

# Obesity Data Book FAQ

## (Frequently Asked Questions)

The *New Hampshire Obesity Data Book 2010* can be downloaded at <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/data.htm>.

The first two questions ask about language used throughout the *NH Obesity Data Book 2010*.

### Q. What are the numerator and denominator?

They are parts of a fraction. The numerator (top number) is divided by the denominator (bottom number).

### Q. Many of the data tables and graphs say: "during the past month." What month do they reference?

This means that the survey respondents were asked to think back on the month before they took the survey, and then report on their health behaviors for that earlier month.



Each question listed below references a page in the *NH Obesity Data Book 2010*.

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#### Q. What is the difference between overweight and obese?

Overweight and obese are technical terms used when a person's weight is higher than what is considered healthy for their height, based on their Body Mass Index (BMI). **For example**, an adult (male or female) who is 5'4" tall has a healthy weight range between 110-144 pounds. If this same person weighed 145-174 pounds, they are classified as overweight. If their weight is 175 pounds or higher, they are classified as obese.

BMI provides a good estimate of body fat. It is a measure for underweight, healthy weight, overweight and obesity. BMI is calculated from an individual's weight and height. Overweight adults have a BMI between 25 and 30, and their health risks are mildly increased. Obese adults have a BMI of 30 or above, and their health risks are moderately to severely increased. Overweight and obesity increase a person's chance of developing high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, gallstones, varicose veins, and arthritis of the knees and hips. To find your BMI, use the calculator at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi>.

#### Q. How were the six target areas for obesity prevention selected?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identified principal target areas for the work done by the 25 states that receive obesity-prevention funding. Selection of target areas was based on current and emerging scientific findings.

**Q. One of the six obesity-prevention target areas is “Decreasing consumption of high-energy-dense foods.” What is energy density? What are high-energy-dense foods?**

Energy density is a way to compare similar foods or meals. Low-energy-dense foods have fewer calories and are often more filling. High-energy-dense foods, such as high-fat foods, have more calories and are less filling. See examples in next column.

Energy = calories

Energy density = calories/gram

To calculate energy density use the information found on the Nutrition Facts label. Start with the number of calories in one serving, and divide it by the weight of one serving (in grams).

## Sample Foods and Meals

- **Low-energy-dense foods:** water, seltzer, skim milk, lean meats, fruits, vegetables, and broth-based soups.
- **High-energy-dense foods:** cake, pastry, pie, candy, deep-fried foods, sugar-sweetened beverages (soda, sports or vitamin drinks, lemonade, fruit drinks, and sweetened iced tea), fatty sauces, and cream-based soups.
- **High-energy-dense meal:** Lunchmeat and cheese sandwich; potato chips; soda.
- **Low-energy-dense meal:** Turkey and roasted veggie sandwich; carrot sticks; seltzer.

Reducing consumption of high-energy-dense foods is closely related to:

- **Reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption.**
- **Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption.** The high weight of fruits and vegetables is mostly from water, which has no calories – and lowers their energy density.

## Energy-Density Comparisons

Beverage (8 ounces)	Calories	Weight (grams)	Energy Density (calories/gram)
Water or seltzer	0	237	0.0
Soda, cola-flavored	97	247	0.4

Milk-Based Beverage (8 ounces)	Calories	Weight (grams)	Energy Density (calories/gram)
Nonfat (skim) milk	83	245	0.3
Low fat (1%) milk	102	244	0.4
Reduced fat (2%) milk	122	244	0.5
Whole milk (3.7%)	146	244	0.6
Chocolate milk, 1%	158	250	0.6
Chocolate milk, 2%	190	250	0.8
Hot chocolate, homemade with 2% milk	192	250	0.8
Eggnog, nonalcoholic	343	254	1.4

Snack	Calories	Weight (grams)	Energy Density (calories/gram)
Tomato, cherry, 5	55	310	0.2
Carrots, 5 baby	20	50	0.4
Apple, 2¾" diameter	72	138	0.5
Orange, navel 2-7/8"	69	140	0.5
Banana, 7-8"	105	118	0.9
Pineapple, canned in juice, 1 cup	208	149	1.4
Raisins, 1.5 ounce box	129	43	3.0
Pretzel, hard, 10 twists	227	60	3.8
Granola bar, 1 ounce	130	28	4.6
Potato chips, baked, 1 ounce	131	28	4.7
M&M's, 1.6-ounce bag	223	47	4.7
Potato chips, 1 ounce	153	28	5.5

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### Recommended Physical Activity Among Adults

**Q. How are moderate and vigorous physical activity defined? What are some examples?**

**Moderate-intensity physical activity** means you're working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat. One way to tell is that you'll be able to talk, but not sing the words to your favorite song. Examples include walking, light gardening, doubles tennis, ballroom dancing, pushing a lawn mower, or bicycling slower than 10 miles per hour.

