

Why Health Insurance Reform? The Example of Type 2 Diabetes

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Health Issues Confronting Latinos/as

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type 2 diabetes

- AKA “adult-onset diabetes” or “non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (NIDDM)”
- Hyperglycemia resulting from the body’s inability to use blood sugar for energy. The pancreas cannot make sufficient insulin, or the body cannot use it correctly. Most glucose remains in the blood stream and cannot be moved into the cells and used for energy.
- Involves a genetic predisposition (usually); Mexican Americans have a relatively high frequency of the genes that cause it: 15.8% of the population on the U.S.-Mexico border has type 2 diabetes (Ruiz et al. 2005).
- Overweight, poor nutrition, and little physical activity dramatically increase the risk of developing the disease

type 2 diabetes

In 2003, at age 47, Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. His physician warned him that he probably had—at most—another 10 years to live. Heeding that warning, Gov. Huckabee underwent a dramatic program of diet, exercise, and supplements, losing more than 100 pounds and completely eradicating his diabetes and related health risks.*



A Latina grandmother in Houston did the same and was able to stop using insulin. There are many success stories like these, but they are little known.**

*Matt Sizing, Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee: A New State of Health for America. Life Extension Magazine, December 2005.

**Millard field notes, 2009.

type 2 diabetes

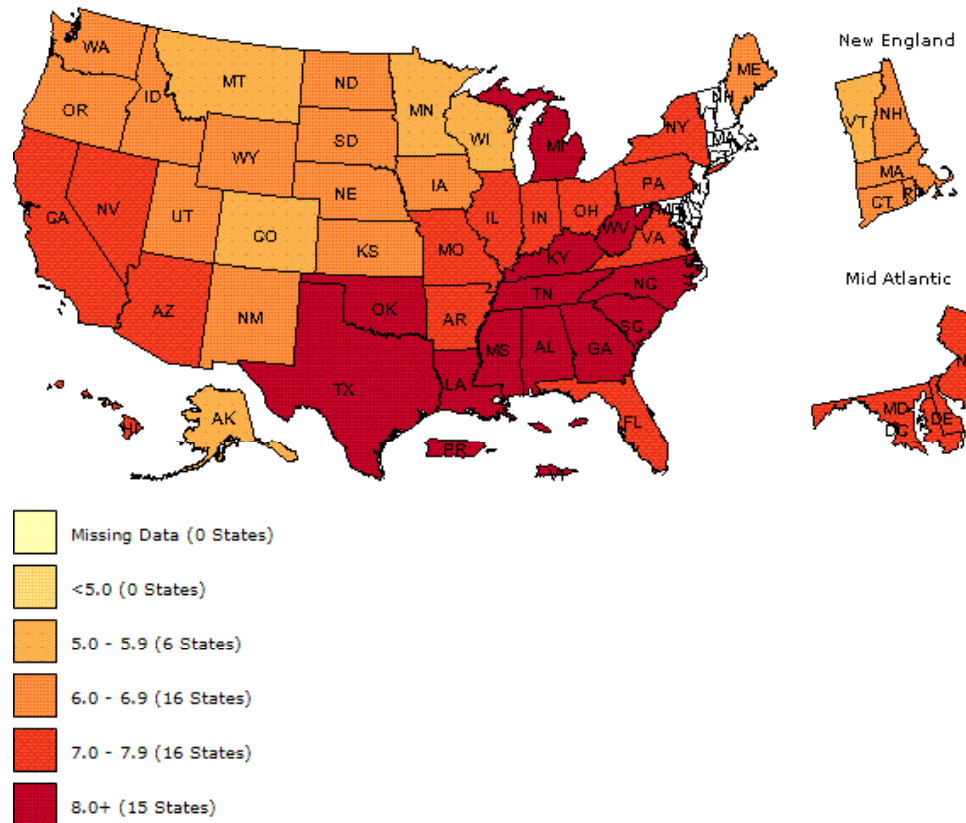
The onset of type 2 diabetes can be delayed for decades through good nutrition and sufficient physical activity.

- The Diabetes Prevention Program, a large prevention study of people at high risk for diabetes, showed that lifestyle intervention reduced the development of diabetes by 58% during a 3-year period.*
- The reduction was even greater, 71%, among adults aged 60 years or older.
- Interventions to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes in individuals with prediabetes can be feasible and cost-effective. Research has found that lifestyle interventions are more cost-effective than medications.

