



# Obesity in Older African American Adults

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Presented by:

The African American Wellness Project



# Course Outline



Obesity and Heart Disease



Benefits of Physical Activity



Actions to Improve Heart Health



Resources



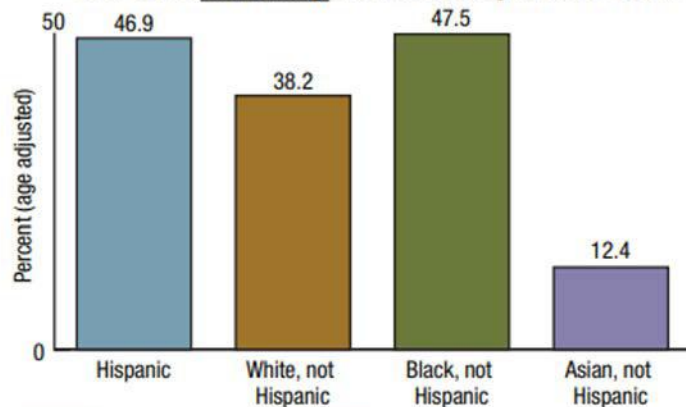
Call to Action

# What is Obesity?



## OBESITY

Hispanic and non-Hispanic black adults aged 20 and over were most likely to have obesity in 2015–2016.



### SOURCE

NCHS, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey ([NHANES](#)).

### NOTES

**Obesity among adults** is measured body mass index (BMI)  $\geq 30.0$ . BMI is measured weight (kg) divided by measured height, squared ( $m^2$ ). Estimates may differ from others based on the same data due to different analytic methodology.

- Obesity is a condition characterized by excessive accumulation of fat in the body that presents a health risk.
  - Obesity is determined by the body mass index (BMI), which uses your height and weight.
  - About 40% of the U.S. population is impacted by obesity.
- Poor diet, physical inactivity, genetic predisposition, and access to food are contributing factors for obesity in older adults.
- Obesity is more prevalent in the following groups:
  - Hispanic, Black, American Indian/Alaska Native and White adults compared with Asian adults.
  - Those with an annual household income of \$25,000 or less compared with those with annual household incomes of \$50,000 or more.
  - Those living in non-metropolitan areas compared with those in metropolitan areas.

Source: [Explore Obesity - Ages 65+ in the United States | 2022 Senior Report | AHR \(americashealthrankings.org\)](#) ; [Obesity and Heart Disease: What You Should Know \(clevelandclinic.org\)](#)



## Obesity in African Americans



- African American women have the highest rates of obesity or being overweight compared to other groups in the United States.
- In 2018,
  - Non-Hispanic blacks were 1.3 times more likely to be obese as compared to non-Hispanic whites.
  - African American women were 50 percent more likely to be obese than non-Hispanic white women.
  - African Americans were 20 percent less likely to engage in active physical activity as compared to non-Hispanic whites.
- People who are overweight are more likely to suffer from high blood pressure, high levels of blood fats, diabetes and LDL cholesterol – all risk factors for heart disease and stroke.

