



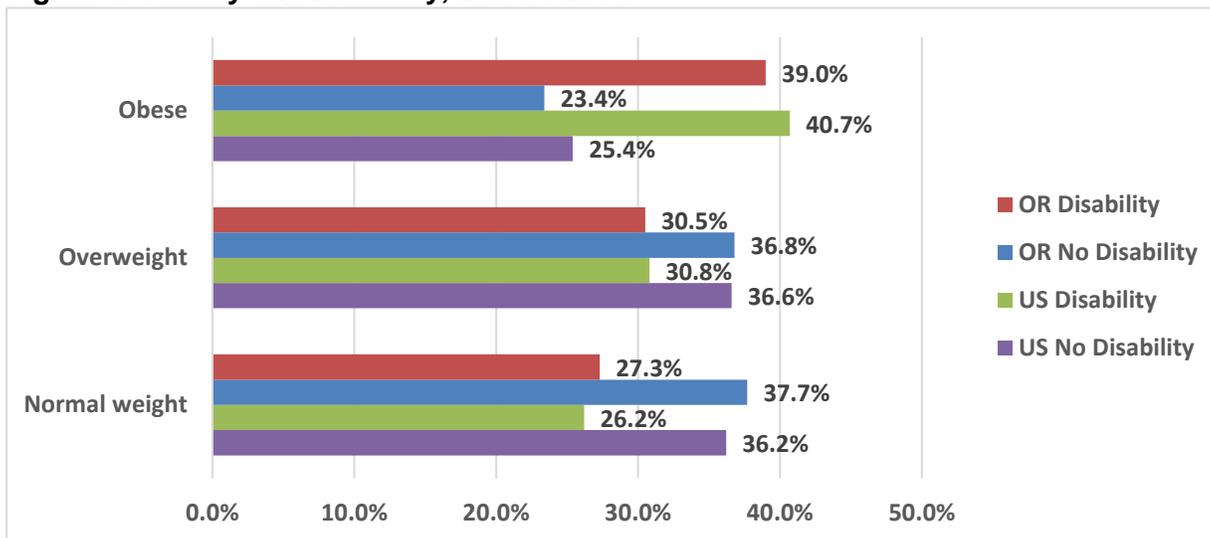
Obesity among Oregonians with Disabilities

Oregon Office on Disability and Health

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines being overweight as having a body mass index (BMI) between 25.0 - 29.9 kg/m² and being obese as having a BMI of 30 kg/m² or above¹. BMI is calculated by dividing a person's weight in kilograms (kg) and by the square of their height in meters (m²).¹ People with disabilities are considered to be at higher risk for obesity due to some conditions that limit mobility which may result in weight gain over time².

The following figure shows the percentages of adult Oregonians with and without disabilities who are overweight or obese, in comparison to the people with and without disabilities in the entire U.S. The BRFSS is a telephone based survey that is conducted annually in all 50 states in the US. The data shown below were collected in 2014.

Figure 1. Obesity and Disability, BRFSS 2014



We found that Oregon adults with disabilities are more likely to be obese than Oregonians without disabilities. Oregonians with disabilities are also less likely to be overweight or healthy weight in comparison to Oregonians without disabilities. The differences between people with and without disabilities in Oregon are very similar to those in the U.S. as a whole.

- 39.0% of adults with disabilities living in Oregon are obese compared to 23.4% of adults without disabilities
- 30.5% of adults with disabilities living in Oregon are overweight compared to 36.8% of adults without disabilities
- Add a bullet about normal (or healthy?) weight)

Cost of obesity

Annually, people who are obese spend about \$1,429 more than a person of normal weight on medical costs³. The annual health care cost of adult obesity in the United States was estimated at \$147 billion dollars for 2008³. People with disabilities had almost three times the additional average obesity cost (\$2,459) of people without disabilities (\$889)². This means that on average, people with disabilities who are obese spend more on health care than people who are obese and do not have a disability.

How does Obesity affect health?

Obesity increases the risk for²:

- High Blood Pressure
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Arthritis
- Stroke
- Depression
- Respiratory disease
- Stress
- Sleep problems

Challenges for adults with disability:

Adults with disabilities may face challenges to maintaining a healthy body weight. One common problem is that programs to reduce obesity are not usually designed for people with disabilities. Challenges for people with disabilities include:

- Limited access to programs to prevent obesity¹
- Limited access to healthy foods¹
- Pain²
- Physical limitations that reduce or prevent ability to exercise²
- Medications that may contribute to weight gain²
- Limited or reduced resources (ex. money, transportation, and social support)²

How to reduce and prevent obesity for people with disabilities:

- Remove barriers to environmental barriers for physical activity among people living with disabilities (e.g., transportation and affordability)²
- Promote public health interventions designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities (e.g., wheelchair accessible sidewalks, exercise equipment, and wheelchair accessible transportation)²
- Increase knowledge on healthy lifestyles and obesity prevention for people living with disabilities **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

To learn more about obesity visit the following:

- [BMI Index Chart](#)
- [CDC- Disability and Obesity](#)
- [CDC-Overweight and Obesity](#)
- [Oregon Health Authority- Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention](#)

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¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). Defining Adult Overweight and Obesity. <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/adult/defining.html>

²Anderson W. L., Wiener J. M., Khatutsky G., Armour B. S. (2013). Obesity and People with Disabilities: The implications for health care expenditures. *Obesity Journal*. 21(12). 789-804. doi:10.1002/oby.20531.

³Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vital Signs: State-Specific Obesity Prevalence Among Adults—United States, 2009. *MMWR* 2010; 59:1-5.