BACKGROUND. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), being overweight or obese increases the risk for many diseases and health conditions including heart disease, stroke, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea, respiratory problems, gallbladder disease, blood lipids (e.g., cholesterol), and some cancers (endometrial, breast, and colon).

The Hawai‘i Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (HBRFSS) reports annual obesity rates for Native Hawaiian adults (18+ years). Figure 1 depicts the adult obesity rates for Native Hawaiians and the State of Hawai‘i from 1999-2011. Also included are the Healthy People 2020 and the OHA benchmarks. To achieve a 35% obesity rate, 24,655 people would be affected (84,998 down to 60,343) based on 2009 population estimates by the American Community Survey.

![Figure 1. Adult Obesity in the State of Hawai‘i (1999-2011)](image)

**Source.** Hawai‘i State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.

Note: In 2011, CDC established a new baseline for state obesity rates due to changes in the survey methodology. Hence 2011 results cannot be compared to prior years.

**Findings.**

- The state of Hawai‘i has one of the lowest obesity rates (21.2%) in the nation, but 39.8% of Native Hawaiian adults are obese. This is higher than the rate for any other ethnic group in Hawai‘i (HBRFSS, 2011).

- Are Native Hawaiians making progress on this Strategic Result? No, but OHA is partnering with Native Hawaiian organizations and health care agencies to address obesity. OHA has awarded almost $3.6 million in grants for community-based programs from 2012-2015.
TERMS.

**American Community Survey (ACS):** An ongoing statistical survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau to collect population and housing information from about 3.5 million addresses yearly.

**Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS):** A phone survey initiated in 1984 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted in 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and six U.S. territories. The Hawai‘i BRFSS (HBRFSS) is part of the national BRFSS.

**Body Mass Index (BMI):** A ratio of body weight (kg) to height (m²). If weight is in pounds (lb) and height in inches (in), multiply the ratio by 703 (NIH).

**Healthy People 2020 (HP2020):** A comprehensive report published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that provides national health goals and objectives on 42 topic areas for a 10-year period.

**Obesity:** A condition characterized by excessive body fat, a BMI of 30 or higher (NIH).

REFERENCES.


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