

Health Fact Sheets

Overweight and obese youth (self-reported), 2014



How to obtain more information

For information about this product or the wide range of services and data available from Statistics Canada, visit our website, www.statcan.gc.ca.

You can also contact us by

email at STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca

telephone, from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at the following numbers:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| • Statistical Information Service | 1-800-263-1136 |
| • National telecommunications device for the hearing impaired | 1-800-363-7629 |
| • Fax line | 1-514-283-9350 |

Depository Services Program

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| • Inquiries line | 1-800-635-7943 |
| • Fax line | 1-800-565-7757 |

Standards of service to the public

Statistics Canada is committed to serving its clients in a prompt, reliable and courteous manner. To this end, Statistics Canada has developed standards of service that its employees observe. To obtain a copy of these service standards, please contact Statistics Canada toll-free at 1-800-263-1136. The service standards are also published on www.statcan.gc.ca under “Contact us” > “Standards of service to the public.”

Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued co-operation and goodwill.

Standard table symbols

The following symbols are used in Statistics Canada publications:

- . not available for any reference period
- .. not available for a specific reference period
- ... not applicable
- 0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
- 0^s value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
- ^P preliminary
- ^r revised
- X suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
- ^E use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published
- * significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

© Minister of Industry, 2015

All rights reserved. Use of this publication is governed by the Statistics Canada [Open Licence Agreement](#).

An HTML version is also available.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.

Overweight and obese youth (self-reported), 2014

Excess weight in childhood has been linked to insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, poor emotional health, and diminished social well-being. As well, obese children tend to become obese adults, making childhood obesity a public health concern.¹

Body Mass Index (BMI), a measure that examines weight in relation to height is a tool used to evaluate whether a person is a healthy weight. BMI (Body Mass Index) is defined as weight in kilograms divided by the square of the height in meters.

The Canadian Community Health Survey has used the Cole classification system since 2005 for the youth body mass index indicator. This classification is based on pooled international data and classifies children aged 12 to 17 as "obese", "overweight" or "neither obese nor overweight" according to age- and-sex specific BMI (Body Mass Index) cut-off points (Table 1).²

Table 1
Body mass index (BMI) ranges for overweight and obese for selected ages, by sex (Cole classification system)

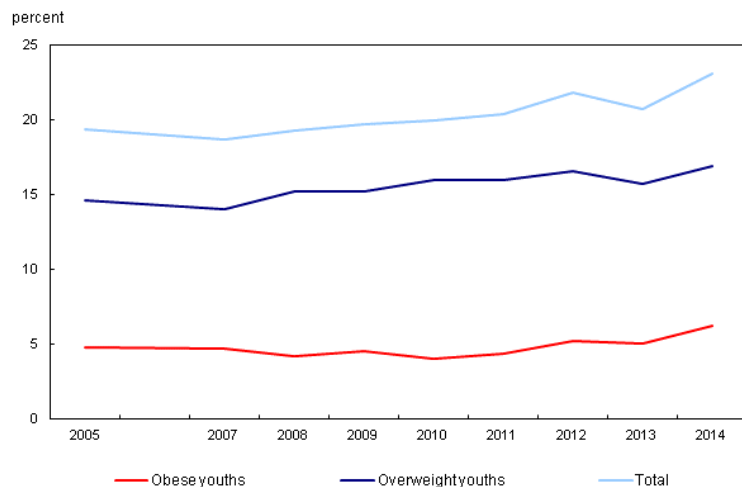
Sex	Age in years (rounded to nearest 0.5)	Overweight [±] for	Obese ^{±±} for
		BMI (Body Mass Index) range:	BMI (Body Mass Index) range:
Boys	12	21.22 to less than 26.02	26.02 or higher
	13.5	22.27 to less than 27.25	27.25 or higher
	15	23.29 to less than 28.30	28.30 or higher
	16.5	24.19 to less than 29.14	29.14 or higher
Girls	12	21.68 to less than 26.67	26.67 or higher
	13.5	22.98 to less than 28.20	28.20 or higher
	15	23.94 to less than 29.11	29.11 or higher
	16.5	24.54 to less than 29.56	29.56 or higher

[±] increased risk of health problems
^{±±} high to extremely high risk of health problems

In 2014, 6.2% of Canadians aged 12-17, roughly 125,000 youths, reported height and weight that classified them as obese. The percentage of those who were overweight was 16.9%, or roughly 343,000 youths. Combined, roughly one in four youths (23.1%) aged 12-17 was overweight or obese in 2014 (Chart 1).

The proportion of youths with excess weight, either obese or overweight, was about the same as in 2013. However, it is a significant increase from 19.4% in 2005 (Chart 1).

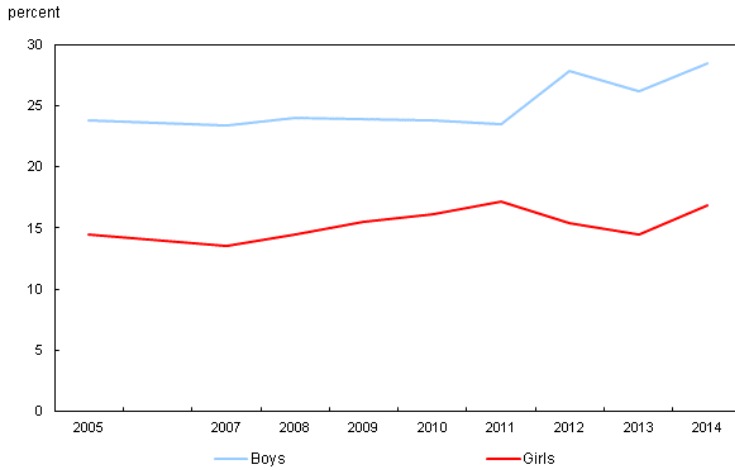
Chart 1
Percentage who were obese and overweight (self-reported), Cole classification, household population aged 12 to 17, Canada, 2005 to 2014



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2005, 2007 to 2014.

