Since 2000, overweight and obesity have reached epidemic proportions in the United States and in Kansas. Since 1995, the prevalence of obesity among Kansas adults has nearly doubled, and by 2010, approximately two-thirds of the state’s adult population was either overweight or obese. Obesity increases the risk for several chronic diseases, including coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, stroke and osteoarthritis. Such chronic diseases are increasingly burdensome to the health care system due to ongoing medical monitoring, intervention and hospitalization. Researchers have estimated that, in Kansas, $1.327 billion in medical expenditures are attributable to obesity, of which 29 percent is financed by Medicare ($286 million) and Medicaid ($99 million).

Adults

Body mass index (BMI) is an inexpensive, convenient and reliable measure use to estimate body fatness and is a useful measure for estimating obesity at the population-level. BMI is calculated as weight in kilograms divided by height in meters-squared. Categories and associated ranges for BMI among adults are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BMI Category</th>
<th>BMI Range (kg/m²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underweight</td>
<td>Less than 18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Weight</td>
<td>18.5 to 24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overweight</td>
<td>25.0 to 29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obese</td>
<td>30.0 or greater</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In 2012, approximately 66% of Kansas adults 18 years and older were classified as overweight or obese.
  - Approximately 36% of Kansas adults were overweight.
  - Approximately 30% of Kansas adults were obese.
- In 2011, approximately 41% of Kansas adults consumed fruit less than 1 time per day and approximately 22% consumed vegetables less than 1 time per day.
- In 2011, approximately 1 in 6 (17%) Kansas adults met current federal guidelines for aerobic and strengthening physical activity.
Prevalence of overweight and obesity among high school students, Kansas 2010/2011 school year

Neither Overweight Nor Obese (BMI < 85th percentile) 75.9%
Overweight (BMI ≥ 85th but < 95th percentile) 13.9%
Obese (BMI ≥ 95th percentile) 10.2%

Youth

In contrast to adults, BMI is age- and sex-specific for youth and is often referred to as BMI-for-age.* For children and adolescents, BMI is plotted on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) BMI-for-age growth charts for either boys or girls to obtain a percentile ranking. The percentile allows comparison of the child’s BMI to youth of the same sex and age. Categories and associated ranges for BMI percentiles among youth are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BMI Percentile Category</th>
<th>BMI Percentile Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underweight</td>
<td>Less than 5th percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Weight</td>
<td>5th to less than 85th percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overweight</td>
<td>85th to less than 95th percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obese</td>
<td>95th percentile or greater</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High School Students

**Overweight and Obesity**

- According to the 2011 Kansas Youth Risk Behavior Survey, almost 1 in 4 (24%) Kansas high school students in grades 9 through 12 were classified as overweight or obese.
  - Approximately 14% of Kansas high school students were overweight.
  - Approximately 10% of Kansas high school students were obese.

**Unhealthy Dietary Behaviors**

- Almost 3 out of 4 (74%) Kansas high school students ate fruits fewer than 2 times per day during the past 7 days.
- Approximately 88% of Kansas high school students ate vegetables fewer than 3 times per day during the past 7 days.
- Approximately 23% of Kansas high school students drank a can, bottle, or glass of soda or pop (not including diet soda or diet pop) at least one time per day during the past 7 days.
Physical Activity

• Achieved recommended level of activity: Approximately 30% of Kansas high school students were physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day on each of the past 7 days.

• Participated in physical education: About half (51%) of Kansas high school students attended physical education classes one or more days in an average week when they were in school.

• Approximately 26% of Kansas high school students attended physical education classes daily in an average week when they were in school.

Physical Inactivity

• No physical activity: Approximately 12% of Kansas high school students did not participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on any day during the past 7 days.

• Television viewing time: One-quarter (25%) of Kansas high school students watched television 3 or more hours per day on an average school day.

School Environment

The 2012 Kansas School Health Profiles assessed the school environment, indicating that among high schools and middle schools:

• Approximately one-quarter (25%) sell fruits and approximately 18% sell non-fried vegetables from vending machines or at the school store, canteen or snack bar.

• Approximately 24% always or almost always offer fruit or non-fried vegetables at school celebrations when foods and beverages are offered.

• Approximately 62% prohibit advertisements for candy, fast food restaurants or soft drinks in the school building and more than half (56%) prohibit such ads on school grounds including on the outside of the school building, on playing fields or other areas of the campus.

The period of adolescent growth is critical for the development of a healthy body weight because the risk of obesity persisting into adulthood is higher among obese adolescents than it is among younger obese children.
Young Children

*Breastfeeding*

Increasing breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity is a priority strategy in CDC’s efforts to decrease the rate of childhood obesity throughout the United States. According to the 2013 CDC Breastfeeding Report Card, among Kansas infants born in 2010:

- Approximately 73% were ever breastfed.
- Approximately 42% were breastfed for at least 6 months, and approximately 27% were breastfed for at least 12 months.
- Approximately 15% were exclusively breastfed for at least 6 months.

*Overweight and Obesity*

Among low-income Kansas children aged 2 years to less than 5 years*:

- More than 1 in 7 (16%) were overweight.
- Approximately 1 in 8 (13%) were obese.

*BMI data only includes low-income children from the Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System sample and do not represent all children.

References