

Report card South Korea



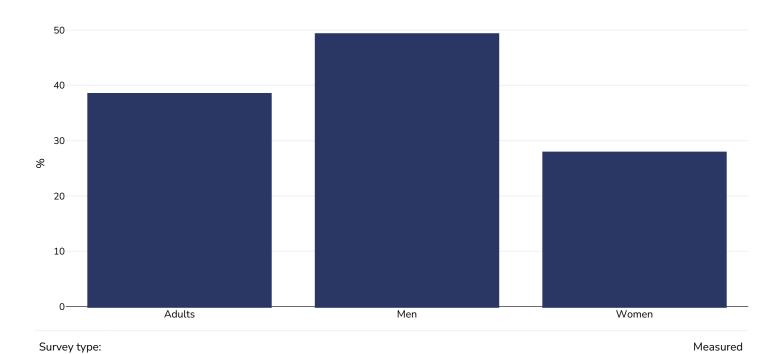
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Obesity prevalence

Adults, 2021





Age: 20+

Area National

covered:

Notes:

References:

Jeong, S.M., Jung, J.H., Yang, Y.S., Kim, W., Cho, I.Y., Lee, Y.B., Park, K.Y., Nam, G.E. and Han, K., 2024. 2023 Obesity Fact Sheet: Prevalence of Obesity and Abdominal Obesity in Adults, Adolescents, and Children in Korea from 2012 to 2021.

Journal of Obesity & Metabolic Syndrome, 33(1), p.27.

Data from the Korean National Health Insurance Service health checkup database (covers 97% of the population). The missing 3% are Koreans in the lowest income bracket. The prevalence of obesity was standardised by age and sex based on the 2010 population and housing census.

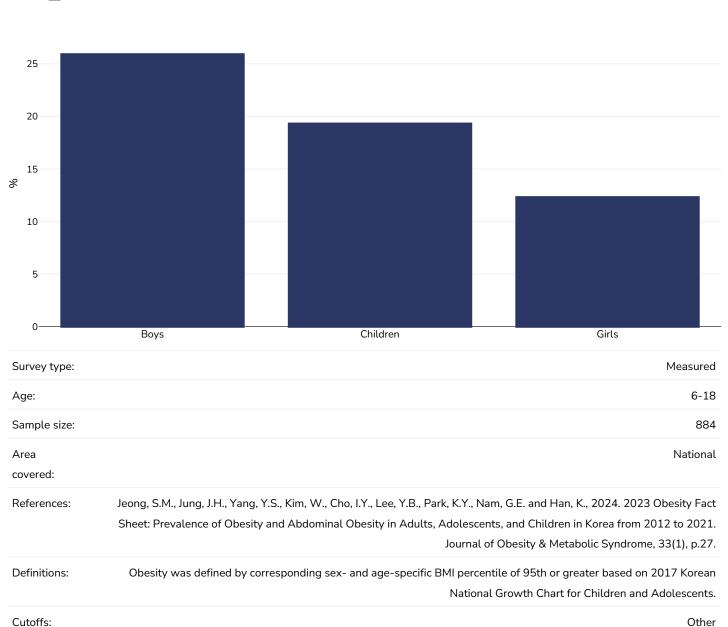
Cutoffs: WHO Asia

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².



Children, 2021

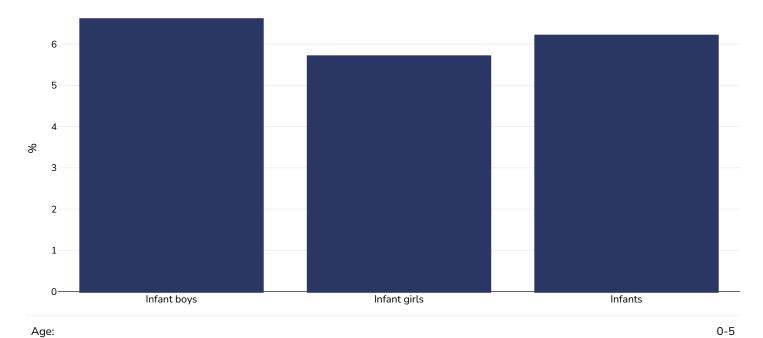






Infants, 2019-2021

Overweight or obesity



Sample 1414207

size:

References: NHANES: South Korea National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2019-21

Notes: UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates Expanded Database: Overweight (Survey Estimates), May 2023,

New York. For more information about the methodology, please consult https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme-2023-country-consultations/ Percentage of children under 5 years of age falling above 2 standard deviations (moderate and severe) from the median weight-for-height of the reference population.

