

# Adult Obesity Estimates

**Obesity is one of the most serious and prevalent public health concerns facing Massachusetts today.**

**Obesity increases the risk for many chronic and debilitating diseases, including Type II diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, and even some cancers. According to the Centers for Disease Control, obesity cost Massachusetts more than \$1.8 billion in medical expenses alone in 2006, not including indirect costs such time absent from work.**

As this map shows, the prevalence of adult obesity varies across the region. Brookline enjoys the region's lowest rate of obesity at 10.6 percent while Revere's is nearly three times as high at 29 percent. Stark disparities also exist within Boston. Fewer than 9 percent of adults in Back Bay/Beacon Hill are obese, while more than 35 percent are obese in Roxbury and Mattapan. Lower rates of overweight and obesity are correlated with higher incomes and education levels, but environmental and social factors also play a role. Investments in community solutions such as walking paths and bike lanes, as well as close and convenient farmers markets and grocery stores, can support healthy behaviors.

With the support of key foundations and health insurance providers, Massachusetts launched a campaign called "Mass in Motion" in 2009 and provided grants to four MAPC communities working on wellness initiatives at the community level. Other statewide components of the campaign include a new weight screening program in schools; calorie labeling at chain restaurants; expansion of workplace wellness programs; and the creation of a new website ([www.mass.gov/massinmotion](http://www.mass.gov/massinmotion)) with tips on healthier living and links to wellness resources.

