

Fact Sheet: American **Body Weight** Distribution

In 1998, a government panel of obesity experts—largely composed of weight-loss industry funded researchers—substantially lowered the federal government’s standard for measuring the prevalence of “overweight” Americans. The following day 35 million Americans woke up officially fat. The national data below from the CDC’s Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System provide a state-by-state breakdown of how the redefined standard more than doubled the prevalence of overweight Americans.

State	Current Overweight Classification			
	Normal and Underweight	Percentage of Americans arbitrarily included in "Overweight" category in 2004	Percentage of Americans originally "Overweight"	Obese
	(0 - 24.9)	(25 - 27.2 or .7)	(27.3 or .8 - 29.9)	(30.0+)
Alabama	35.30%	21.80%	14.00%	28.90%
Alaska	37.50%	22.20%	16.70%	23.70%
Arizona	43.90%	22.50%	12.40%	21.20%
Arkansas	37.50%	21.90%	14.50%	26.10%
California	39.80%	22.40%	15.60%	22.20%
Colorado	47.00%	23.10%	13.10%	16.80%
Connecticut	43.90%	21.80%	14.60%	19.70%
Delaware	40.30%	23.50%	15.20%	21.10%
Florida	40.20%	22.20%	14.70%	22.90%
Georgia	40.50%	20.10%	14.70%	24.70%
Idaho	41.80%	22.50%	14.90%	20.80%
Illinois	40.50%	20.60%	15.90%	23.00%
Indiana	37.80%	21.50%	15.20%	25.50%
Iowa	39.10%	21.30%	16.10%	23.50%
Kansas	39.30%	22.40%	15.10%	23.20%
Kentucky	36.60%	22.10%	15.50%	25.80%
Louisiana	37.40%	20.40%	15.30%	27.00%
Maine	39.10%	22.40%	15.20%	23.40%
Maryland	41.50%	19.80%	14.80%	23.90%
Massachusetts	45.50%	21.70%	14.40%	18.40%
Michigan	39.10%	20.80%	14.70%	25.40%
Minnesota	39.70%	22.70%	14.90%	22.60%
Mississippi	34.40%	20.50%	15.60%	29.50%
Missouri	38.20%	22.80%	14.00%	24.90%
Montana	43.00%	23.00%	14.30%	19.70%
Nebraska	38.20%	22.50%	16.10%	23.20%
Nevada	40.00%	21.90%	17.00%	21.10%
New Hampshire	42.30%	21.50%	14.60%	21.60%
New Jersey	40.30%	22.50%	15.20%	21.90%
New Mexico	42.10%	20.50%	15.90%	21.50%
New York	42.20%	20.50%	15.10%	22.10%
North Carolina	38.70%	21.70%	15.40%	24.20%
North Dakota	37.10%	22.60%	15.70%	24.60%
Ohio	38.90%	20.70%	15.10%	25.30%
Oklahoma	39.00%	20.70%	15.40%	24.90%
Oregon	41.00%	22.90%	14.90%	21.20%
Pennsylvania	38.90%	21.30%	15.50%	24.30%
Rhode Island	44.00%	22.40%	14.70%	19.00%
South Carolina	38.70%	20.60%	15.60%	25.10%
South Dakota	38.20%	22.50%	15.40%	23.80%
Tennessee	35.90%	21.10%	15.80%	27.20%
Texas	37.10%	21.50%	15.60%	25.80%
Utah	43.60%	21.90%	14.20%	20.40%
Vermont	45.70%	22.20%	13.50%	18.70%
Virginia	40.00%	22.20%	14.70%	23.10%
Washington	41.60%	21.60%	14.70%	22.20%
West Virginia	35.90%	21.40%	15.00%	27.60%
Wisconsin	39.50%	22.80%	14.50%	23.20%
Wyoming	42.20%	21.20%	15.70%	20.80%
National	39.80%	21.60%	15.10%	23.50%

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Table 2: State-by-state population estimates (18+ years old) of body weight distribution by overweight and obese categories.

State	Current Overweight Classification			
	Normal and Underweight	Number of Americans arbitrarily included in "Overweight" category in 2004	Number of Americans originally "Overweight"	Obese
	(0 - 24.9)	(25 - 27.2 or .7)	(27.3 or .8 - 29.9)	(30.0+)
Alabama	1,161,486	715,290	461,647	948,729
Alaska	165,044	97,627	73,593	104,290
Arizona	1,740,271	891,538	491,061	838,142
Arkansas	747,019	436,110	288,711	519,534
California	9,924,166	5,578,253	3,891,342	5,547,720
Colorado	1,545,250	760,703	429,420	550,706
Connecticut	1,086,958	541,012	362,931	487,561
Delaware	244,999	142,698	92,351	128,258
Florida	5,081,833	2,799,835	1,859,187	2,888,104
Georgia	2,524,666	1,250,518	912,471	1,540,191
Idaho	405,632	217,954	145,044	202,057
Illinois	3,637,524	1,853,283	1,431,219	2,066,837
Indiana	1,681,208	956,177	674,059	1,134,712
Iowa	848,427	462,127	348,550	510,531
Kansas	766,318	437,412	294,028	451,519
Kentucky	1,119,554	675,169	475,496	791,235
Louisiana	1,182,854	645,991	483,585	853,408
Maine	390,188	223,523	151,464	233,414
Maryland	1,645,279	787,694	587,061	948,663
Massachusetts	2,165,503	1,033,577	685,227	873,300
Michigan	2,861,902	1,522,376	1,072,407	1,859,137
Minnesota	1,478,126	846,513	555,845	842,194
Mississippi	706,304	420,590	319,682	604,119
Missouri	1,609,672	958,680	590,823	1,049,186
Montana	290,711	155,672	96,923	133,415
Nebraska	476,796	280,942	200,350	288,842
Nevada	651,280	355,781	276,393	342,939
New Hampshire	399,864	203,241	138,481	203,845
New Jersey	2,491,247	1,390,159	941,215	1,352,791
New Mexico	564,392	274,643	213,372	287,535
New York	5,880,973	2,861,154	2,109,321	3,073,798
North Carolina	2,334,465	1,313,484	928,841	1,462,511
North Dakota	173,158	105,301	73,431	114,722
Ohio	3,195,525	1,696,261	1,242,712	2,074,211
Oklahoma	988,446	524,256	390,870	629,890
Oregon	1,060,261	591,229	385,705	548,333
Pennsylvania	3,561,833	1,954,979	1,420,505	2,223,287
Rhode Island	352,381	179,425	117,582	152,320
South Carolina	1,201,353	638,082	484,094	778,324
South Dakota	211,799	124,823	85,218	131,995
Tennessee	1,522,361	896,258	672,869	1,154,730
Texas	5,608,148	3,258,055	2,366,591	3,902,825
Utah	686,665	345,049	223,107	320,851
Vermont	213,022	103,367	62,822	87,111
Virginia	2,156,027	1,194,657	790,839	1,243,955
Washington	1,833,021	950,369	645,977	977,212
West Virginia	497,645	296,573	207,578	382,751
Wisconsin	1,562,802	902,061	574,012	919,094
Wyoming	155,168	78,031	57,677	76,386
National	83,991,222	45,665,638	31,861,822	49,602,933