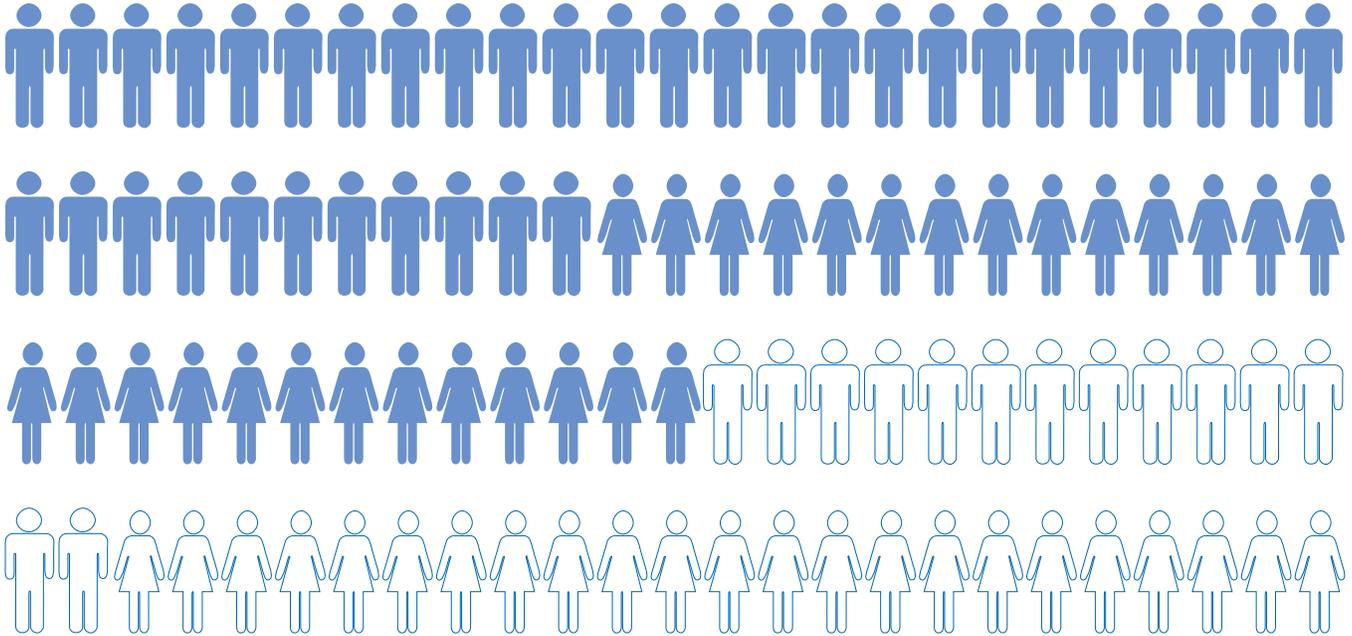


# Facts & Figures

## Healthy Lifestyles and Reducing the Risk of Cancer in Wisconsin



**63%** Percentage of Wisconsin adults who are overweight or obese

<b>25%</b>	Percentage of Wisconsin high school students who are overweight or obese
<b>31%</b>	Percentage of children ages 2-4 (participating in the Wisconsin WIC Program) who are overweight or obese
<b>21%</b>	Percentage of Wisconsin adults who have no physical activity or exercise
<b>50%</b>	Percentage of Wisconsin high school students who are not physically active for 60 minutes a day on five or more days a week

# Healthy Lifestyles and Reducing the Risk of Cancer

Approximately one-third of the cancer deaths that occur in the US each year are associated with poor nutrition and physical inactivity, including excess weight. Aside from not smoking tobacco, eating a healthy diet, being physically active, and maintaining a healthy body weight are the most important choices the majority of people can make to reduce their cancer risk.

Lifestyle factors that influence cancer risk, such as diet, physical activity level, and tobacco use, are modifiable. By changing these aspects of their lifestyle, people may reduce their risk of cancer. Factors that influence the risk of cancer, such as age, sex, or family history, cannot be modified and are classified as nonmodifiable risk factors.

## Recommendations for Individual Choices to Reduce Cancer Risk

### Achieve and maintain a healthy weight throughout life.

Excessive caloric intake combined with inadequate physical activity leads to obesity. Being overweight and obese are clearly associated with an increased risk for developing many cancers. At the same time that evidence connecting excess weight to increased cancer risk has

been accumulating, the rates of overweight and obesity have been increasing.