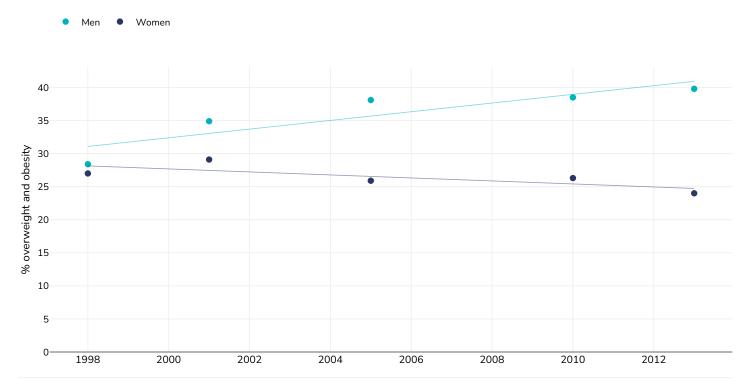
Definitions: =>+2SD



% Adults living with obesity



% Adults living with obesity in South Korea 1998-2014



Survey Measured

type:

References: Jae Yong Lee, Yi-Ryoung Lee, Hyoung-Ryoul Kim, Jun-Pyo Myong, Mo-Yeol Kang, Trends in Obesity Prevalence by Occupation
Based on Korean National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey From 1998 to 2015, Safety and Health at Work Vol 11
(1):2020:97-102

Notes: 2007-9 (marked as 2008), 2010-2012 (marked as 2011), 2013-15 (marked as 2014)

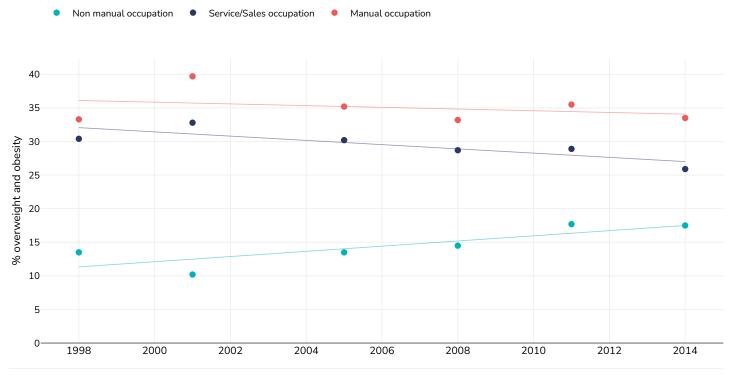
Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.



% Adults living with overweight or obesity by socioeconomic group in South Korea 1998-2014

Women



Survey Measured type:

References: Jae Yong Lee, Yi-Ryoung Lee, Hyoung-Ryoul Kim, Jun-Pyo Myong, Mo-Yeol Kang, Trends in Obesity Prevalence by Occupation

Based on Korean National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey From 1998 to 2015, Safety and Health at Work Vol 11

(1):2020:97-103

Notes:

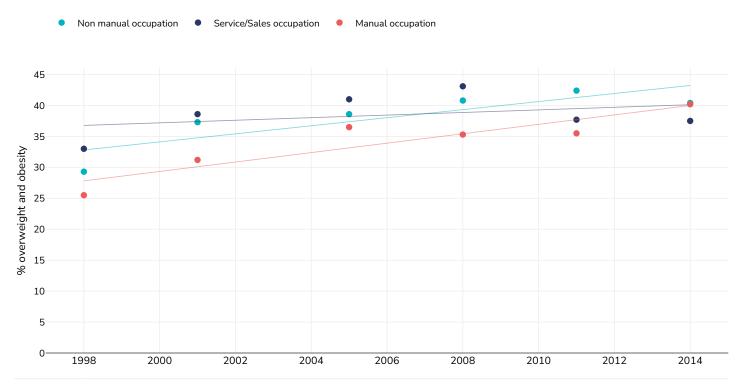
2007-9 (marked as 2008), 2010-2012 (marked as 2011), 2013-15 (marked as 2014)

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.



