

# The Alberta Perspective on the Economic Impact of Obesity

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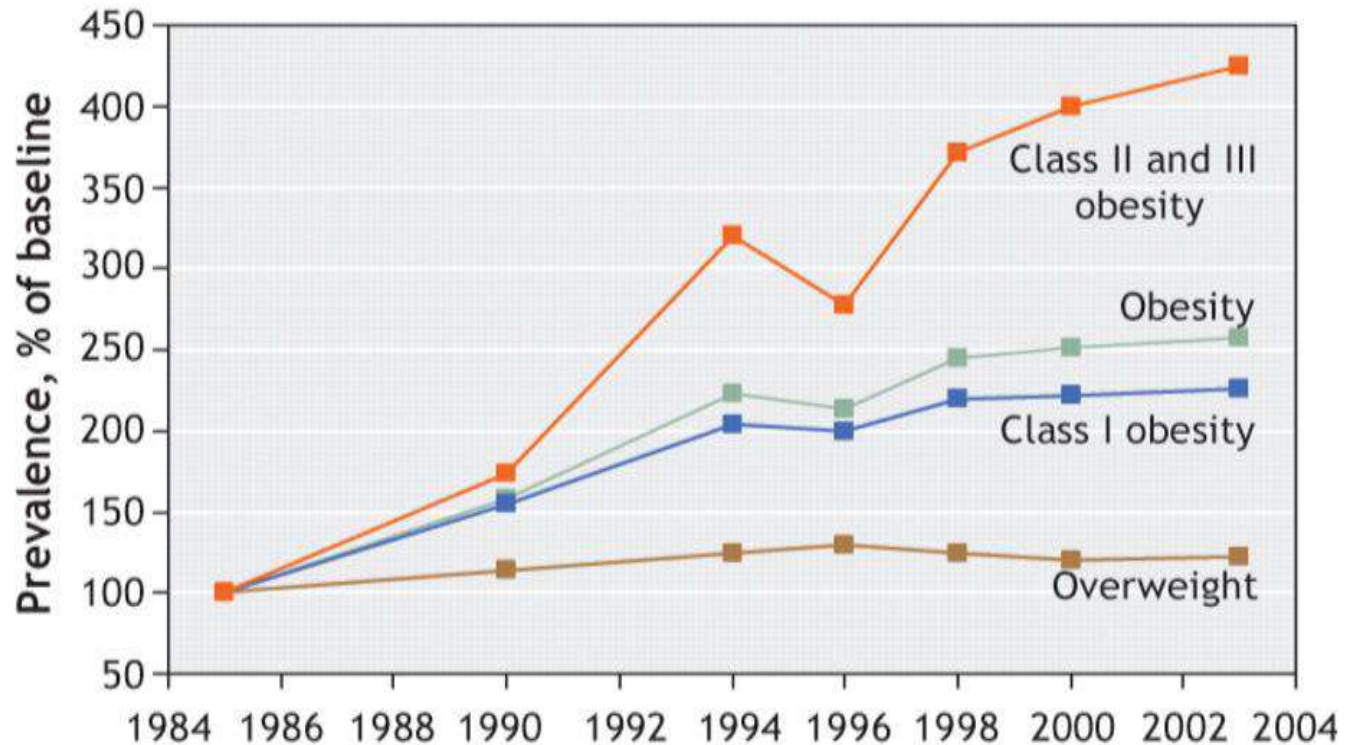
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# Obesity in Canada and Alberta

- Prevalence of excess weight (overweight + obese) in Canada has increased over past 30 years
  - Approximately 60% of adults have excess weight
  - Approximately 23% of children have excess weight
- In Alberta, excess weight levels are similar to those across Canada
  - 1.7 million adults and over 200k children are potentially in need of intervention