Many people do not know this, including diabetics.

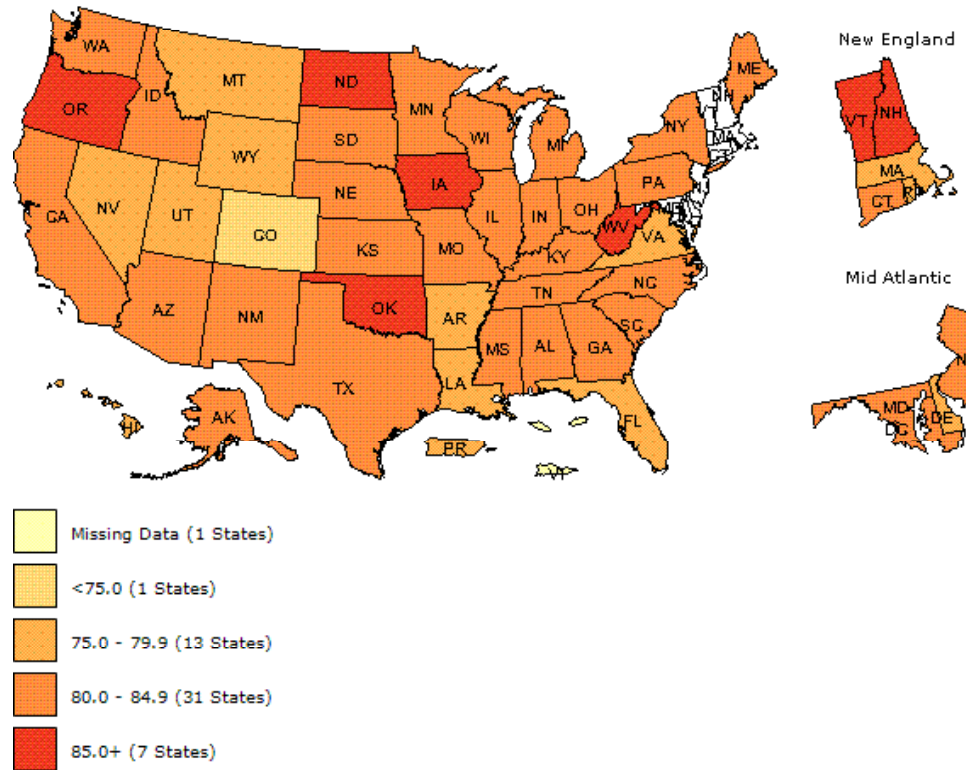
*National Diabetes Fact Sheet, 2007, CDC. www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/pdf/ndfs_2007.pdf Retrieved 3/12/09.