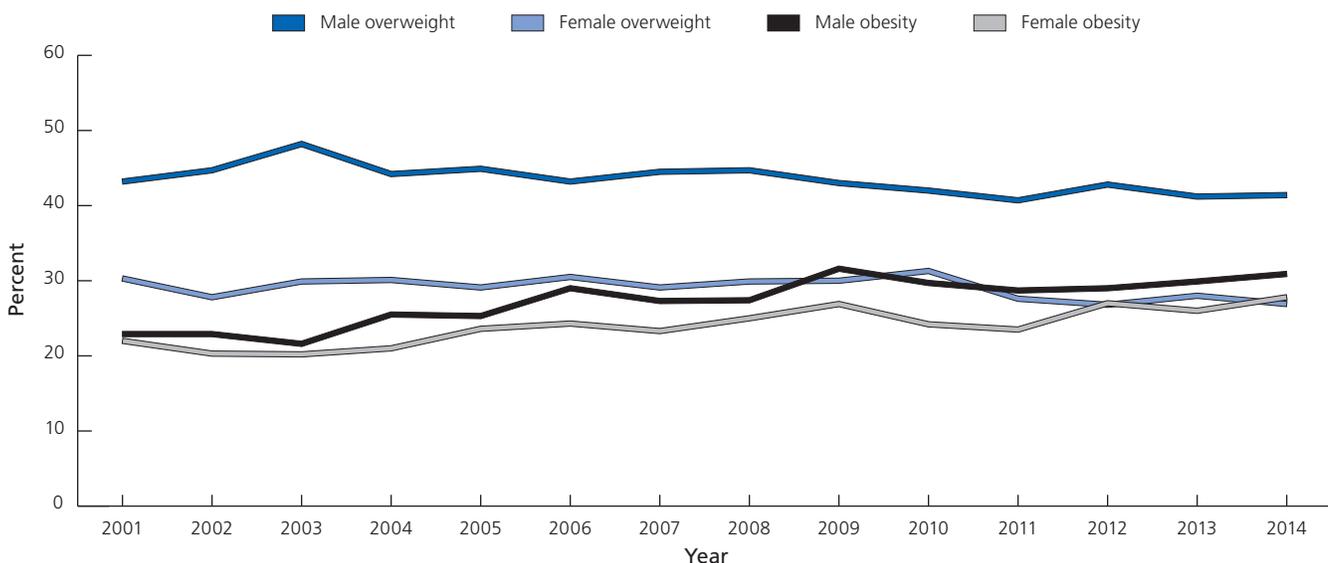
Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in the United States and in Wisconsin. The percentage of overweight and obese adults has continued to increase in Wisconsin over the past decade (Figure 1). Being overweight is defined as a body mass index (BMI) of 25.0-29.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>, and obesity is defined as a BMI equal to or greater than 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup>.

According to the Wisconsin 2014 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 34% of Wisconsin adults are overweight and an additional 29% are obese. The highest percentage of those who are obese are between the ages of 30-44 for males and ages 45-64 for females (Figure 2). The percentage of obesity is highest among:

- Adults ages 45-64 (33%)
- Adults with an annual household income less than \$15,000 (36%)
- Adults whose highest level of education is a high school diploma or GED (33%)
- Non-Hispanic African American women (45%) compared to non-Hispanic white women (27%)

Current behaviors such as eating meals away from home, reduced physical activity, and the increased availability of electronic entertainment contribute to lifestyles highly conducive to weight gain. If the environments where

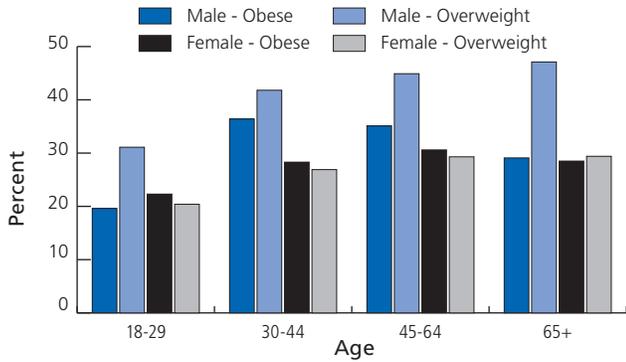
Figure 1. Trends in Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity by Sex in Wisconsin, 2001-2014



Notes: Obesity is defined as Body Mass Index 30.0 or greater. Overweight is defined as Body Mass Index 25.0-29.9.

