

OBESITY: THE COST OF DOING NOTHING

ADULT OBESITY

- In 2009, there were 2.4 million more obese adults in America than in 2007. 63.2 percent of U.S. adults were obese or overweight in 2009.
- In 2009, the state achieved the unhealthy distinction of having **two-thirds (66.7 percent) of all adult Texans overweight or obese, with 29.5 percent obese** and 37.2 percent overweight. Only 33.1 percent of adult Texans were of a normal weight.
- The prevalence of obese Texas adults more than doubled in the last two decades, from 12.3 percent in 1990 to 29.5 percent in 2009.¹

CHILDHOOD OBESITY

- From 1980 to now, the rate of obesity among U.S. children and adolescents tripled.
- **20.4 percent** of Texas children aged 10 to 17 are obese, compared to 16.4 percent of U.S. children.
- Texas tied with Arkansas in 2007 for seventh place among states in its share of children who are obese.
- Obese kids have an 80 percent chance of staying obese their entire lives.²



HEALTH COSTS OF OBESITY AND COSTS TO EMPLOYERS

- U.S. health care costs due to obesity doubled in less than a decade and account for 9.1 percent of annual health costs, or \$147 billion.
- Average health care spending for obese individuals was \$1,429 or 41.5 percent higher than that of normal-weight persons in 2006.
- Obesity accounts for 12.9 percent of private insurer costs.
- Obesity is now the leading cause of premature heart attacks.
- Individuals with a BMI greater than 35 represent 37 percent of the population but account for 61 percent of the costs due to excess weight.
- **Obesity cost Texas businesses \$9.5 billion in 2009.**³
- A recent study of IBM's self-insured program showed 2008 average per capita health insurance claims for obese children were \$2,907, compared to \$1,640 for non-obese children. Children with type 2 diabetes had average claims of \$10,789. The study found that hospitalization rates for obese children with chronic health conditions were up to 2.9 times higher than for non-obese children with no chronic conditions.⁴
- Obesity could cost Texas businesses **\$32.5 billion annually** by 2030, if current trends in obesity and health care costs continue.
- Wellspring Camps, a weight loss camp with several locations in the U.S., estimates that an obese 18-year old that remains obese throughout adulthood can expect to spend approximately \$550,000 in obesity related health costs during his or her lifetime.⁵

HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY

Hospitals are facing added costs to be able to accommodate and treat larger patients. Examples:

- stretchers, wheelchairs, blood pressure cuffs, hospital gowns, beds, diagnostic equipment such as MRI machines, and doorways all can be too small to accommodate obese patients.
- more medical personnel are needed to move and assist patients; also more personnel needed for surgeries.
- medical personnel can find it difficult to locate airways to insert a breathing tube.
- multiple surgeries can be needed for procedures such as wound closure that could be done all at once for a non-obese person.⁶

TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY

- The U.S. airline industry consumes 350 million more gallons of fuel at an extra cost of \$275 million annually due to an increase in the average weight of passengers.⁷
- One study found that passenger weight gain accounted for an additional one billion gallons of fuel consumed per year between 1960 and 2002.⁸

Obesity could cost Texas businesses **\$32.5 billion** annually by 2030, if current trends in obesity and health care costs continue.

IMPACT ON VARIOUS INDUSTRIES

Manufacturers are adjusting and refitting the size of their products due to a growing overweight population. Some affected industries include:

- clothing for children and adults.
- furniture for homes, schools and offices.
- public seating for sports arenas, theaters, classrooms, churches, and restaurants.
- bathroom fixtures such as toilet seats, showers, and bathtubs.
- cemetery supplies including caskets, hearses and plots.