# Obesity in Canada and Alberta

- Obesity an increasing problem



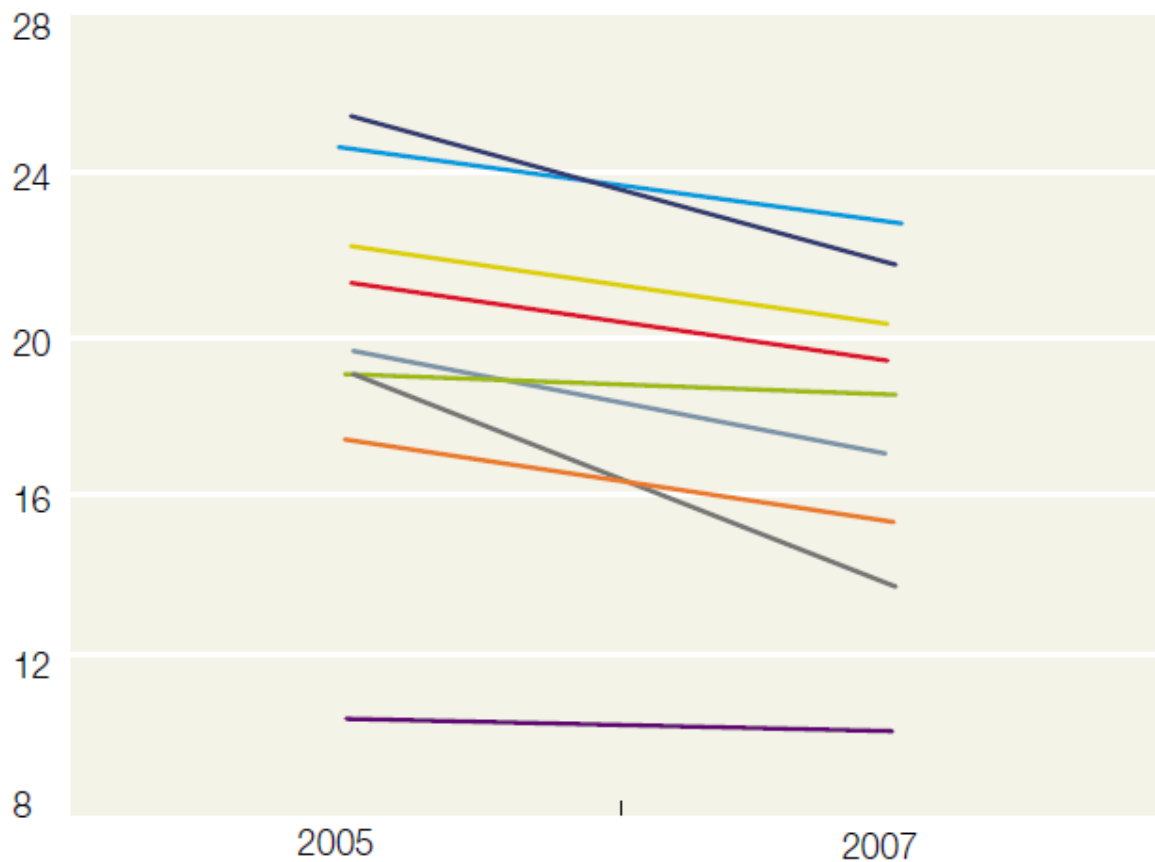
- Note that it is the more severely obese that are driving the increase.

# Cost of Obesity

- In Alberta, the annual cost of excess weight individuals on the health system is approximately \$1.4 billion
  - 70% of this cost is due to the obese
  - Therefore, the fastest growing groups are also the most costly groups.
- Much are driven by co-morbidities
  - Coronary heart disease (CHD) accounts for 28.3% of this cost
    - Higher prevalence of CHD in men leads to a skew of costs for men as well.
  - Others: osteoarthritis, Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, certain cancer types associated with obesity

# Role of Government

Prevalence of childhood obesity, %



<sup>4</sup>*Ensemble, Prévenons l'Obésité Des Enfants (Together, Let's Prevent Childhood Obesity).*

Source: J.M. Borys, "EPODE: A methodology to prevent childhood obesity, involving local stakeholders in a sustainable way," April 2008, [www.health.sa.gov.au](http://www.health.sa.gov.au)

