

Health Disparities in the Medi-Cal Population

Adult Obesity



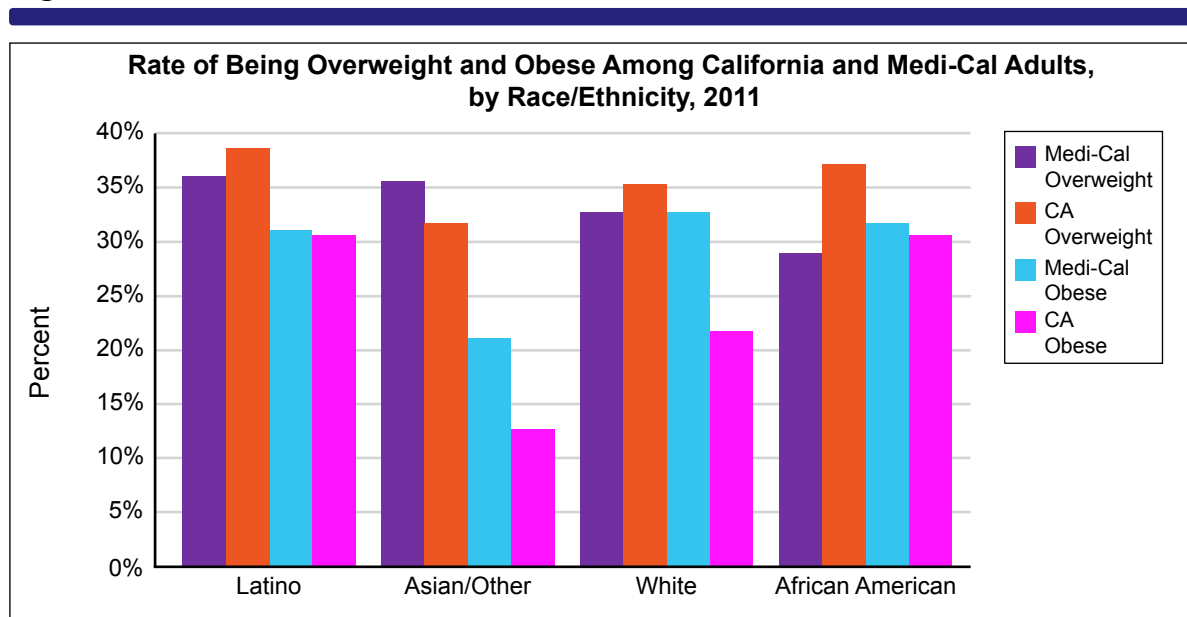
According to a 2012 Institute of Medicine report, two-thirds of adults in the United States are overweight or obese and the proportion of those who are obese has more than doubled since 1976-1980. Some of the health consequences of obesity include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes.¹ Many of the health care costs of these chronic diseases are paid for with public dollars. It has been estimated that total Medicare and Medicaid spending reductions would be 8.5% and 11.8%, respectively, in the absence of obesity.²

Adults with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 25 to 29.9 are defined as overweight and those with a BMI of 30 and above are classified as obese. Among adult Californians, Latinos and African Americans reported higher rates of being overweight and obese than Whites and Asians/Others (see Figure).

In the adult Medi-Cal population, Latinos and Asians/Others reported higher rates of being overweight than Whites and African Americans. The highest rates for obesity were among Whites and African Americans and the lowest was among Asians/Others. Medi-Cal adults were more likely to report being overweight than California adults only in the Asian/Other population. Regardless of race/ethnicity, however, Medi-Cal adults were more likely to report being obese compared to California adults. Due to the small number of Asian/Other adults in the sample, results for this group should be interpreted with caution.



Figure



Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2011 - California Data File.

1. IOM (Institute of Medicine). 2012. *Accelerating Progress in Obesity Prevention: Solving the Weight of the Nation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
2. Finkelstein EA, TrogonJG, Cohen JW, Dietz W. Annual medical spending attributable to obesity: Payer- and service-specific estimates. *Health Affairs*. 2009;28(5):w822-w831.

[Link to Data Sources and Methods](#)