

OBESITY FACT SHEET

HEALTHY DELAWAREANS
WITH DISABILITIES

RESEARCH

Individuals with disabilities are more likely to be classified as overweight or obese. The economic, physical and mental health consequences of obesity are intensified for individuals with disabilities.

- The prevalence of overweight and obese classifications among children with disabilities is three and six times greater, respectively, than in children without disabilities.^{1,2,3}
- Secondary health conditions including high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabetes, depression, fatigue, liver or gallbladder problems, low self-esteem, preoccupation with weight, early maturation and pressure sores are more likely to occur in obese adolescents with disabilities compared with healthy weight adolescents.³
- The average body mass index (BMI) among adults who are obese and have a disability is significantly higher than the average BMI for those who are obese and do not have a disability.⁴
- The prevalence of morbid obesity is 4 times higher among adults with disabilities than among adults without disabilities.⁵
- Obesity costs people with disabilities three times more than people without disabilities.⁶
- Prescription drug expenditures for obese people with disabilities were three times as high and outpatient expenditures were 74% higher than people without disabilities.⁶

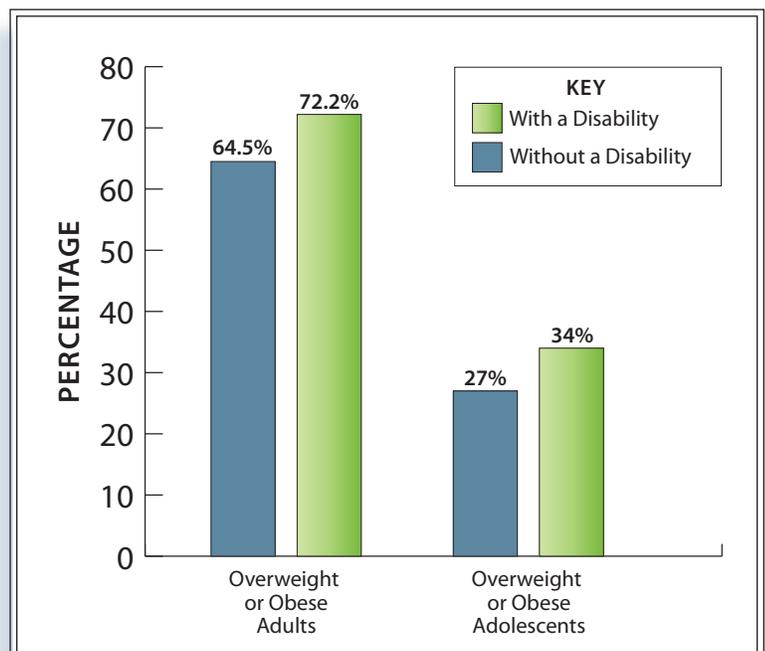
IN DELAWARE

72.2% of adults with a disability reported being overweight or obese, compared to **64.5%** of adults without a disability.⁷

Of the Delawareans with disabilities, **39.7%** are obese and **32.5%** are overweight.⁷

34% of adolescents with a disability reported being overweight or obese, compared to **27%** of adolescents without a disability.⁷

Of the adolescents with disabilities, **16%** are obese and **18%** are overweight.⁷



COMMUNITY VOICE

The Healthy Delawareans with Disabilities Needs Assessment asked individuals with disabilities and their caregivers to speak out about barriers they face and improvements they would like to see in accessing healthy weight programs.

"I find it difficult to visit my doctors (as a person with a physical disability) and to experience the dilemma that the physicians' offices are not equipped to allow me to be weighed and measured for height and weight."

"Better eating health guides for those that may not be able to exercise at all. Procedures to maintain good circulation for those that cannot walk or stand."

"Individuals who work in these areas need to understand how to adapt recreational activities for individuals with disabilities. The classes need to be more prevalent. One class a week during the day does not work for a group that works. Adaptations or accommodations should be available in regular classes such as transportation or getting into or out of a pool."

COMMUNITY ASSETS

Many community and state-based programs exist targeting prevention of obesity as well as weight loss among those who already overweight and/or obese. These programs represent available assets within Delaware. These agencies responded to a recent survey about public health resources in Delaware. This is not intended to be a complete listing.

Delaware WIC Program

Delaware YMCA

University of Delaware
Cooperative Extension

Sussex County Health
Promotion Coalition

Boys and Girls Clubs of
Delaware

Beebe Medical Center
Population Health
Outreach

Bayhealth Medical Center
(Outpatient Dietitian)

Nemours Health and
Prevention Services

Delaware State University-
Student Health Services

Senior Centers (Exercise
Classes/Screenings)

School-Based Health
Centers

Healthy Foods for
Healthy Kids

Physical Activity Nutrition
and Obesity Prevention
Program (PANO)

University of Delaware
Healthy HENS

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