

# 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%  |

# Fact Sheet: American **Body Weight** Distribution

**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> |