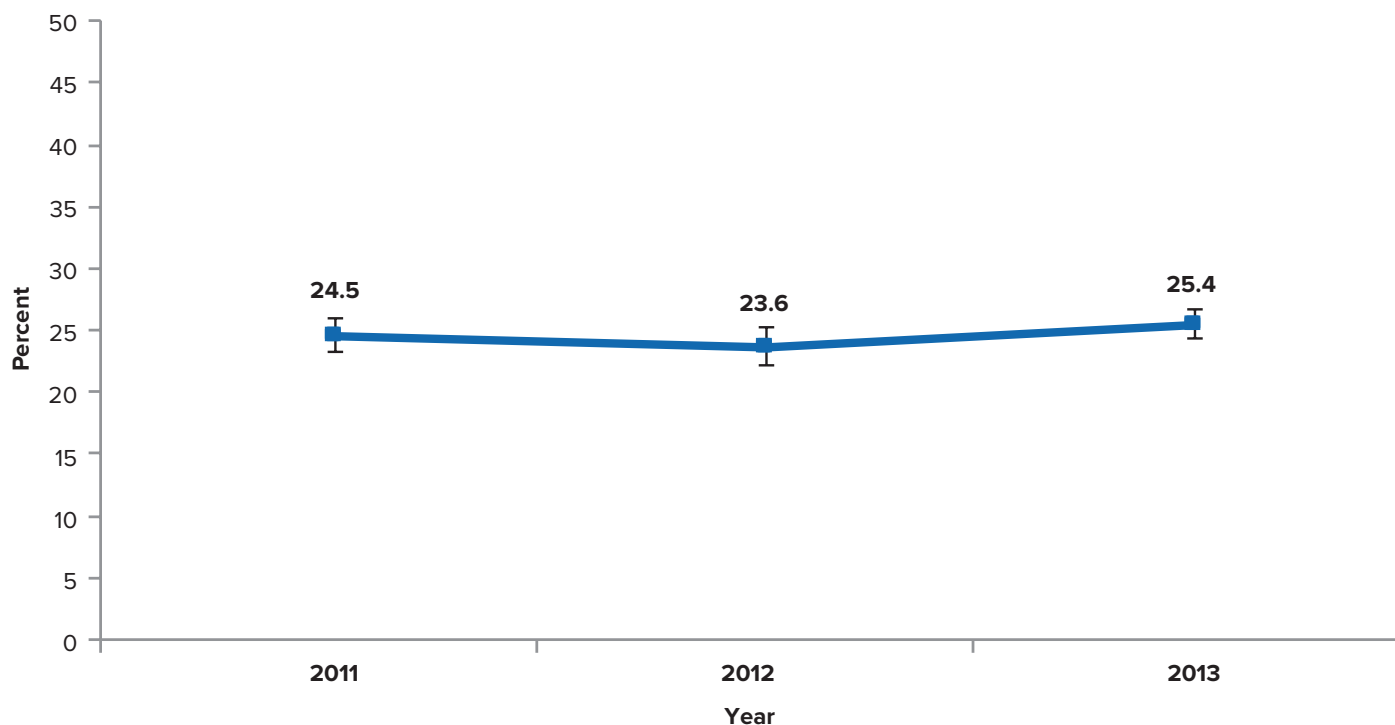
Weight and height responses were used to determine body mass index (BMI), calculated as weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters. Respondents were classified as overweight if their BMI was equal to or greater than 25.0, but less than 30.0. They were classified as obese if their BMI was 30.0 or greater.

Figure 1. Obesity among US and New York State adults, BRFSS 2013



*Median percent; includes data from all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Figure 2. Prevalence of obesity among New York State adults, by BRFSS survey year



Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Overweight and obesity^a among New York State adults, 2013 BRFSS

	Neither overweight nor obese		Overweight ^b		Obese ^c	
	% ^d	95% CI ^d	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
New York State (NYS) [n=6,060]	38.7	37.3-40.1	35.9	34.5-37.3	25.4	24.2-26.6
Sex						
Male	31.8	29.8-33.9	43.5	41.1-45.7	24.7	22.9-26.5
Female	45.4	43.4-47.3	28.6	26.9-30.3	26.1	24.4-27.8
Age (years)						
18-24	59.6	54.6-64.5	29.3	25.0-34.0	11.1	8.4-14.5
25-34	46.2	42.6-49.9	31.3	27.9-34.9	22.5	19.5-25.8
35-44	36.4	32.7-40.2	35.6	31.9-39.4	28.1	24.9-31.6
45-54	30.8	28.0-33.8	38.8	35.7-42.1	30.4	27.5-33.4
55-64	28.4	25.8-31.3	40.2	37.2-43.3	31.4	28.4-34.5
65+	35.6	33.1-38.2	38.4	35.9-41.1	25.9	23.6-28.4
Race/ethnicity						
White non-Hispanic	39.8	38.1-41.5	36.2	34.6-37.9	24.0	22.6-25.5
Black non-Hispanic	29.3	25.5-33.4	36.6	32.3-41.0	34.2	30.2-38.4
Hispanic	33.9	30.5-37.5	36.1	32.6-39.7	30.0	26.7-33.6
Other non-Hispanic	55.4	46.7-60.9	32.8	27.9-38.1	11.9	8.8-15.9
Income						
<\$25,000	34.6	31.9-37.4	35.9	34.5-37.3	31.9	29.3-34.6
\$25,000-\$34,999	36.5	32.0-41.3	37.9	33.3-42.7	25.6	21.7-30.0
\$35,000-\$49,999	35.0	31.0-39.3	38.2	34.1-42.5	26.8	23.3-30.6
\$50,000-\$74,999	36.4	32.7-40.3	39.0	35.0-43.1	24.6	21.4-28.1
\$75,000 and greater	41.2	38.6-43.7	37.8	35.3-40.4	21.1	19.0-23.2
Missing ^e	47.9	43.9-52.0	31.4	27.9-35.2	20.7	17.7-24.0
Educational attainment						
Less than high school (HS)	31.4	27.0-36.1	36.0	31.8-40.4	32.7	28.7-36.9
High school or GED	35.4	32.7-38.2	36.4	33.7-39.3	28.2	25.7-30.7
Some post-HS	36.1	33.4-38.8	36.0	33.3-38.8	28.0	25.6-30.5
College graduate	47.8	45.7-50.0	35.1	33.1-37.2	17.1	15.6-18.6
Disability^f						
Yes	30.3	27.5-33.2	31.4	28.6-34.3	38.4	35.4-41.5
No	41.0	39.4-42.6	37.0	35.4-38.6	22.0	20.7-23.3
Region						
New York City (NYC)	42.0	39.8-44.3	34.9	32.8-37.1	23.1	21.1-25.0
NYS exclusive of NYC	36.2	34.4-38.1	36.6	34.8-38.5	27.1	25.6-28.8

a Based on categories of body mass index (BMI), calculated as weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters.

b Overweight, 25.0≤BMI<30.0

c Obese, BMI≥30.0

d % = weighted percentage; CI = confidence interval.

e "Missing" category included because more than 10% of the sample did not report income.

f All respondents who report activity limitations due to physical, mental, or emotional problems OR have health problems that require the use of special equipment.

References

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Program Contributions

New York State Department of Health
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