

A Look at Childhood Obesity

The DON SCN strives to improve the health and well-being of individual Albertans and our communities through a collaborative network that: encourages uptake of best practices, promotes improvements, and champions innovation in nutrition and in the prevention and management of diabetes and obesity across the health system to promote equitable access, quality and sustainability.

DON SCN Fast Facts

- In 2015, the Canadian Medical Association declared obesity a chronic disease.
- Approximately 19.1 % (>90,000) children ages 12-19 living in Alberta meet the criteria for overweight or obesity (no Alberta data for ages 5-11).
- Alberta children and youth are more likely to be overweight or have obesity if they live in rural (26.9%) versus non-rural areas (18.6%).
- 30% of youth entering adulthood meet the criteria for overweight or obesity.
- Children and youth who meet the criteria for overweight or obesity are at risk to suffer from several health conditions previously seen almost exclusively among adults, including high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes.

How to Screen for Overweight/ Obesity in Children?

- Annual growth monitoring including measuring height, weight and calculating BMI.
- Plot height, weight, and BMI on appropriate World Health Organization Set 2 growth chart for age and gender.

How Does Obesity Compare Across Age and Gender in Canada?

- Number of boys and girls who are overweight are similar.
- Obesity is more likely to be higher among boys (15%) than girls (8%); most notable at ages 5 to 11.

| Percentiles | | Growth Status (Health Professional reference only) |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 2-5 years** | 5-19 years | |
| ≥3 rd to ≤85 th | ≥3 rd to ≤85 th | Healthy Weight |
| >85 th | - | Risk of Overweight |
| >97 th | >85 th | Overweight |
| >99.9 th | >97 th | Obese |
| - | >99.9 th | Severely Obese |

**Up to but not including 5 years of age.
Table adapted from AHS Protocol: Growth Chart Use

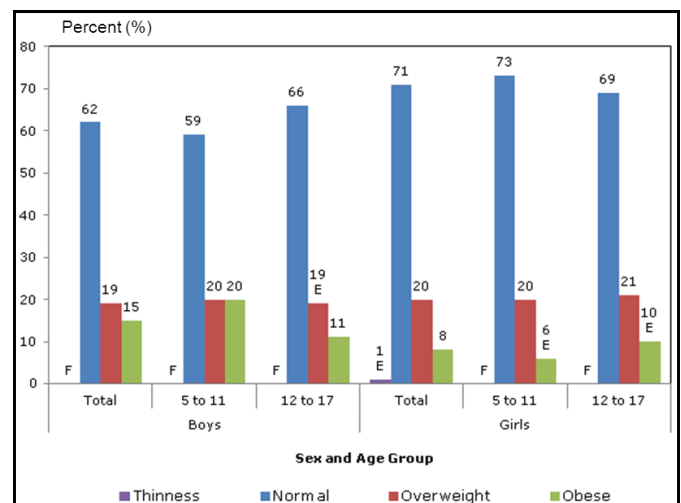


Figure 1. Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity by Age and Gender . *E use with caution; F too unreliable to be published

Has the Number of Referrals to Outpatient Dietitian Counselling and Specialty Care Changed Over Time?

- The number of referrals for outpatient dietitian counselling and specialty care have increased approximately 20% per year.

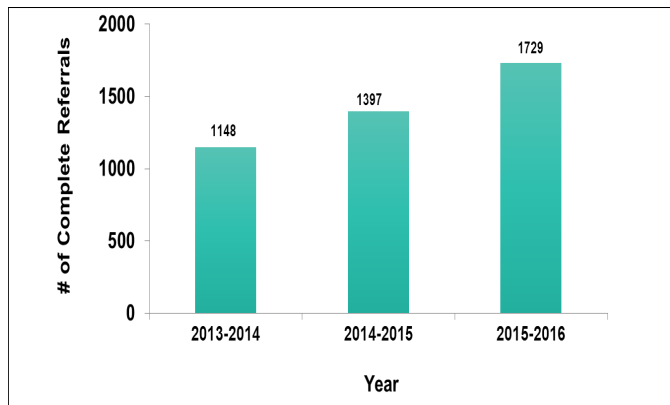


Figure 2. Referrals by year for outpatient dietitian counselling and specialty care in Alberta.

Has the National Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity Changed Over Time?

- Across Canada, the overall proportion for children who meet the criteria for overweight or obesity has significantly decreased from 2004-2013, but the proportion of children with obesity has remained stable.

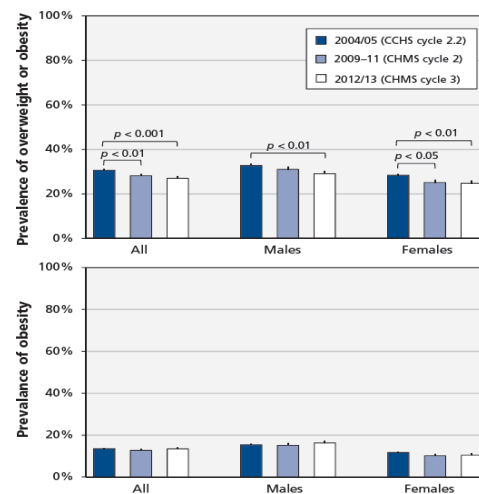


Figure 3. Prevalence of Canadian children who meet the criteria for overweight or obesity. CCHS = Canadian Community Health Survey, CHMS = Canadian Health Measure Survey

Provincial Resources

Alberta Resources for Pediatric Obesity Prevention and Management for ages 2-17 years address:

- Growth Monitoring
- Health Living Messages
- Prevention
- Programs and Services
- Obesity-Related Conditions

Find the link at: <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/hp/cdm/if-hp-ed-cdm-obesity-peds-weight-mgt-2-17-years.pdf>

Data Source

Using World Health Organization standards on BMI thresholds, we used data from the Canadian Health Measures Survey 2009-2013; and from the Canadian Community Health Survey (2004-2005; 2011-2012); (the data is available for 14,014 children aged 3-19 years for the period 2004-2013). Data were also accessed from the Provincial Bariatric Resource Team at AHS; <http://www.cmaj.ca/content/early/2016/05/09/cmaj.150854.abstract>