



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Vermont: 6th Lowest Rates of Adult Obesity in the Nation



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BURLINGTON – Vermont’s adult obesity rate barely budged between 2013 and 2014 (24.7 percent to 24.8 percent), but the state ranked 6th best in the nation overall, according to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data released today by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Hawaii had the nation’s lowest rates at 22.1 percent. Colorado (2nd), the District of Columbia (3rd), Massachusetts (4th), and California (5th) also had lower rates than Vermont.

“Vermont is doing well compared to the rest of the nation, but the bar is set so low,” said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD. “Our obesity rate in 1990 was close to 11 percent, and now it is one of every four adults. That’s an alarming trend and it’s unacceptable.

“Public health officials and the provider community understand that the obesity epidemic is complex,” Dr. Chen said, “but prevention matters. Vermont should intensify its efforts, such as making healthy food choices easier and more affordable, and do a better job of promoting the recommended levels of physical activity.”

Obesity increases the risk of many serious diseases and health conditions, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, Type2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, and some cancers. Currently 60 percent of adults in Vermont are either overweight or obese, 29 percent of high school students are overweight or obese, and 75 percent of students report not meeting the national physical activity recommendation of 60 minutes of physical activity a day every day. Twenty percent of Vermont adults report getting no leisure time physical activity.

“We are not satisfied and we are working to make a difference in communities, workplaces, schools and child care programs to support people in eating healthy and being physically active where they live, work and play,” said Dr. Chen. “Progress has been far too slow.”

A link to the CDC report can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html>

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