

# Health Disparities In Pediatric Obesity

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## Purpose of Study

To examine the health disparities that affect youth in Baltimore specifically related to obesity in African American children.

## Introduction

Children become overweight and obese for a variety of reasons. The most common causes are genetic factors, lack of physical activity, and unhealthy eating habits.

In the US:

- 11.9% black children are obese
  - 1 in 6 children/adolescents in US. are obese
- Among Baltimore City Students:
- 1 in 3 are obese or overweight
  - 1 in 4 drink 1 or more sodas daily
  - Less than ½ eat 1 or more servings of vegetables daily

## Contributing Factors

- High number of convenience stores with unhealthy foods. (soda, chips, candy)
- Decreased access to grocery stores with healthy foods.
- Healthy foods are more expensive.
- Unsafe neighborhoods.
- Limited number of parks.
- Middle schools with unhealthy lunches and no gym classes.

## Discoveries and Innovations

- Horizon Foundation is addressing childhood obesity by assessing how to treat severe obesity.
- Specialty centers are being developed in nutritional counseling in the community.
- Scientist are looking at how genes can affect how a child metabolizes fat (faster/slower).

## Prevention

- Healthy eating habits are a key factor for a healthy weight.
- Physical activity is important for health and a healthy weight.
- Lower prices for healthy foods in grocery stores would help people afford healthy food options..
- Healthier choices/options are needed at school and in in the grocery stores.

Obesity Rate for Children Ages 2 to 19  
by Race and Ethnicity

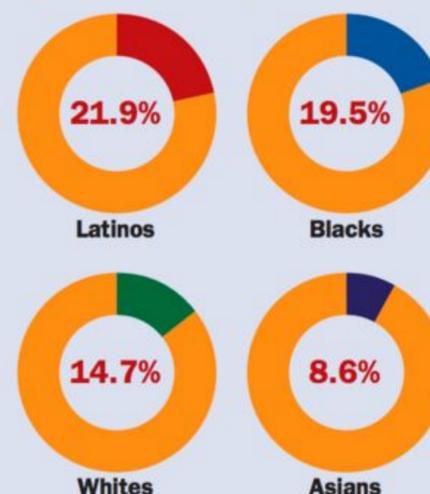


Figure 1. Obesity by Race and Ethnicity.

## Data

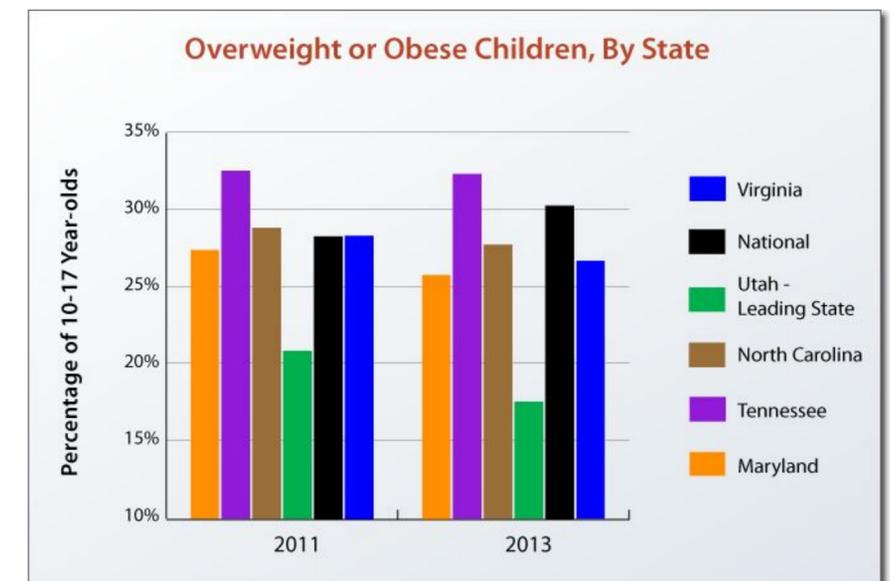


Figure 2. Overweight or Obese Children by State.

## Conclusion

There is a higher incidence of pediatric obesity in Baltimore, because of many social and environmental factors. Focusing on decreasing cost while improving access to healthy foods can help decrease pediatric obesity.

## References

- <https://stateofobesity.org/states/md>
- <http://www.globalobesity.org/our-projects/index.html>
- [www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/obesity.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/obesity.html)
- <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/ccdpc/healthy-lifestyles/Pages/obesity.aspx>