**Vigorous-intensity physical activity** means you're breathing hard and fast, and your heart rate has gone up quite a bit. If you're working at this level, you won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for a breath. Examples include running, heavy gardening (continuous digging or hoeing), swimming laps, playing basketball or jumping rope.  
<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html#Aerobic>



**Q. Are moderate and vigorous physical activity defined differently for children?**

The CDC provides this simple explanation of moderate versus vigorous activity for children ages 6-17, which is similar to the explanation for adults:

On a scale of 0 to 10, where sitting is a 0 and the highest level of activity is a 10, moderate-intensity activity is a 5 or 6. When your child does moderate-intensity activity, his or her heart will beat faster than normal and he/she will breathe harder than normal. On the same scale, vigorous-intensity activity is a level 7 or 8; your child's heart will beat much faster than normal and he/she will breathe much harder than normal.

<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/children.html>



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### Fruit and Vegetable Consumption Among Adults

**Q. The NH Obesity Data Book 2010 reports that 28.5 percent of New Hampshire adults eat fruits and vegetables five or more times a day. Who was surveyed for the "risk factor" data – all New Hampshire adults or only overweight and obese adults?**

Everyone was surveyed regardless of their weight status.

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### Obesity Among High School Students

**Q. In high schools, the rate of male obesity is twice that of female obesity. Is this due to under reporting by high school females?**

The heights and weights of high school students were self-reported, and the students were not physically measured to check the accuracy of their answers. That means we cannot know if how often under-reporting might have occurred. That said, this method has been in use for many years. During those years, we have seen a rise in the overweight and obesity rates of high school students. This increase is consistent with increases among adults. Historically, males have had higher rates of overweight and obesity in the high-school years.

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### Physical Activity Among High School Students

**Q. Can you provide a citation that supports the claims that physical activity reduces risk for colon and breast cancer?**

The claim is supported in the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, which is available at <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines>.

**Q. Does physical activity reduce risk of obesity? Can you provide a supporting citation?**

The *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines> address the link between regular physical activity and the achievement and maintenance of a healthy weight.



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**Fruit and Vegetable Consumption Among High School Students**

**Q. Fruit and vegetable consumption is reported as “times per day”. What is the recommendation for fruit and vegetable consumption?**

Recommended fruit and vegetable intakes vary by age, gender, and activity level. For individuals 2 years and older, the amounts vary from 2 to 6.5 cups per day (fruits and vegetables combined). From a practical standpoint, to meet these recommendations, it's helpful to eat fruits and vegetables several times a day – at every meal and snack.

**Q. How much is a serving of fruits and vegetables?**

Fruit and vegetable recommendations used to be measured in “servings.” With the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, recommendations shifted to the commonly known measuring cup.

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**Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Consumption Among High School Students**

**Q. This data only mentions soda and pop. Does pop mean the same thing as soda? Yes, pop is another name for soda.**

**Q. What else counts as a sugar-sweetened beverage?**

Sugar-sweetened beverages include sodas, sport drinks, vitamin waters, energy drinks, and other beverages that contain caloric sweeteners such as tea, coffee, lemonade, flavored milks, fruit punch, and fruit drinks.

**Q. What about measuring the consumption of all sugar-sweetened beverages?**

Soda intake is reported because the Youth Risk Behavior Survey asks about soda consumption. It does not ask about all sugar sweetened beverages.

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**Television Viewing Among High School Students**

**Q. Can you provide a citation that supports the claims that television viewing increases the risk of overweight and obesity?**

Research shows that television viewing has been linked to increased risk for overweight and obesity. Here is one study:  
Hager RL. Television viewing and physical activity in children. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. 2006 Nov; 39(5):656-661.  
[http://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X\(06\)00175-3](http://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X(06)00175-3)

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**County Comparison, PedNSS, NH, 2008**

**Q. The WIC Program serves children from birth to age 5. Why does the chart only report on children ages 2 to 5?**

BMI is not done on children under age 2.



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