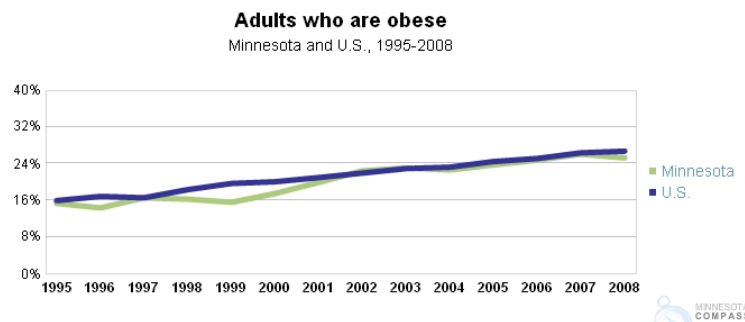


Overview of Obesity in Minnesota

“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 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.