Men



Survey Measured type:

References: Jae Yong Lee, Yi-Ryoung Lee, Hyoung-Ryoul Kim, Jun-Pyo Myong, Mo-Yeol Kang, Trends in Obesity Prevalence by Occupation

Based on Korean National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey From 1998 to 2015, Safety and Health at Work Vol 11

(1):2020:97-103

Notes: 2007-9 (marked as 2008), 2010-2012 (marked as 2011), 2013-15 (marked as 2014)

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².

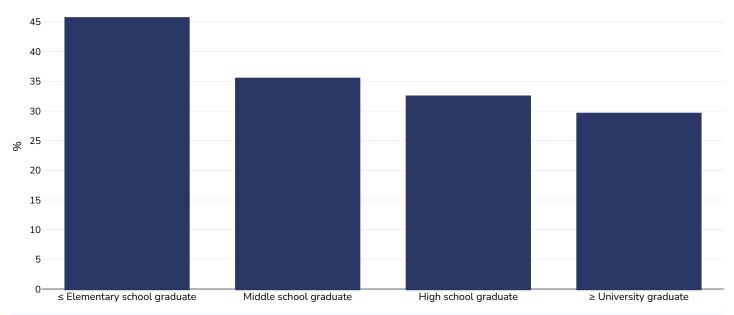
Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.



Overweight/obesity by education

Adults, 2018

Overweight or obesity



Survey type:
Age:
Area Covered:

Measured type:

20+

References: Nam, Ga Eun, et al. "Obesity Fact Sheet in Korea, 2019: Prevalence of Obesity and Abdominal Obesity from 2009 to 2018 and Social Factors." Journal of Obesity & Metabolic Syndrome, vol. 29, no. 2, 30 June 2020, pp. 124–132, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7338491/, 10.7570/jomes20058. Accessed 18 Oct. 2021.

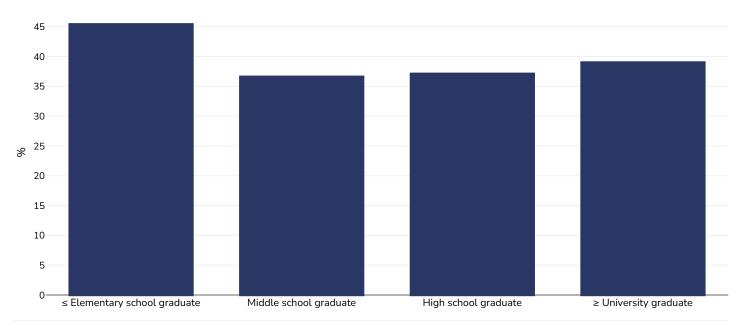
Definitions: Data from the Korean National Health Insurance Service health checkup database.

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².



Men, 2018

Overweight or obesity



Survey	Measured
type:	
Age:	20+
Area	National
covered:	

References: Nam, Ga Eun, et al. "Obesity Fact Sheet in Korea, 2019: Prevalence of Obesity and Abdominal Obesity from 2009 to 2018 and Social Factors." Journal of Obesity & Metabolic Syndrome, vol. 29, no. 2, 30 June 2020, pp. 124–132, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7338491/, 10.7570/jomes20058. Accessed 18 Oct. 2021.

