

# 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%	<b>21.80%</b>	14.00%	28.90%
Alaska	37.50%	<b>22.20%</b>	16.70%	23.70%
Arizona	43.90%	<b>22.50%</b>	12.40%	21.20%
Arkansas	37.50%	<b>21.90%</b>	14.50%	26.10%
California	39.80%	<b>22.40%</b>	15.60%	22.20%
Colorado	47.00%	<b>23.10%</b>	13.10%	16.80%
Connecticut	43.90%	<b>21.80%</b>	14.60%	19.70%
Delaware	40.30%	<b>23.50%</b>	15.20%	21.10%
Florida	40.20%	<b>22.20%</b>	14.70%	22.90%
Georgia	40.50%	<b>20.10%</b>	14.70%	24.70%
Idaho	41.80%	<b>22.50%</b>	14.90%	20.80%
Illinois	40.50%	<b>20.60%</b>	15.90%	23.00%
Indiana	37.80%	<b>21.50%</b>	15.20%	25.50%
Iowa	39.10%	<b>21.30%</b>	16.10%	23.50%
Kansas	39.30%	<b>22.40%</b>	15.10%	23.20%
Kentucky	36.60%	<b>22.10%</b>	15.50%	25.80%
Louisiana	37.40%	<b>20.40%</b>	15.30%	27.00%
Maine	39.10%	<b>22.40%</b>	15.20%	23.40%
Maryland	41.50%	<b>19.80%</b>	14.80%	23.90%
Massachusetts	45.50%	<b>21.70%</b>	14.40%	18.40%
Michigan	39.10%	<b>20.80%</b>	14.70%	25.40%
Minnesota	39.70%	<b>22.70%</b>	14.90%	22.60%
Mississippi	34.40%	<b>20.50%</b>	15.60%	29.50%
Missouri	38.20%	<b>22.80%</b>	14.00%	24.90%
Montana	43.00%	<b>23.00%</b>	14.30%	19.70%
Nebraska	38.20%	<b>22.50%</b>	16.10%	23.20%
Nevada	40.00%	<b>21.90%</b>	17.00%	21.10%
New Hampshire	42.30%	<b>21.50%</b>	14.60%	21.60%
New Jersey	40.30%	<b>22.50%</b>	15.20%	21.90%
New Mexico	42.10%	<b>20.50%</b>	15.90%	21.50%
New York	42.20%	<b>20.50%</b>	15.10%	22.10%
North Carolina	38.70%	<b>21.70%</b>	15.40%	24.20%
North Dakota	37.10%	<b>22.60%</b>	15.70%	24.60%
Ohio	38.90%	<b>20.70%</b>	15.10%	25.30%
Oklahoma	39.00%	<b>20.70%</b>	15.40%	24.90%
Oregon	41.00%	<b>22.90%</b>	14.90%	21.20%
Pennsylvania	38.90%	<b>21.30%</b>	15.50%	24.30%
Rhode Island	44.00%	<b>22.40%</b>	14.70%	19.00%
South Carolina	38.70%	<b>20.60%</b>	15.60%	25.10%
South Dakota	38.20%	<b>22.50%</b>	15.40%	23.80%
Tennessee	35.90%	<b>21.10%</b>	15.80%	27.20%
Texas	37.10%	<b>21.50%</b>	15.60%	25.80%
Utah	43.60%	<b>21.90%</b>	14.20%	20.40%
Vermont	45.70%	<b>22.20%</b>	13.50%	18.70%
Virginia	40.00%	<b>22.20%</b>	14.70%	23.10%
Washington	41.60%	<b>21.60%</b>	14.70%	22.20%
West Virginia	35.90%	<b>21.40%</b>	15.00%	27.60%
Wisconsin	39.50%	<b>22.80%</b>	14.50%	23.20%
Wyoming	42.20%	<b>21.20%</b>	15.70%	20.80%
National	39.80%	<b>21.60%</b>	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	<b>715,290</b>	461,647	948,729
Alaska	165,044	<b>97,627</b>	73,593	104,290
Arizona	1,740,271	<b>891,538</b>	491,061	838,142
Arkansas	747,019	<b>436,110</b>	288,711	519,534
California	9,924,166	<b>5,578,253</b>	3,891,342	5,547,720
Colorado	1,545,250	<b>760,703</b>	429,420	550,706
Connecticut	1,086,958	<b>541,012</b>	362,931	487,561
Delaware	244,999	<b>142,698</b>	92,351	128,258
Florida	5,081,833	<b>2,799,835</b>	1,859,187	2,888,104
Georgia	2,524,666	<b>1,250,518</b>	912,471	1,540,191
Idaho	405,632	<b>217,954</b>	145,044	202,057
Illinois	3,637,524	<b>1,853,283</b>	1,431,219	2,066,837
Indiana	1,681,208	<b>956,177</b>	674,059	1,134,712
Iowa	848,427	<b>462,127</b>	348,550	510,531
Kansas	766,318	<b>437,412</b>	294,028	451,519
Kentucky	1,119,554	<b>675,169</b>	475,496	791,235
Louisiana	1,182,854	<b>645,991</b>	483,585	853,408
Maine	390,188	<b>223,523</b>	151,464	233,414
Maryland	1,645,279	<b>787,694</b>	587,061	948,663
Massachusetts	2,165,503	<b>1,033,577</b>	685,227	873,300
Michigan	2,861,902	<b>1,522,376</b>	1,072,407	1,859,137
Minnesota	1,478,126	<b>846,513</b>	555,845	842,194
Mississippi	706,304	<b>420,590</b>	319,682	604,119
Missouri	1,609,672	<b>958,680</b>	590,823	1,049,186
Montana	290,711	<b>155,672</b>	96,923	133,415
Nebraska	476,796	<b>280,942</b>	200,350	288,842
Nevada	651,280	<b>355,781</b>	276,393	342,939
New Hampshire	399,864	<b>203,241</b>	138,481	203,845
New Jersey	2,491,247	<b>1,390,159</b>	941,215	1,352,791
New Mexico	564,392	<b>274,643</b>	213,372	287,535
New York	5,880,973	<b>2,861,154</b>	2,109,321	3,073,798
North Carolina	2,334,465	<b>1,313,484</b>	928,841	1,462,511
North Dakota	173,158	<b>105,301</b>	73,431	114,722
Ohio	3,195,525	<b>1,696,261</b>	1,242,712	2,074,211
Oklahoma	988,446	<b>524,256</b>	390,870	629,890
Oregon	1,060,261	<b>591,229</b>	385,705	548,333
Pennsylvania	3,561,833	<b>1,954,979</b>	1,420,505	2,223,287
Rhode Island	352,381	<b>179,425</b>	117,582	152,320
South Carolina	1,201,353	<b>638,082</b>	484,094	778,324
South Dakota	211,799	<b>124,823</b>	85,218	131,995
Tennessee	1,522,361	<b>896,258</b>	672,869	1,154,730
Texas	5,608,148	<b>3,258,055</b>	2,366,591	3,902,825
Utah	686,665	<b>345,049</b>	223,107	320,851
Vermont	213,022	<b>103,367</b>	62,822	87,111
Virginia	2,156,027	<b>1,194,657</b>	790,839	1,243,955
Washington	1,833,021	<b>950,369</b>	645,977	977,212
West Virginia	497,645	<b>296,573</b>	207,578	382,751
Wisconsin	1,562,802	<b>902,061</b>	574,012	919,094
Wyoming	155,168	<b>78,031</b>	57,677	76,386
<b>National</b>	<b>83,991,222</b>	<b>45,665,638</b>	<b>31,861,822</b>	<b>49,602,933</b>