Source: Wisconsin Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2001-2014, Office of Health Informatics, Division of Public Health, Department of Health Services.

**Figure 2. Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity by Age in Wisconsin, 2014**



Obesity is defined as body mass index of 30.0 or greater. Overweight is defined as body mass index of 25.0-29.9.

**Source:** Wisconsin Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2014, Office of Health Informatics, Division of Public Health, Department of Health Services.

people live, work, go to school, and enjoy leisure time are not oriented to improve their eating and activity habits, efforts to decrease obesity will have limited success. Since excessive weight gain that begins during childhood often continues into adulthood, obesity prevention for children and adolescents can create healthy diet and physical activity habits that will set the foundation for their behaviors as adults.

### Consume a healthy diet, with an emphasis on plant sources.

Individuals should choose food and beverages in amounts that will help achieve and maintain a healthy weight. Read food labels to become more aware of portion sizes and calories consumed. Eat at least 2½ cups of vegetables and fruits each day. Choose brown rice and whole-grain breads, pasta, and cereals instead of white rice and breads, cereals, and pasta made from refined grains. It's also important to limit consumption of processed and red meats, choosing fish, poultry, or beans as an alternative.

### Adopt a physically active lifestyle.

Many Wisconsin adults live relatively inactive lifestyles. Regular physical activity can lower cancer risk by maintaining a healthy weight, since obesity is a risk factor for many types of cancer. Adults should engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity each week, or an equivalent combination, preferably spread throughout the week. Doing any intentional physical activity above usual activities, no matter what one's level of activity, can have many health benefits.

Children and teens also need to have a physically active lifestyle. Youth should get at least 1 hour of moderate or vigorous activity each day, with vigorous activity at least three days a week.

From an extensive array of activities (whether gardening, dancing, pushing a stroller, playing sports, or walking), everyone should engage in physical activities that are fun, easy, practical, and appropriate in relation to any health conditions.

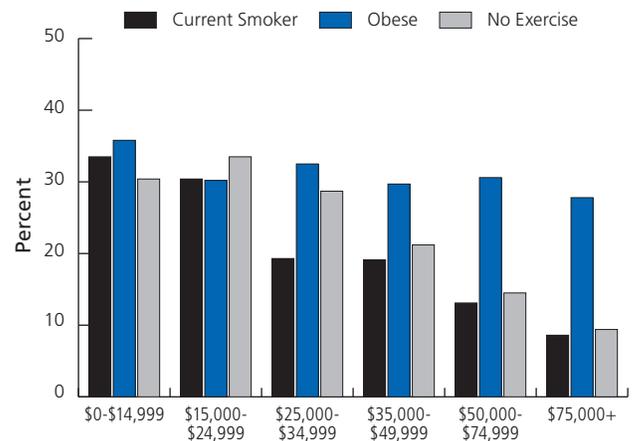
In 2014, according to the Wisconsin 2014 BRFSS, those least likely to exercise were reported by the following groups of adults in the state:

- Adults ages 65 and older (30%)
- Adults with an annual household income \$15,000-\$24,999 (34%)
- Adults with less than high school education (36%)

### Limit alcohol consumption, if you drink at all.

Alcohol consumption increases the risk of cancers of the mouth, pharynx, larynx, esophagus, liver, female breast, colon, and rectum. For each of these cancers, risk increases substantially with the intake of more than two drinks per day. The combination of alcohol and tobacco significantly multiplies the risk for cancers of the mouth, larynx, and esophagus more than either alcohol or tobacco use alone. People who drink alcohol should limit their intake to no more than two drinks per day for men and one drink a day for women.

**Figure 3. Prevalence of Smoking, Obesity, and Sedentary Lifestyle by Income in Wisconsin, 2014**



Notes: Obesity is defined as body mass index of 30.0 or greater.

**Source:** Wisconsin Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2014, Office of Health Informatics, Division of Public Health, Department of Health Services.

## Body weight and cancer risk

### Being overweight or obese is clearly linked with an increased risk of several types of cancer:

- Breast (among women who have gone through menopause)
- Colon and rectum
- Endometrium (lining of the uterus)
- Esophagus
- Kidney
- Pancreas

### Being overweight or obese also likely raises the risk of other cancers:

- Gallbladder
- Liver
- Non-Hodgkin lymphoma
- Multiple myeloma
- Cervix
- Ovary
- Aggressive forms of prostate cancer



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