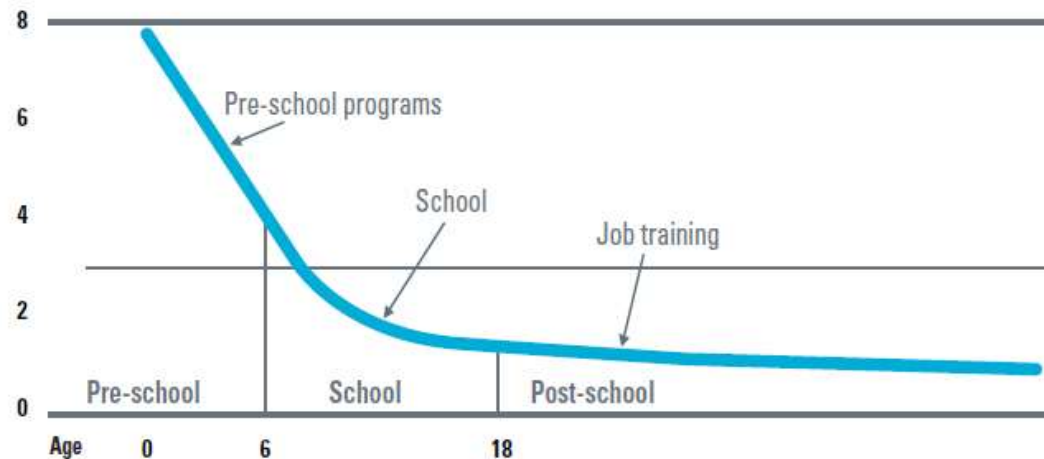
# Government of Alberta Initiatives

- Curbing Childhood Obesity: A FPT Framework for Action to Promote Healthy Weights
  - Make healthy weights for children a collective priority for Health Ministers
  - Make environments more supportive of physical activity & healthy eating
  - Identify the risk of overweight/obesity in children & address it early
  - Increase the availability & accessibility of nutritious foods
  - Decrease the marketing of unhealthy foods & beverages to children
  - Measure & report on collective progress in promoting healthy weights

# Government of Alberta Initiatives

- The Premier's Council for Economic Strategy identified the health of our citizens as a priority to sustain prosperity over the next 30 years.
  - One strategic direction was childhood obesity.

## RATES OF RETURN TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT ACROSS ALL AGES (RETURN PER \$ INVESTED)



Source: Cunha et al., 2005.

A dollar invested in early childhood yields three times as much as a dollar invested in school-aged children, and eight times as much as a dollar for adult education.

# Government of Alberta Initiatives

- Other community and public health programs cover various areas, including:
  - MEND (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition... Do It!) Program, to empower communities and families of overweight and obese children to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles
  - Communities ChooseWell recognizes communities for their efforts to promote healthy living for residents.
  - Nutrition guidelines for children and adults, Food Checker program on Healthy U website.
    - Alberta is a leader in nutritional guidelines and has the most stringent criteria on sodium and fat content
  - Provincial Screening Framework for early detection and prevention

# Government of Alberta Initiatives

- **Healthy U:** public information and education campaign

The screenshot displays the 'Healthy U' website interface. At the top, there is a 'Government of Alberta' header with a search bar and navigation links for 'Contact Us' and 'Using this Site'. Below the header, a breadcrumb trail reads 'Alberta.ca > Alberta Health and Wellness > Healthy U Home'. The main content area features the 'Healthy U' logo, which includes a stylized 'U' with an upward arrow, and a cartoon character holding a red apple. A horizontal navigation menu contains four categories: 'Active Living', 'Healthy Eating', 'Healthy Places', and 'About Healthy U'. Below this menu is a prominent banner for 'Action on Wellness - An International Symposium' held from October 11-13, 2011, at the Fairmont Banff Springs in Banff, Alberta, Canada. The banner includes the website's tagline 'Building a Healthier Tomorrow Together' and contact information. The lower section of the page is divided into several content tiles: 'Healthy Eating Toolkit' (Making food choices for a Healthy U), 'Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth', 'Hot Tips', 'In the News' (featuring an article on 'Launching into Physical Activity and Staying Active' with a photo of a person on a stationary bike), and 'What's On' (listing news items such as 'Congratulations to the 2010/2011 Food for Health Award Winners!', 'Try the NEW Healthy U Food Checker!', 'The new Physical Activity Counselling Toolkit is now available online!', and 'New Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines').

# Alberta Health System

- Alberta Health and Wellness (AHW)
  - Government Ministry responsible for the legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks.
- Alberta Health Services (AHS)
  - Delivery system
  - Promote and protect the health of the population in Alberta and work toward the prevention of disease and injury.
  - Determine priorities in the provision of health services in Alberta and allocate resources accordingly.
  - Recent integration of 12 entities.
- Common objective – improving access and the quality of patient care