Between 2005 and 2014, the percentage of boys who were classified as overweight or obese has been higher than that for girls. In 2014, the percentage with excess weight was 28.5% for boys and 16.9% for girls (Chart 2).

Chart 2
Percentage who were obese or overweight (self-reported), Cole classification, by sex, household population aged 12 to 17, Canada, 2005 to 2014



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2005, 2007 to 2014.

Having excess weight did not have an effect on the reported physical activity of youths in 2014. Of the 12-17 year olds who were overweight or obese, 70.2% reported being at least moderately physically active in leisure time. This was not significantly different from the 73.9% of youths who were not overweight or obese.³ 'Moderately active' would be equivalent to walking at least 30 minutes a day or taking an hour-long exercise class at least three times a week.

While there was no difference in levels of activity, there was a significant difference in self-perceived health. This is a self-reported measure that reflects not only a lack of disease or injury, but also an overall physical, mental and social well-being. Among those youth who were overweight or obese, only 56.6% reported very good or excellent overall health, compared to 74.9% of youths who did not have excess weight.

Notes

- 1 Roberts, Karen C, Shields, Margot, de Groh, Margaret, Aziz, Alfred, Gilbert, Jo-Anne. 2012. " Overweight and obesity in children and adolescents: Results from the 2009 to 2011 Canadian Health Measures Survey." *Health Reports*. Vol. (Volume)23, no. (number) 3. September. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2012003/article/11706-eng.pdf>.
- 2 Note: Excluded from the classification are females aged 15-17 who were pregnant or who did not answer if they were pregnant. There is no 'underweight' or 'normal weight' in this classification. Youths with a BMI (Body Mass Index) below the low cut-off for being classified as

overweight are indicated as “neither overweight nor obese” See: Cole, Tim J., Bellizzi, Mary C., Flegal, Katherine M., Dietz, William H. 2000. “Establishing a Standard Definition for Child Overweight and Obesity Worldwide – International survey”. *British Medical Journal*, Volume: 320, May 2000.

For the full set of BMI (Body Mass Index) ranges used by the Cole classification, please refer to the Canadian Community Health Survey derived variable documentation.

- 3 The Cole classification designates youths as either overweight or obese or neither. Those classified as neither overweight nor obese would be those with a BMI (Body Mass Index) below the lower limit for the overweight category.
-

References

Connor Gorber, Sarah, Shields, Margot, Tremblay, Mark S., McDowell, Ian. 2008. “The feasibility of establishing correction factors to adjust self-reported estimates of obesity.” *Health Reports. Vol. (Volume) 19, no. (number) 3.* September. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?lang=eng&catno=82-003-X200800310680>.

Garriguet, Didier. 2008. “Obesity and the eating habits of the Aboriginal population.” *Health Reports. Vol. (Volume) 19, no. (number) 1.* March. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?lang=eng&catno=82-003-X200800110487>.

Le Petit, Christel, Berthelot, Jean-Marie. 2006. “ Obesity—a growing issue.” *Health Reports. Vol. (Volume) 17, no. (number) 3.* June. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. p. (page(s)) 43–50. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/studies-etudes/82-003/archive/2006/9278-eng.pdf>.

Roberts, Karen C, Shields, Margot, de Groh, Margaret, Aziz, Alfred, Gilbert, Jo-Anne. 2012. “ Overweight and obesity in children and adolescents: Results from the 2009 to 2011 Canadian Health Measures Survey.” *Health Reports. Vol. (Volume) 23, no. (number) 3.* September. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2012003/article/11706-eng.pdf>.

Shields, Margot, Connor Gorber, Sarah, Tremblay, Mark S. 2008. “Estimates of obesity based on self-report versus direct measures.” *Health Reports. Vol. (Volume) 19, no. (number) 2.* June. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?lang=eng&catno=82-003-X200800210569>.

Shields, Margot, Connor Gorber, Sarah, Tremblay, Mark S. 2008. “Effects of measurement on obesity and morbidity.” *Health Reports. Vol. (Volume) 19, no. (number) 2.* June. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?lang=eng&catno=82-003-X200800210564>.

Shields, Margot. 2006. “ Overweight and obesity among children and youth.” *Health Reports. Vol. (Volume) 17, no. (number) 3.* August. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. p. (page(s)) 27–42. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/studies-etudes/82-003/archive/2006/9277-eng.pdf>.

Shields, Margot, Tjepkema, Michael. 2006. “ Regional differences in obesity.” *Health Reports. Vol. (Volume) 17, no. (number) 3.* August. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. (number) 82-003. p. (page(s)) 61–67. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/studies-etudes/82-003/archive/2006/9280-eng.pdf>.

Data

Additional data from the Canadian Community Health Survey are available from CANSIM table 105-0501.