

Overweight

Objective: *Reduce overweight to a prevalence of no more than 20% among people aged 18 and older.*

Overweight is defined as weight that exceeds the recommended weight for height by 20%. Based on 1995 survey responses, about three of every ten adult Virginians classified themselves in this category. It should be noted, however, that males are more likely than females to report themselves as overweight, so it is possible that the numbers are even higher. The problem is a serious one, for overweight is associated with elevated blood cholesterol levels, elevated blood pressure, and noninsulin-dependent diabetes mellitus, and is an independent risk factor for coronary heart disease. Overweight is particularly prevalent in minority populations, especially minority women. The potential benefits to be derived from a reduction in the prevalence of overweight, especially in terms of decreasing body fat, are of considerable public health importance. Programs to reduce weight and body fat require a regimen of increased physical activity combined with dietary caloric restrictions, particularly calories from dietary fat.