## Obesity & Gender



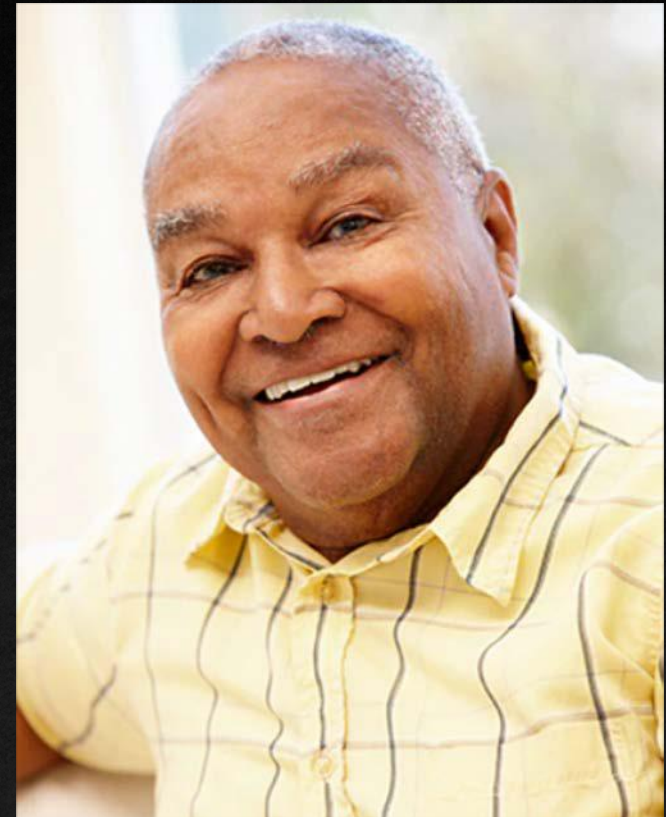
About 4 out of 5  
African American  
women are  
**OVERWEIGHT**  
or obese.

— Office of Minority Health, 2020



# Obesity & Age

- Between 2007-2010, approximately 35% of adults over the age of 65 in the United States were obese based on their BMI.
- As we age, physical disability is a major concern of obesity because of additional weight on joints, which may limit mobility.
- Obese adults are at an increased risk of developing serious health conditions such as:
  - Hypertension, Type 2 diabetes, stroke, sleep apnea and breathing problems, osteoarthritis, certain cancers, depression and anxiety.



Source: [Obesity in the Elderly - Endotext - NCBI Bookshelf \(nih.gov\)](#)

# Obesity & Heart Disease in African Americans

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States
- Obesity increases the risk of cardiovascular disease
  - The extra weight can cause the heart to do more work
  - Obesity increases the chance of developing high blood pressure, diabetes, and poor cholesterol levels.
- Possible outcomes of obesity-caused heart disease include heart attacks, strokes, irregular heartbeats, and heart failure.
- In 2018, African Americans were 30 percent more likely to die from heart disease than non-Hispanic whites.
- Although African American adults are 40 percent more likely to have high blood pressure, they are less likely than non-Hispanic whites to have their blood pressure under control.
- African American women are nearly 60 percent more likely to have high blood pressure, as compared to non-Hispanic white women.



# African Americans are...



**40% more likely**  
to have high blood pressure



**10% less likely**  
to have their blood pressure  
under control



**3 times as likely**  
to die from heart disease  
caused by high blood pressure  
as Caucasians

Statistics from BlackDoctor.org



# Obesity & Nutrition in Older Adults

- Meal choices can impact your weight and overall health; therefore, it is important to make healthy choices.
- Include more fruits and vegetables in your diet.
- Try to use smaller plates and dishes to help with portion control.
- Do not skip meals; instead try to distribute calories throughout the day.
- Always discuss these changes with your healthcare provider or dietician.

Source: [FSHN13-04/FS226: Overweight and Weight Loss Maintenance \(ufl.edu\)](#)

First Skill

Second Skill

Third Skill

Summary

PAGE 9

# Benefits of Physical Activity for Older Adults

- Being physically active while ageing can:
  - Make it easier to perform activities of daily living such as bathing, getting in and out of bed, and moving around the house;
  - Lower risk of dementia;
  - Reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression;
  - Improve perception of quality of life; and,
  - Provide opportunities for social engagement and interaction.
- Physically active older adults are less likely to experience falls, and if they do fall, they are less likely to be seriously injured.
- Physical activity is key to preventing and managing chronic disease.