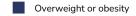
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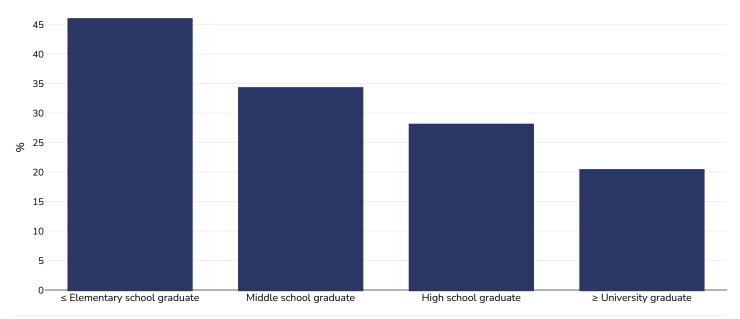
Data from the Korean National Health Insurance Service health checkup database.

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².



Women, 2018





Survey	Measured
type:	
Age:	20+
Area	National
covered:	

References: Nam, Ga Eun, et al. "Obesity Fact Sheet in Korea, 2019: Prevalence of Obesity and Abdominal Obesity from 2009 to 2018 and Social Factors." Journal of Obesity & Metabolic Syndrome, vol. 29, no. 2, 30 June 2020, pp. 124–132, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7338491/, 10.7570/jomes20058. Accessed 18 Oct. 2021.

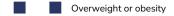
Definitions:

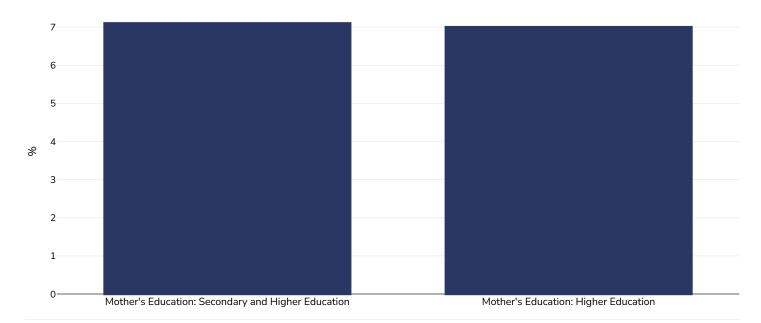
Data from the Korean National Health Insurance Service health checkup database.

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².



Infants, 2016-2018





Sample 1704906

size:

NHANES: South Korea National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2016-2018

References:

Notes:

UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates Expanded Database: Overweight (Survey Estimates), May 2023, New York. For more information about the methodology, please consult https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme-2023-country-consultations/ Percentage of children under 5 years of age falling above 2 standard deviations (moderate and severe) from the median weight-for-height of the reference population.

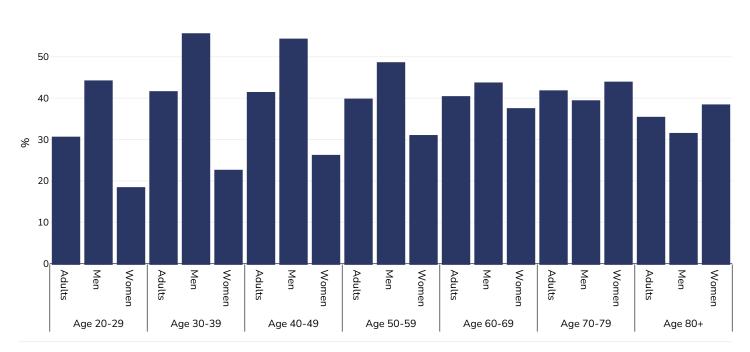
Definitions: =>+2SD



Overweight/obesity by age

Adults, 2021

Overweight or obesity



Survey type: Measured

Area National

covered:

References: Jeong, S.M., Jung, J.H., Yang, Y.S., Kim, W., Cho, I.Y., Lee, Y.B., Park, K.Y., Nam, G.E. and Han, K., 2024. 2023 Obesity Fact Sheet: Prevalence of Obesity and Abdominal Obesity in Adults, Adolescents, and Children in Korea from 2012 to 2021.

Journal of Obesity & Metabolic Syndrome, 33(1), p.27.

Notes: Data from the Korean National Health Insurance Service health checkup database (covers 97% of the population). The missing 3% are Koreans in the lowest income bracket. The prevalence of obesity was standardised by age and sex based on the 2010 population and housing census.

