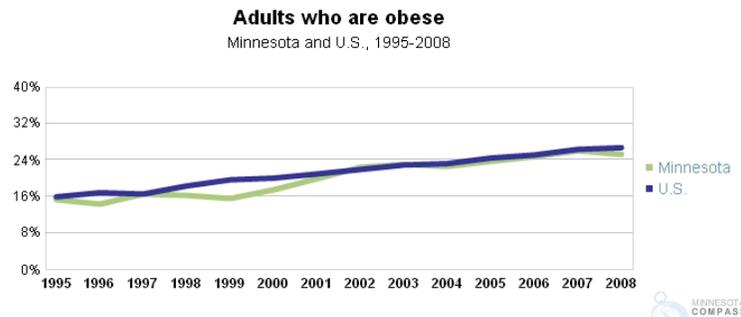


# Overview of Obesity in Minnesota

“Obesity” has become a household word across America as more attention is paid to alarming trends and the resulting personal and social costs.

## The Data

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 37.6% of Minnesotans are considered overweight and 25.2% obese. It is predicted that in 2020, only 23% of Minnesotans will be at a healthy weight.
- Obesity is a risk factor for a number of serious conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and breast cancer.
- According to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, if current trends continue, Minnesota’s direct health care costs will be \$3.7 billion dollars *higher* in 2020 than they were in 2005.



## The Struggle

- Our society is increasingly one that makes the *unhealthy* choice the easy choice. We live in a fast-paced, time-crunched world where unhealthy food is cheap and available at every turn, and finding time for an active lifestyle is increasingly challenging.
- Airwaves tout supposedly easy fixes to the problem, but experts and laypeople alike realize that achieving a healthy weight requires a series of both individual and systemic changes.
- Obesity is especially challenging in Minnesota, as many Minnesotans underestimate how extensive their weight problem is, with many people considering themselves overweight instead of obese, or average instead of overweight.
- Childhood obesity is a growing health concern. Providing support to families to maintain healthier lifestyles and instill lifelong healthy habits in children is a critical investment with significant long-term dividends.
- Instead of searching for the illusive silver bullet, we must seek out innovative ideas that can tackle the problem in our own communities.

**Beginning on March 18, go to [www.MNIdeaOpen.org](http://www.MNIdeaOpen.org) for a short video and additional resources and information about the issue of obesity.**

*Information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota’s Prevention Minnesota, and Minnesota Compass.*