

The Prevention Connection:

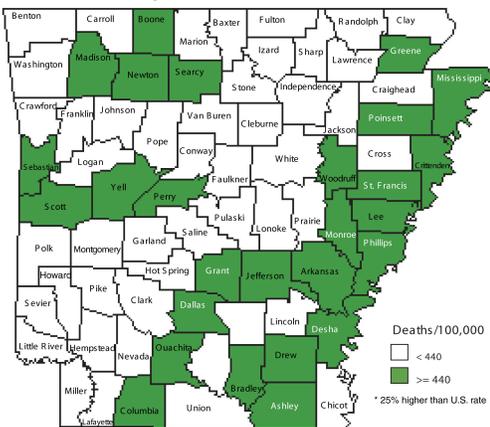


Arkansans of all ages are heavier than ever. Improving the health of Arkansans through good nutrition and physical activity must become a top priority.

A Look at **Diabetes & Heart Disease** in Arkansas

- **Heart disease and stroke** are the #1 and #3 causes of death in Arkansas.¹
- **High blood pressure** is reported by 30% of adult Arkansans.²
- Nationally, **high blood pressure** affects nearly 40% more African Americans than whites.³
- The **stroke** death rate in Arkansas is the 2nd highest in the U.S.¹
- The **Diabetes** frequency in Arkansas increased 34 percent from 1993-2001 (5.8 % to 7.8 %).⁴

Arkansas counties with Age Adjusted Total Cardiovascular¹ Mortality at least 25% higher than the US rate, 1999

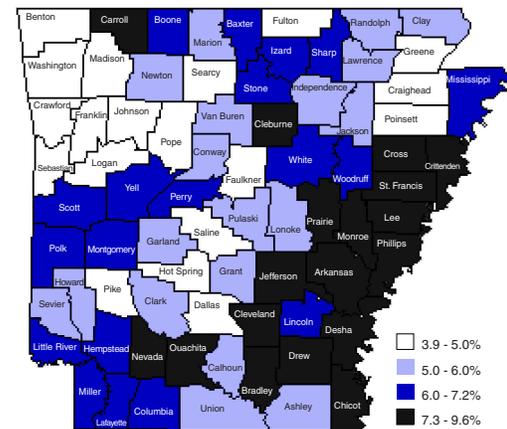


¹ adjusted to 2000 US standard population
² ICD10 codes=I00-199.9
 Data source-CDC Wonder

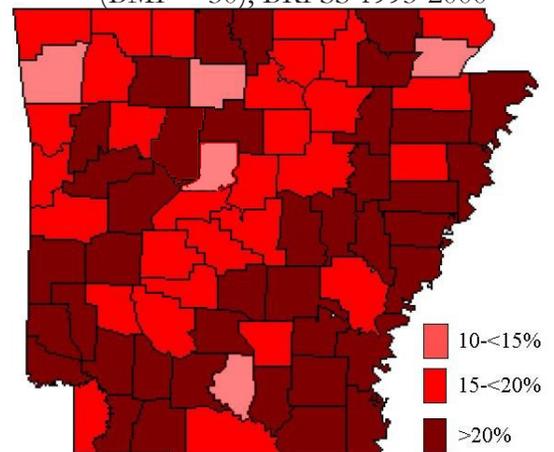
Obesity: A Common Cause

With 23% of adults being obese, Arkansas ranks 7th in the nation in **obesity** (BMI \geq 30); 60% of our adult population is **overweight** (BMI \geq 25).⁴ Arkansas has seen a 81% increase in obesity from 1991 to 2001 (12.7 % to 23%).⁴ Being overweight may lead to many chronic diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

Percent Adults with Diabetes BRFSS 1993-1999



Percent Adults with Obesity (BMI \geq 30), BRFSS 1993-2000



There is an epidemic of **childhood obesity** in our state and nation. Of Arkansas children 0-5 years, 8.6% are obese (%>95th).⁵ Of Arkansas students 9th-12th grades, 34% describe themselves as overweight.⁶

Targeting obesity in childhood can impact and prevent adult obesity. The dramatic increase in childhood obesity has led to an increased incidence of “adult” diseases occurring in children and adolescents, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes.



Risk Behaviors: Physical Activity and Nutrition

A lifestyle characterized by physical inactivity and poor dietary habits is a leading cause of premature death in the state, second only to tobacco use.

In Arkansas:

- Only one out of five adults report regular sustained physical activity.⁴
- Only 37% of high school students attended PE class one or more days during an average school week.⁶
- Over forty percent of high school students report more than two hours of television watching on a school day.⁶
- Almost four out of five adults report eating *less* than 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.⁴

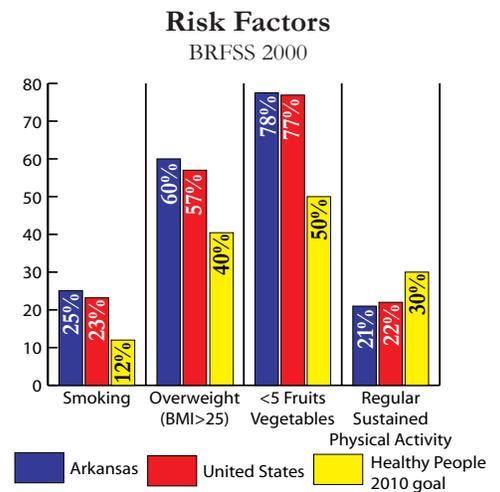


Improving Arkansas health habits could extend productive life span and reduce the occurrence of chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

The Future for Arkansas

- Reversing the trend is critical. We have the opportunity to reshape our society into one that promotes healthy eating and regular physical activity.
- Prevention is the key to reducing chronic disease related to poor nutrition and physical inactivity.
- A successful campaign to encourage healthy eating and physical activity behaviors of Arkansans will:
 - ▶ Increase awareness of the problems;
 - ▶ Promote environmental changes to improve access and remove barriers;
 - ▶ Establish policies that support and encourage healthy lifestyles.

Much of the death and disability due to diabetes and cardiovascular disease is preventable. However, we will not be successful in prevention without population-wide actions by individuals, schools, communities, and workplaces working together to create an environment where **the healthy choice is the easy choice.**



“There is no point in teaching something if it is not supported by the environment.”⁷

References:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Chronic Diseases and Their Risk Factors: The Nation's Leading Causes of Death*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999.
2. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2001.
3. Healthy People 2010.
4. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2001.
5. Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System (PedNSS), 2000.
6. Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2001.
7. USDA, FNS, Shirley Watkins.



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