Source: [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition \(health.gov\)](#)



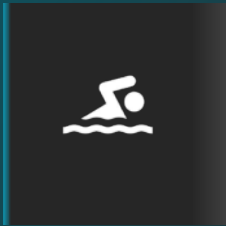
# Actions to Improve Heart Health

- To improve heart health, older adults should engage in more physical activity and practice healthy behaviors such as nutritious food choices.
  - Physical activity practices should be discussed with your health care provider to ensure you are choosing activities safely.
- Older adults should aim for about 150 minutes (or 2.5 hours) of moderate-intensity physical activity per week.
  - Health professionals recommend spreading out these activities across three days per week to reduce the risk of injury and prevent exhaustion.
  - Relatively-moderate intensity means you should be able to talk while doing physical activity without being short of breath.



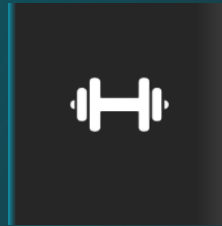
Source: [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition \(health.gov\)](https://www.health.gov)

# Actions to Improve Heart Health



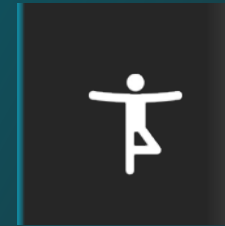
## Aerobic Activities.

1. Walking, hiking, running
2. Tennis, basketball
3. Bicycle riding
4. Dancing
5. Yard work
6. Swimming



## Muscle-Strengthening.

1. Gardening
2. Carrying groceries
3. Push-ups, pull-ups, lunges
4. Hand-held weights
5. Some forms of yoga
6. Some forms of tai chi



## Balance Activities.

1. Walking heel-to-toe
2. Using a wobble board
3. Practice standing from a sitting position



# Treatments

## Changes that can be made at home:

- Getting 150 minutes per week of aerobic exercise can reduce obesity and abdominal fat.
- Eating more fruits and vegetables while eating fewer calories can reduce abdominal fat.
- Quitting smoking can reduce your risk for heart disease and reduce your risk of death from heart disease.

## Changes with supervision of a health care professional:

- Seek a Behavioral Therapist for support with achieving your weight loss goals.
- Speak to your health care provider or obesity specialist about treatments that can assist you in your weight loss journey.
  - Anti-Obesity Medications (AOM)
  - Bariatric surgery (gastric bypass, sleeve gastrectomy, etc.)

# Positive Responses to Addressing Obesity

**Table K-1. Positive Responses to Common Roadblocks to Addressing Overweight and Obesity**

When the patient says...	The provider responds...
I don't think obesity is a disease.	We can all be healthier at every size.
I don't want to talk about my weight.	That's okay. Just know that we're always here for you.
I don't have enough time for exercising.	Instead of doing one long workout session, build in three 10-minute bursts of activity during your day, such as a brisk walk. Even standing up instead of sitting at your desk has benefits.
I just don't like exercise.	Good news! You don't have to run a marathon or go to the gym all the time to benefit from being active. To make physical activity more fun, try something you enjoy doing, such as dancing to the radio or taking a yoga class with friends. Many people find they start to like exercise better the more they do it.
I'm worried about my health or getting hurt.	If you have a hard time being active because of your health, talk with a health care professional first. A certified fitness professional can also guide you on how to be active safely.
I feel self-conscious working out in front of others.	Start being active at home until you feel more confident. Be active with friends who will support and encourage you.



# Resources

## Move your Way



**MOVE YOUR WAY** OLDER ADULTS  
What's your move?

**Physical activity can make daily life better.**  
When you're active and strong, it's easier to:

- Do everyday tasks, like chores and shopping
- Keep up with the grandkids
- Stay independent as you get older

And it has big health benefits, too.

- Less pain
- Better mood
- Lower risk of many diseases

**How much activity do I need?**

**Moderate-intensity aerobic activity**  
Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts.

**Muscle-strengthening activity**  
Do activities that make your muscles work harder than usual.

at least **150 minutes a week** AND at least **2 days a week**

Break it up over the whole week however you want!

What is obesity?

