US Obesity Prevalence Surged Over the Past Decade

At least 35% of adults in 22 US states are now living with obesity, according to 2022 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In 3 of those states—Louisiana, Oklahoma, and West Virginia—at least 40% of adults have obesity. By comparison, 19 states had an adult obesity prevalence at or above 35% in 2019 and none did a decade ago, the CDC reported.

The report also illustrated racial and ethnic disparities in obesity. In the majority of states with enough data, 35% or more of American Indian or Alaska Native, Black, and Hispanic adults had obesity. There were fewer states in which more than one-third of White adults had obesity, and no states in which more than one-third of Asian adults had the condition, which is defined by having a body mass index of 30 or above.

“Our updated maps send a clear message that additional support for obesity prevention and treatment is an urgent priority,” Karen Hacker, MD, MPH, director of the CDC’s National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, said in a statement. Hacker noted that ensuring that people have access to health care, affordable and nutritional food, and safe places to exercise are crucial for addressing the rising numbers. ~ Emily Harris

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Note: Source references are available through embedded hyperlinks in the article text online.