Percentage of adults with diagnosed diabetes by state, 2005

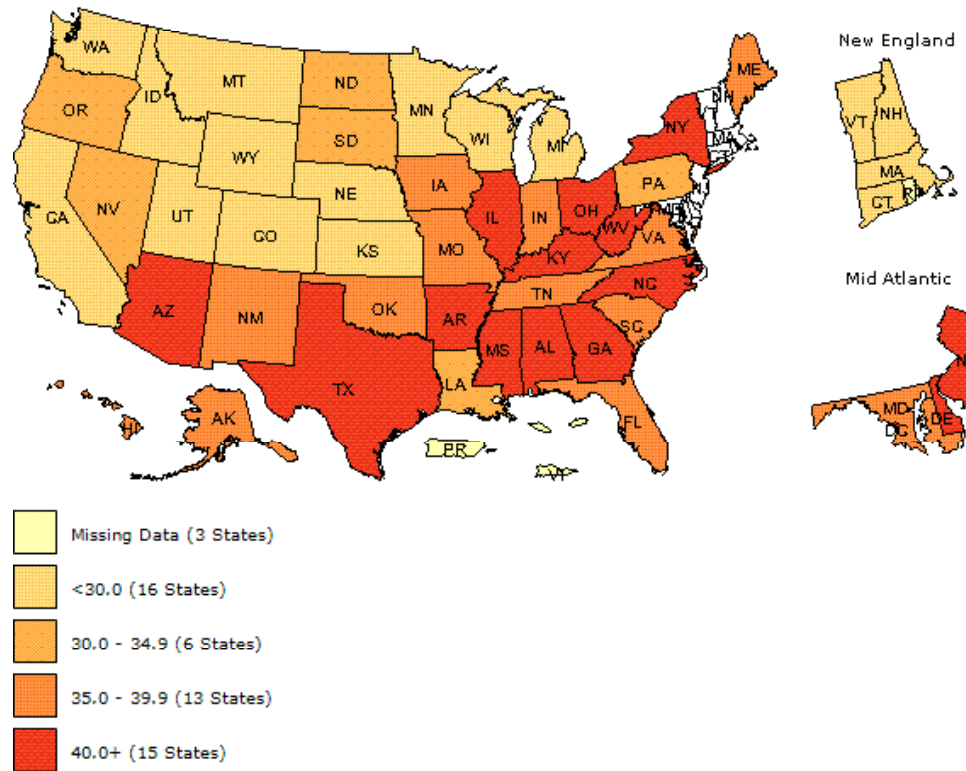


Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: National Diabetes Surveillance System. Available online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/statistics/index.htm>. Retrieved 3/12/2009.

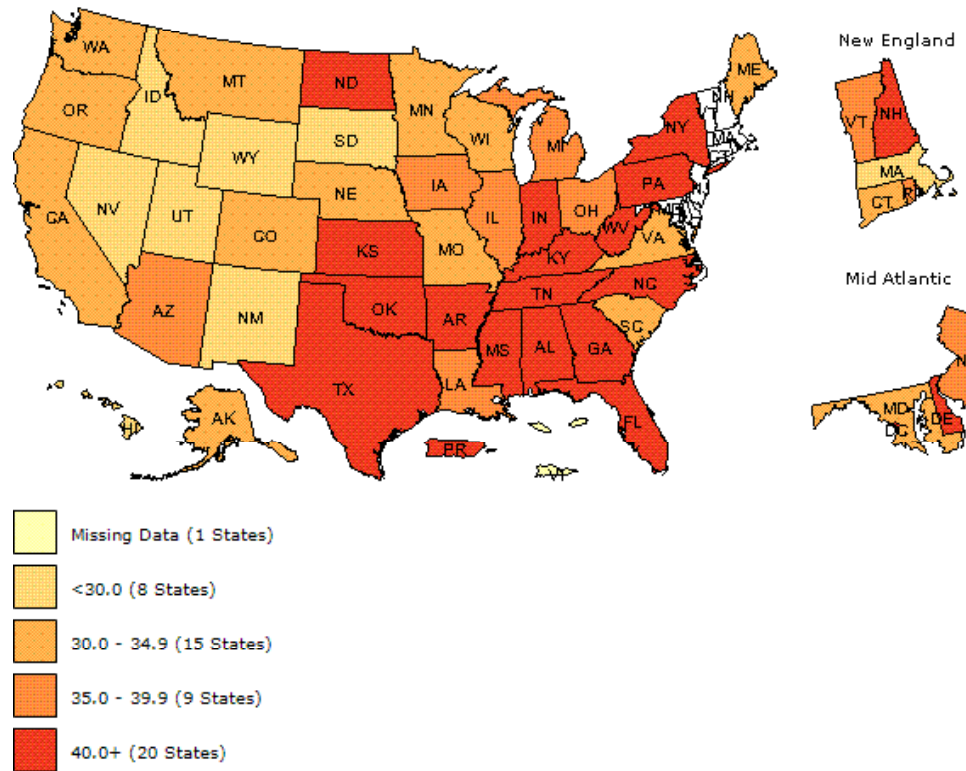
Percentage of adults who were overweight or obese by state, 2000



