

Industry Fact Sheet

The advent of a fitness-specific Web TV channel is significant for our time, largely due both to the magnitude and escalation of obesity and related medical conditions in the United States and abroad as well as the emergence and burgeoning usage of Internet video technologies. This escalating “epidemic of obesity” has motivated consumers worldwide to seek health, fitness and weight-loss resources online at an ever-increasing rate. Consider the following:

- A 1999 study conducted at Brown University School of Medicine, as published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, found that those who participated in an Internet weight-loss program, which incorporated a behavioral component, lost three times as much weight than those who did not.
- A study published in *Obesity Research* and led by Jean Harvey-Berino of the University of Vermont found that an Internet program was as effective as in-person counseling in promoting long-term weight maintenance. After losing weight through a six-month program, participants were assigned to one of three groups, either frequent in-person support (F-IPS), minimal in-person support (M-IPS) or Internet support (IS). The researchers found that those in the Internet support group were able to sustain a comparable weight loss with those who received in-person support.
- Exercise linked to memory improvement. Adults with memory problems who participated in a home based physical activity program experienced a modest improvement in cognitive function, compared to those who did not participate in the program, according to a study in the September 3, 2008 issue of *JAMA*.
- An estimated 81 million people, or 63% of the 129 million people who access the Internet over broadband in the U.S., watch broadband video at home or at work, according to research conducted by The Nielsen Company. This number increased from 70 million in September 2006 to 81 million in March 2007, a jump of 16% in just six months.
- The number of Internet users worldwide reached 1407 million in March, 2008, according to Internet World Statistics.
- Less than one-third (31.8 percent) of U.S. adults get regular leisure-time physical activity (defined as light or moderate activity five times or more per week for 30 minutes or more each time and/or vigorous activity three times or more per week for 20 minutes or more each time). About 10 percent of adults do no physical activity at all in their leisure time. (*Barnes MA, Schoenborn CA. Physical activity among adults: United States, 2000. National Center for Health Statistics. Advance Data. 2003*)
- Approximately 127 million adults in the U.S. are overweight, 60 million are obese (Body Mass Index or BMI > 30) and 9 million are extremely obese (Body Mass Index or BMI > 40) (*American Obesity Association. AOA Fact Sheets: “Obesity in the U.S.”*)

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- Currently, an estimated 65.2 percent of U.S. adults, age 20 years and older, and 15 percent of children and adolescents are overweight and 30.5 percent are obese (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: National Center for Chronic Diseases Prevention and Health Promotion. "Defining Overweight and Obesity" & "Health, United States, 2004"*)
 - An estimated 400,000 deaths per year may be attributable to poor diet and low physical activity. (*Ali H. Mokdad, et. al, "Actual Causes of Death in the United States, 2000," JAMA. 2004*)
 - Obesity is the second leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. (*Ali H. Mokdad, et. al, "Actual Causes of Death in the United States, 2000," JAMA. 2004*)
 - According to Dr. Julie Gerberding, the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, obesity is the No. 1 health threat in the United States today as reported on CNN.com. The CDC's Dr. Gerberding noted that Americans are much more likely to die from cancer, heart disease, and diabetes caused by smoking, eating too much and exercising too little. "Unfortunately, poor diet and a lack of exercise have almost caught up with tobacco as being the leading cause of death in the United States," she said.
 - As the prevalence of overweight and obesity has increased in the United States, so have related health care costs—both direct and indirect. Direct health care costs refer to preventive, diagnostic, and treatment services (for example, physician visits, medications, and hospital and nursing home care). Indirect costs are the value of wages lost by people unable to work because of illness or disability, as well as the value of future earnings lost by premature death. What is the cost of overweight and obesity? As of 2001, total cost: \$117 billion, Direct cost: \$61 billion, Indirect cost: \$56 billion, which is a figure comparable to the economic costs of cigarette smoking. (*Wolf, AM, Manson JE, Colditz GA. The Economic Impact of Overweight, Obesity and Weight Loss. In: Eckel R, ed. Obesity: Mechanisms and Clinical Management. Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins; 2002.*)
 - Researchers at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that as many as 47 million Americans may exhibit a cluster of medical conditions (a "metabolic syndrome" or "Syndrome X") characterized by insulin resistance and the presence of obesity, excessive abdominal fat, high blood sugar and triglycerides, high blood pressure (hypertension) and high cholesterol (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. "Prevalence Among U.S. Adults of a Metabolic Syndrome Associated with Obesity." 2002*)
 - Exercise can help expectant moms in mind as well as body. One study suggests that women who stay active and are more positive about their changing shapes might improve their body image and protect themselves from depression both during and after pregnancy. "Our study supports the psychological benefits of exercise to improve body image and lessen depressive symptoms," said lead study author Danielle Symons Downs, Ph.D., associate professor of kinesiology and obstetrics and gynecology at Penn State University. "There is no question that pregnant women, in consultation with their health care providers, should try to maintain a regular and moderate exercise regimen," said Michael O'Hara, Ph.D., professor of psychology at the University of Iowa, in response to this finding. The American College of Sports Medicine also recommends that healthy pregnant women without obstetric complications engage in 30 minutes of moderate exercise most, if not all, days of the week.