# Government of Alberta Initiatives

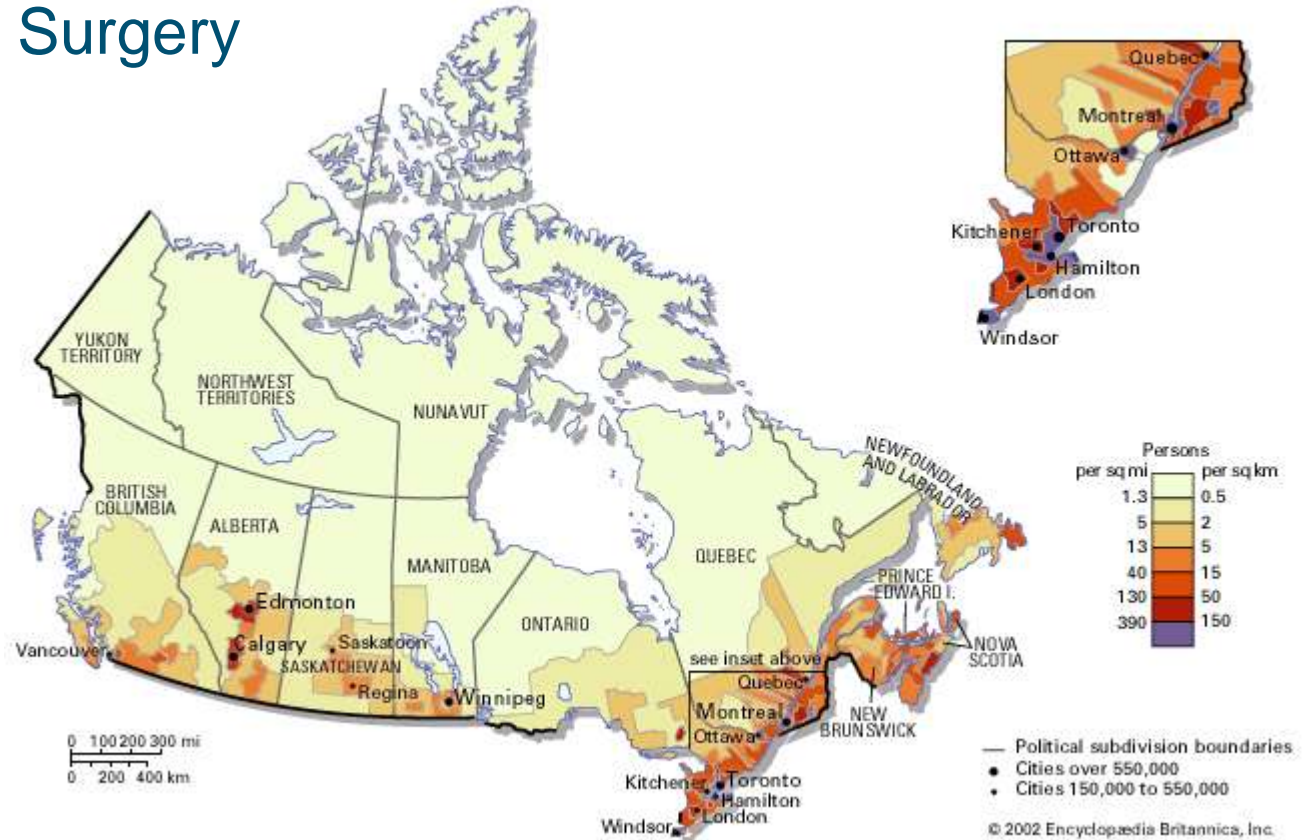
- Alberta is in an unprecedented position for long term planning and forward thinking
  - 5 year committed budget for the health care system
- *Becoming the Best: Alberta's 5-Year Health Action Plan* outlines key strategies to drive improvements in the Alberta health system
  - Be healthy, stay healthy: community education and prevention
  - Improve access and reduce wait times: timely access to bariatric services

# Coverage of Treatment Options

- Pharmacotherapy
  - Orlistat (Xenical) and sibutramine (Meridia, Apo-sibutramine) received marketing approval in Canada.
    - Alli, the OTC version of orlistat is not approved in Canada.
    - All sibutramine drugs were voluntarily withdrawn in Oct, 2010.
    - Rimonabant (Acomplia) is not approved in Canada.
  - Orlistat is not a benefit of provincial drug formularies, but may be covered through extended private insurance or other restricted programs:
    - Ontario through the Exceptional Access Program for the treatment of Type 2 Diabetics
    - Restricted use within the Canadian Forces

