Public Perceptions of the Obesity Epidemic

**Americans think obesity is an urgent health problem for the nation**

What is the most urgent health problem facing the nation?

% saying obesity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Obesity</th>
<th>Cancer</th>
<th>AIDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation 1990-2012; Public Religion Research Institute, Nov 12-Dec 13

**Most serious health impacts of being overweight and obese**

78% Heart disease

70% Diabetes

21% High blood pressure

15% Arthritis

14% Mental health

11% Cholesterol

10% Stroke

Source: Associated Press/NORC, Nov 21-Dec 14 2012

Note: Respondents could give multiple responses

**Americans don’t see themselves or their kids as overweight**

1965 Americans saw themselves as:

- Underweight: 7%
- About right: 55%
- Overweight: 38%

Actual overweight/obesity rate: 46%

Harris POLL, CDC estimates

2014 Americans see themselves as:

- Underweight: 4%
- About right: 56%
- Overweight: 40%

Actual overweight/obesity rate: 69%

Gallup, CDC estimates

2012 Parents see their kids as:

- Overweight: 12%
- Not overweight: 88%

- Not overweight: 32%

Actual childhood overweight/obesity rate: 46%

AP/NORC, CDC estimates