



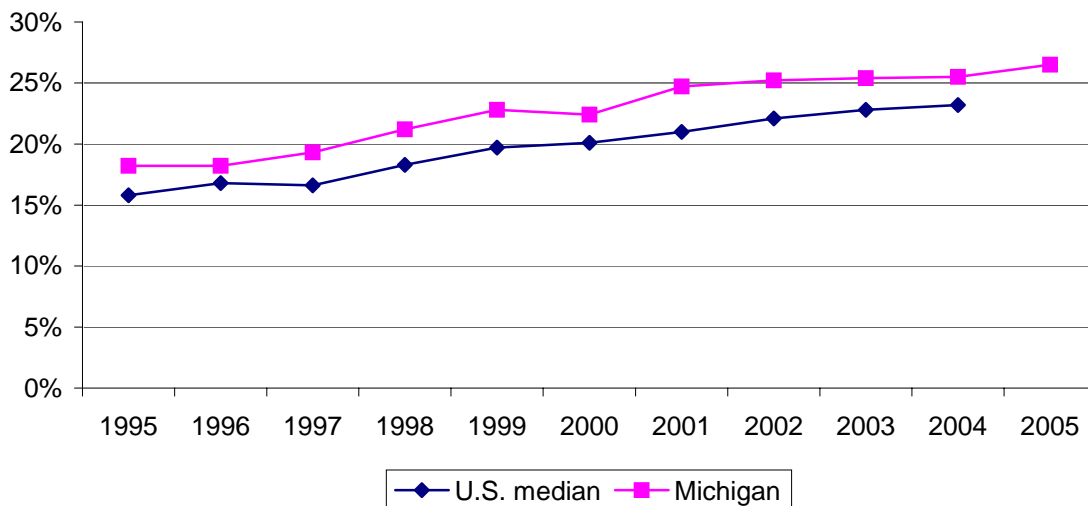
Topic: Risky Health Behaviors

4. Adult Obesity

Adult obesity is defined by a BMI of 30 or greater. Eighty percent of Michigan adults report that they are actively trying to either lose weight or maintain their weight. Higher weights are associated with chronic disease. Obesity increases the risks for long-term health problems such as osteoporosis, heart disease, stroke and cancer among people at all weights. Some conditions can be improved without weight loss if physical activity is increased and eating patterns are improved.

How are we doing?

**Obesity Trends 1995 - 2005
Michigan and the United States**



An estimated 26.5% of Michigan adults were obese in 2005, according to the BRFSS survey. Obesity has increased by nearly 50% in Michigan over the past decade, from 18.2% in 1995 to 26.5% in 2005.

How does Michigan compare with the U.S.?

Michigan consistently has higher obesity rates than the U.S. median. In 2005, Michigan had the fifteenth highest obesity rates among all states.

How are different populations affected?

Adults aged 45 to 64 were the most likely to be obese (one in three). Substantially lower rates were found in younger adults (14% of 18-24 year olds) and in adults age 75+ (17%). As of 2002, the percentage of obesity among older adults age 65 and older (25.2%) was higher in Michigan than in any other state.

The 2005 Michigan BRFSS obesity estimates by race and gender show serious health disparities, with 38.7% of adult Black females obese, compared to 26.5% of adults generally. White females and White males have similar rates, 24.2% vs. 26.6%; however, Black females have a higher percentage than Black males, 38.7% vs. 32.9%.



What is the Department of Community Health doing to improve this indicator?

The obesity prevention program of the Michigan Department of Community Health focuses limited governmental resources on two major causes of obesity – lack of physical activity and poor food choices.

Funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention permitted the development, in 2005, of a five-year plan to address the epidemic of obesity. This plan includes strategies for the MDCH and partner agencies to create environments that support healthy behaviors in communities, schools, healthcare systems, faith-based organizations, and worksites. The Department awards grants to local health departments to conduct assessments and create plans for healthier community environments in their jurisdictions, and works with other partners to support local efforts to improve access to healthy foods and physical activity.

Lower-income Michigan pregnant and postpartum women receive nutrition services locally under the WIC Program: Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. These services include counseling and education regarding diet, weight management, optimal prenatal weight gain, and breastfeeding promotion and support.

The MDCH works with faith-based organizations to promote fruit and vegetable consumption and healthier diets, and has a healthy weight pilot project based on the “Sisters Together” program in the Detroit area.

The Michigan Steps Up website provides a variety of tools for individual use in creating a plan for losing weight and adopting a healthier lifestyle at: <http://www.michigan.gov/surgeongeneral/>.