RESULTS AMERICA

Rates of Obesity

Colorado has the lowest obesity rate; Louisiana the highest

HIGHLIGHTS

Colorado, Massachusetts, and Hawaii are the least obese states in the Union.

Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas are the most obese states in the US.

There is a correlation between the states with high food insecurity and high rates of obesity.

Results America, dedicated to sharing useful information that states can use to promote their well being, has taken a look at the rate of obesity in 2012. Without question obesity is a national epidemic that requires our attention and understanding to reduce climbing rates.

The data contained in this white paper comes from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) through a self-reported Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. The CDC defines obesity as an individual, possessing a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30.0 or greater. As a nation, the rate of obesity is creeping towards steeper numbers.

Obesity is driven by a state's particular culture and the nutritional value of its available food. Besides popular culture and a lack of physical education, our nation provides an environment where inexpensive processed food is more readily available. So, states have to contend with a surplus of processed food on one hand and a deficit of physical activity on the other. In addition, we are witnessing a strong correlation between poverty and obesity rates among the states. This is a

Rank	State	Percent of Obese Population
1	Colorado	20.5
2	Massachusetts	22.9
3	Hawaii	23.6
4	New York	23.6
5	Vermont	23.7
6	Montana	24.3
7	Utah	24.3
8	New Jersey	24.6
9	Wyoming	24.6
10	California	25.0

reverse from previous historical norms and is linked to the nutritional value of the cheapest foods.

States leading the nation with the least amount of obese citizens are Colorado (20.5%), Massachusetts (22.9%), and Hawaii and New York (23.6%).

The three states with the highest rates of obesity are Louisiana (34.7%), Mississippi (34.6%), and Arkansas (34.5%). What is interesting to note is that two of the three, Mississippi and Arkansas, are also ranked high in food insecurity, which was highlighted by Results America white paper in March.

"The state that acknowledges its obesity rate, the connection to food insecurity, and the correlation to poverty, will have an advantage in resolving this problem."

Whether a state is in the top or bottom ranking, obesity remains a key measure of public health in the states, one that points to significant costs and significant opportunities. The state that acknowledges its obesity rate, the connection to food insecurity, and the correlation to poverty, will have an advantage in resolving this problem.

Rank	State	Percent of Obese Population
41	Tennessee	31.1
42	Kentucky	31.3
43	Indiana	31.4
44	South Carolina	31.6
45	Oklahoma	32.2
46	Alabama	33.0
47	West Virginia	33.8
48	Arkansas	34.5
49	Mississippi	34.6
50	Louisiana	34.7

Although 16 out of 50 states have decreased their prevalence of obesity since 1995, it continues to be a major cause of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. According to the CDC, in 2008, roughly $147 billion was spent on obesity or obesity-related health issues. When taking a look from a different perspective, people dealing with obesity spend almost $1,429 more than people with a healthy BMI.

While Mississippi has decreased its rate of obesity since 1995, obesity rates have almost doubled since 1995 across the country. Since there is noticeable gap between the top and bottom states, ranging from 20.5% to 34.7%, there are clearly cultural and nutritional differences driving this gap

References & Data Sources

The Center for Disease Control
America's Health Rankings.org
Gallup
World Health Organization

Results America is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that exists to inspire and enable the spread of results-driven government. Its sole purpose is to demonstrate how focusing government on results is key to fulfilling the promise of America.

More information and measures data available at **www.resultsamerica.org**