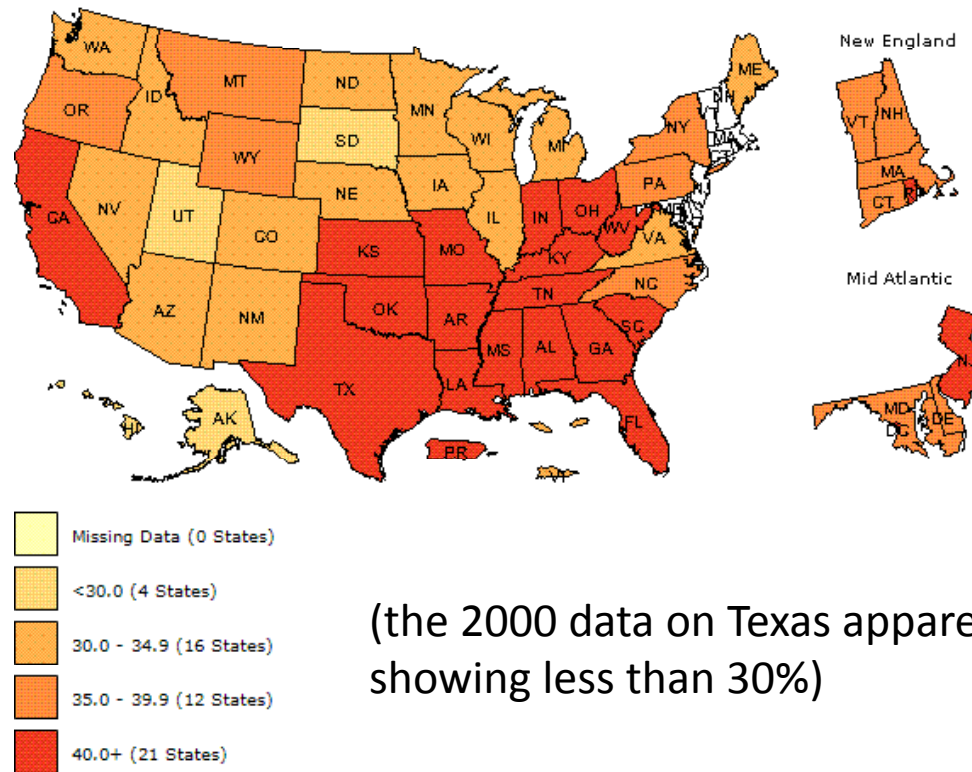
Percentage of diabetic adults who were physically inactive, 1994



Percentage of diabetic adults who were physically inactive, 1998



Percentage of diabetic adults who were physically inactive, 2005



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: National Diabetes Surveillance System.
Available online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/statistics/index.htm>. Retrieved 3/12/2009.

Deaths among people with diabetes, U.S., 2006

- Diabetes was the seventh leading cause of death listed on U.S. death certificates in 2006.
- Diabetes is likely to be underreported as a cause of death. (Only about 35% to 40% of decedents with diabetes had it listed anywhere on the death certificate and only about 10% to 15% had it listed as the underlying cause of death.)
- Overall, the risk for death among people with diabetes is about twice that of people without diabetes of similar age.

*National Diabetes Fact Sheet, 2007, CDC. www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/pdf/ndfs_2007.pdf Retrieved 3/12/09.

diabetes complications

Blindness

- Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness among adults aged 20–74 years.
- Diabetic retinopathy causes 12,000 to 24,000 new cases of blindness each year.

Kidney disease

- Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, accounting for 44% of new cases in 2005.
- In 2005, 46,739 people with diabetes began treatment for end-stage kidney disease in the United States and Puerto Rico.
- In 2005, a total of 178,689 people with end-stage kidney disease due to diabetes were living on chronic dialysis or with a kidney transplant in the United States and Puerto Rico.

*National Diabetes Fact Sheet, 2007, CDC. www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/pdf/ndfs_2007.pdf Retrieved 3/12/09.

diabetes complications

Amputations

- More than 60% of nontraumatic lower-limb amputations occur in people with diabetes.
- In 2004, about 71,000 nontraumatic lower-limb amputations were performed in people with diabetes.

*National Diabetes Fact Sheet, 2007, CDC. www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/pdf/ndfs_2007.pdf Retrieved 3/12/09.

Estimated diabetes costs, U.S., 2007

Total (direct and indirect): \$174 billion

Direct medical costs: \$116 billion

- After adjusting for population age and sex differences, average medical expenditures among people with diagnosed diabetes were 2.3 times higher than what expenditures would be in the absence of diabetes.

Indirect costs: \$58 billion (disability, work loss, premature mortality)

*National Diabetes Fact Sheet, 2007, CDC. www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/pdf/ndfs_2007.pdf Retrieved 3/12/09.

Conclusions

The late 20th and early 21st centuries as toxic for many U.S. populations because of poor nutrition and little physical activity. Causes are factors at many levels (individual, community, government, society at large)

Today: no prevention or medical assistance until uninsured diabetics become seriously ill, suffer greatly, need expensive medical care, and end with an early death.

In the case of type 2 diabetes, healthcare reform could make a real difference in the health of patients and the lives of their families. Good nutrition and physical activity in childhood and during the working years can prevent or delay onset of type 2 diabetes.