

Obesity Prevention Services to Communities

Improving Community Health and Well-Being

Making the Link: Overweight and Obesity Leads to Health Problems

Obesity is a public health epidemic. Rates of obesity among adults and youth have increased at alarming rates over the past 20 years, nationally, statewide and locally. This is a concern because obesity greatly impacts people's health; overweight or obesity significantly increases the risk of many serious and preventable health problems at younger ages. These include:

- Type 2 Diabetes
- Cardiovascular diseases: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, heart attack, and stroke
- Cancer
- Gallbladder disease
- Arthritis
- Asthma, sleep apnea (sleep disturbances), and other respiratory problems



Addressing the Obesity Epidemic



The causes of the obesity epidemic are complex and multi-faceted, rooted in societal changes that have caused us to eat more and be less active. It is a public health crisis that cannot be solved by any one strategy or program.

Change is needed everywhere: schools, health care systems, community organizations, businesses, the food industry, and government. We must all work together to reverse the obesity and chronic disease trends in Dane County by increasing knowledge of the importance of eating healthy foods and being physically active.



Public Health - Madison and Dane County (PHMDC) works with community partners towards the shared goal of healthy communities. A healthy community is one that works to promote health and prevent chronic diseases, like diabetes and cancer.

Because obesity is a cause of preventable diseases, our focus is on creating an environment that makes it is easy for people be physically active and eat well. We are most successful when PHMDC staff work closely with community leaders and residents; strong connections between neighbors, community leaders and PHMDC contributes to success.



PHMDC offers services to communities that address the problems of obesity, physical inactivity, and poor nutrition. We focus on proven strategies that are effective and long lasting. Want to do something in your community? Call or email PHMDC's Fit City/Fit Neighborhoods Coordinator Kathy Andrusz at 243-0315 or kandrusz@publichealthmdc.com.

PHMDC Services and Resources for Dane County Communities

- Linking partners for coalition building
- Assessing community strengths and needs
- Assisting with strategic planning
- Providing information about strategies and model programs
- Offering resource materials and data
- Providing grant and funding information
- Assisting with program evaluation
- Identifying and addressing barriers to healthy eating and physical activity
- Developing traffic safety plans to promote safe walking and biking
- Identifying needs for additional opportunities for physical activity
- Presenting local data on childhood obesity
- Consulting with schools
- Sharing guidelines for treatment of overweight children with health providers
- Working with community organizations to improve the nutritional quality of available foods
- Developing a nutrition and physical activity 'local resources' brochure
- Developing fitness/nutrition information and links for websites or newsletter articles
- Involving schools and youth groups in Fit City activities and events
- Connecting youth groups with needs to partners with resources and services
- Working to improve concessions at community sites and events
- Providing health education for high-risk and underserved parents
- Connecting businesses to resources for worksite wellness

