

## Fast Facts: Obesity-Related Chronic Disease

This fact sheet is one in a series of 'Fast Facts' that provide information to help shed light on the complex health issue of obesity.

### Diabetes and Obesity

- Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S. and accounts for \$174 billion in total U.S. health care costs.<sup>1</sup>
- Being overweight or obese significantly increases an individual's risk of type 2 diabetes.<sup>2</sup>
- The CDC projects that as many as one in three U.S. adults could have diabetes by 2050.<sup>3</sup>
- Research has shown that losing weight can significantly reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.<sup>4</sup>

### Coronary Heart Disease and Stroke and Obesity

- Being overweight or obese raises the risk of having high blood pressure, high levels of harmful blood fats known as triglycerides, and high levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL), also known as "bad cholesterol." It can also lead to lower levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL), also known as "good cholesterol."<sup>5</sup>
- These conditions can raise the long-term risk of heart disease or stroke.<sup>6</sup>

### Hypertension and Obesity

- Being overweight or obese increases the risk for hypertension, or high blood pressure, which can cause damage to an individual's arteries, heart, brain, kidneys, eyes, and other body functions.<sup>7</sup>

### Arthritis and Obesity

- Obesity prevalence is 54 percent higher among adults with arthritis compared with adults without arthritis.<sup>8</sup>
- About 35% of adults with doctor-diagnosed arthritis are obese compared to only 21% of those without arthritis.<sup>9</sup>
- Currently, 50 million Americans have arthritis.<sup>10</sup>

### Cancer and Obesity

- Obesity-related cancers include kidney, endometrial, colorectal, gallbladder, pancreas, thyroid, and postmenopausal breast cancer.<sup>11</sup>
- Approximately 20 percent of cancer in women and 15 percent of cancer in men is attributable to obesity.<sup>12</sup>
- One in three deaths from cancer per year (approximately 190,650) are related to obesity, poor nutrition or physical inactivity.<sup>13</sup>

### What Chronic Diseases are Associated with Obesity?

- The risks of many medical conditions and diseases grow with increasing **Body Mass Index (BMI)** and abdominal obesity.
- The five most common and highest-cost chronic diseases associated with obesity are **type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease and stroke, hypertension, arthritis, and obesity-related cancer.**<sup>14,15</sup>
- More than 85% of people who have type 2 diabetes are overweight, and more than **50% are obese.**<sup>16</sup>

### About the STOP Obesity Alliance

The Strategies to Overcome and Prevent (STOP) Obesity Alliance is a collaboration of nearly 70 consumer, provider, government, labor, business, health insurer and quality-of-care organizations working to drive innovative and practical strategies that combat obesity. Housed at The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services, Department of Health Policy, the Alliance has centered on developing reports, policy recommendations, and tools for consumers and policy makers that are evidence-based and approved by consensus. The Alliance receives funding from founding sponsor, Sanofi. For more information, visit [www.stopobesityalliance.org](http://www.stopobesityalliance.org) and follow the Alliance on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

### Resources

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National diabetes fact sheet: national estimates and general information on diabetes and prediabetes in the United States, 2011. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Am I at Risk for Type 2 Diabetes?. Retrieved July 6, 2009, from National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse: <http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/riskfortype2/index.htm>

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Number of Americans with Diabetes Projected to Double or Triple by 2050. Press Release, October 2010. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/media/pressrel/2010/r101022.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Hamman, R.F., Wing, R.R., Edelstein, S.L., Lachin, J.M., Bray, G.A., Delahanty, L. et al. (2006) Effect of weight loss with lifestyle intervention on risk of diabetes. *Diabetes Care*. 29: 2102-2107.

<sup>5</sup> TFAH. (2012) F as in Fat. Pg. 36. Available at: <http://healthyamericans.org/assets/files/TFAH2012FasInFatFnlRv.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> "High Blood Pressure," In Mayo Clinic. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/high-blood-pressure/HI00062>.

<sup>8</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prevalence of Obesity Among Adults with Arthritis—United States, 2003-2009. *MMWR*, 60(16): 509-513, 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2012. NHIS Arthritis Surveillance. Available at: [http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/data\\_statistics/national\\_nhis.htm#excess](http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/data_statistics/national_nhis.htm#excess).

<sup>10</sup> TFAH. (2012) F as in Fat. Pg. 41. Available at: <http://healthyamericans.org/assets/files/TFAH2012FasInFatFnlRv.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Curry SJ, Byers T, Hewitt M, Eds. Fulfilling the Potential for Cancer Prevention and Early Detection. National Cancer Policy Board. Institute of Medicine. National Research Council of the National Academies. Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2003.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Obesity in the News: Helping Clear the Confusion." Power Point Presentation, May 25, 2005.

<sup>13</sup> TFAH. 2012. F as in Fat. Pg. 4. Available at: [http://healthyamericans.org/assets/files/2012\\_f\\_as\\_in\\_fat\\_FINAL%20ES%209-22-12.pdf](http://healthyamericans.org/assets/files/2012_f_as_in_fat_FINAL%20ES%209-22-12.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> Malnick SD, Knobler H. (2006) The medical complications of obesity. *QJM*. 99(9): 565-579.

<sup>15</sup> Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2012) F as in Fat. Pg. 27. Available at: <http://healthyamericans.org/assets/files/TFAH2012FasInFatFnlRv.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Eberhardt M.S., Ogden C., Engelgau M., Cadwell B., Hedley A.A., Saydah S.H. (November 19, 2004,). Prevalence of overweight and obesity among adults with diagnosed diabetes—United States, 1988-1994 and 1999-2002. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. 53: 1066-1068.