# Coverage of Treatment Options

- Surgery

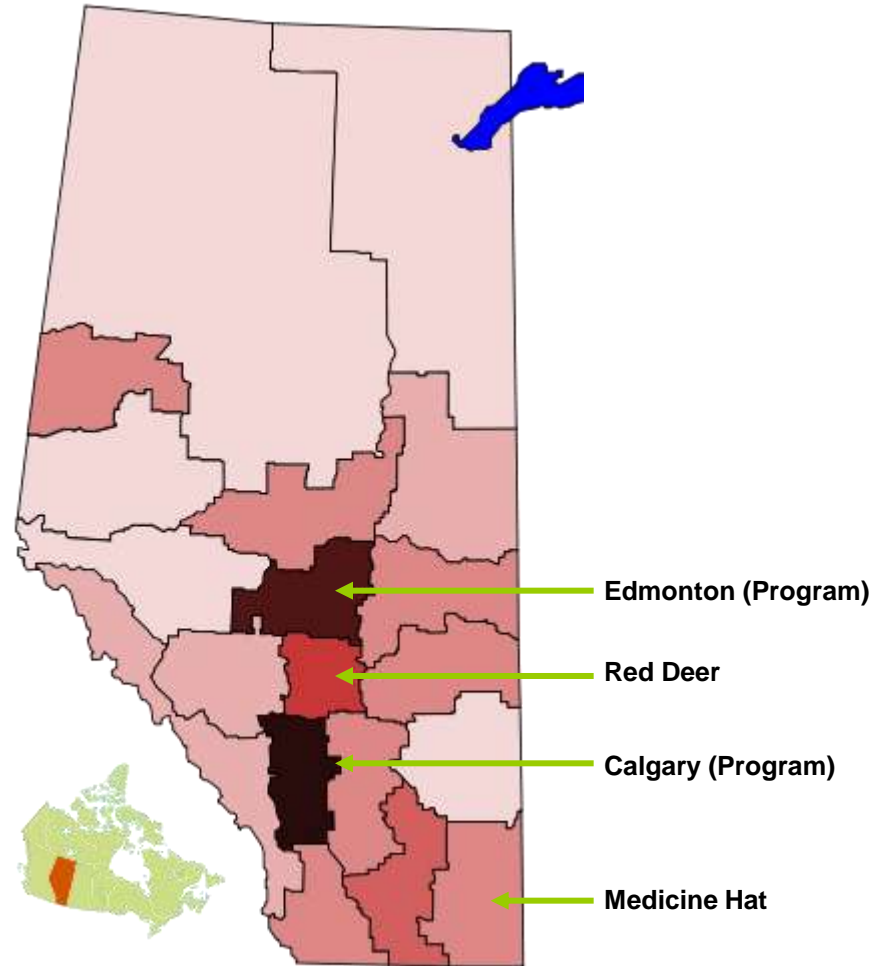
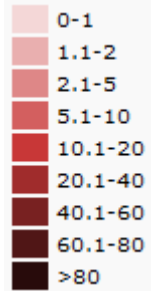


- All provinces provide some bariatric surgery publicly
- LAGB public in Alberta, Quebec and New Brunswick

# Coverage of Treatment Options

- **Surgery**

Population density map of Alberta census subdivisions. In people per square kilometer:



# The Alberta Health Technologies Decision Process (Decision Process)

- Established in 2003
- Provides evidence and information for making decisions on public funding of health technologies and services
- Main steps of the Decision Process:
  - Identification, selection and prioritization of technologies
  - Provincial review using the STEP analytic framework
  - Stakeholder engagement
  - Formulation of policy recommendations
- Where innovation meets practice

# Provincial Review of Bariatric Services

- Intended to provide information towards the development of a provincial bariatric program
  - To determine which bariatric services are most effective, and how Alberta should administer these bariatric services.
- Key findings of the review include:
  - Magnitude and durability of weight loss is modest and short-lived with lifestyle and pharmaceutical interventions.
  - Surgeries produce longer term weight loss.
  - Bariatric treatments are associated with improved health outcomes with additional costs to the health system.

# Alberta Health Services

- Committed up to \$11 million for a provincial obesity and chronic disease management initiative
- Funding will provide:
  - Additional 120 bariatric surgeries
  - Approximately 2,000 new patients to be seen for non-surgical specialty care
  - Expand primary care teams
- Future: developing a comprehensive program to address the obesity issue
  - Treatment as well as prevention strategies
  - Significant additional cost

# Leader in Research

- Alberta is also a leader in obesity research with multiple research universities and teaching hospitals.
- Dr. Arya Sharma, Professor of Medicine & Chair in Obesity Research and Management at the University of Alberta is a leading expert
  - Focus is on evidence-based management of obesity and related co-morbidities.
  - Scientific Director of the Canadian Obesity Network, based in Edmonton.
  - Medical Director of the Weight Wise Adult Weight Management Clinic, a model for comprehensive bariatric programs, offering medical, psychological, behaviour modification, and surgical interventions.

# Global Issue, Local Solutions

- Obesity is a growing problem for Alberta, Canada and North America.
  - The economic burden is of significant concern and a high priority
- Alberta is working towards finding economically sustainable solutions such as health promotion, preventing obesity, optimizing treatment options through evidence-based policy making, and cutting edge research.

# Questions?