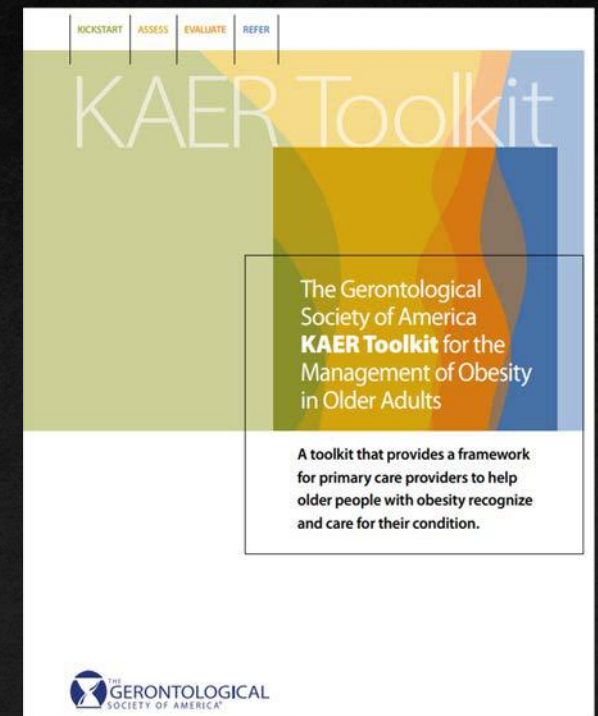
## Active Older Adults



**Chapter 5. Active Older Adults**

Benefits of physical activity

## KAER Toolkit



**KAER Toolkit**

The Gerontological Society of America  
**KAER Toolkit** for the Management of Obesity in Older Adults

A toolkit that provides a framework for primary care providers to help older people with obesity recognize and care for their condition.

GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

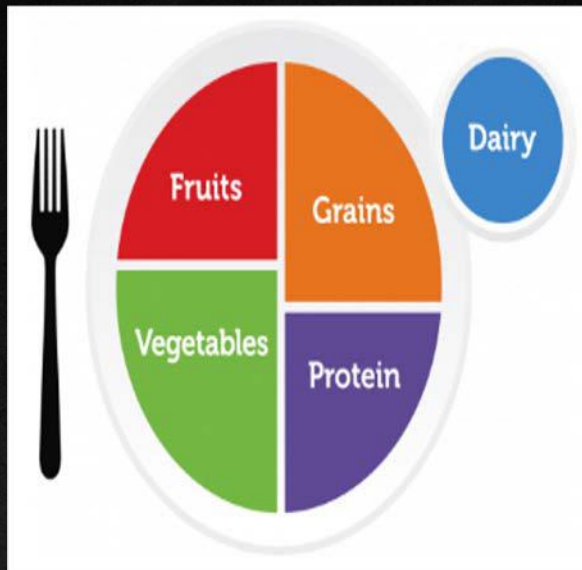
Actions to improve heart health

Resources

PAGE 15

# Resources

## My Plate Guidelines



## Adult BMI Calculator

### Adult BMI Calculator

1. Height:

Feet

Inches

2. Weight:

Pounds

Calculate

## Health Trackers





# Call To Action

1

Review the resources in this module.

2

Talk to your healthcare provider about your BMI and weight.

3

Develop an exercise routine with your provider that is safe for you.

4

Discuss portions and healthy meal options with your provider.

# Call to Action Activity

- Set clear, measurable goals
  - *I want to lose \_\_ pounds by \_\_\_\_*
  - *I want to walk at least \_\_ [minutes, miles] every \_\_\_\_ [day, 2x a week, etc.]*
  - *I want to eat \_\_ more servings of \_\_\_\_ daily*
- Consider joining a support group or fitness group with similar goals
  - Check your local gym or YMCA for new fitness classes
  - Join or start a [local walking club](#) with the American Heart Association
- Discuss your new health plans with your family and friends to gain their support with changes you may make to diet and lifestyle
- Keep a diary of your progress and blood pressure readings



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