Definitions: WHO Asian cutoffs shown for BMI greater than or equal to 25kg/m² to allow comparison with non-Asian cutoffs. Data for overweight and obesity separately using WHO Asian cutoffs is not available in the paper.

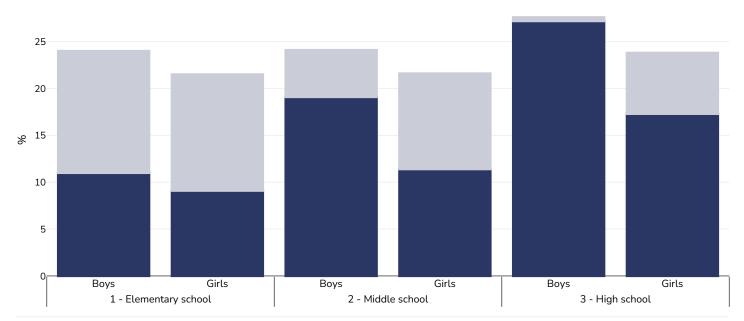
Cutoffs: WHO Asia

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².



Children, 2017





Survey type:	Measured
Area covered:	National
References:	Kim, Jae Hyun, and Jin Soo Moon. "Secular Trends in Pediatric Overweight and Obesity in Korea." Journal of Obesity & Metabolic Syndrome, vol. 29, no. 1, 30 Mar. 2020, pp. 12–17, 10.7570/jomes20002. Accessed 18 Oct. 2021.
Notes:	Data from the National School Health Examination 2017
Cutoffs:	WHO

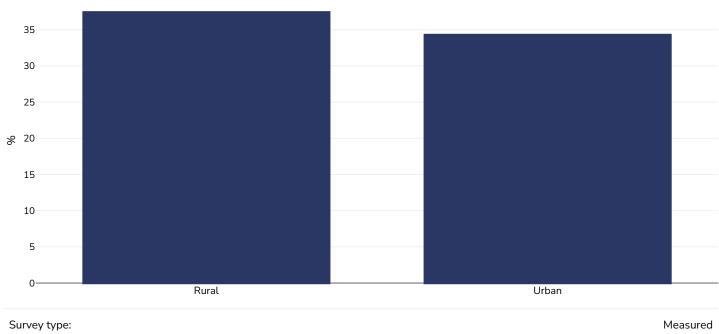


Overweight/obesity by region

Adults, 2017

References:

Overweight or obesity



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	19+
Sample size:	6126
Area	National

covered:

Lee J, Sa J. Regional disparities in healthy eating and nutritional status in South Korea: Korea National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2017. Nutr Res Pract. 2020 Dec;14(6):679-690. doi: 10.4162/nrp.2020.14.6.679. Epub 2020 Oct 7.

PMID: 33282128; PMCID: PMC7683206.

Definitions: WHO Asian cutoffs shown for BMI greater than or equal to 25kg/m² to allow comparison with non-Asian cutoffs.

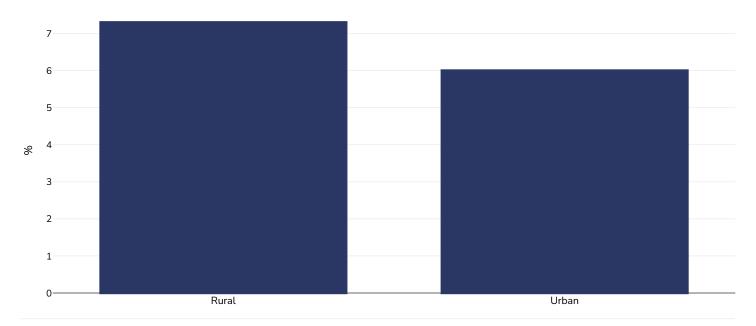
Cutoffs: WHO Asia

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².



Infants, 2019-2021

Overweight or obesity



Sample 1414207

References:

size:

NHANES: South Korea National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2019-21

Notes:

UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates Expanded Database: Overweight (Survey Estimates), May 2023, New York. For more information about the methodology, please consult https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme-2023-country-consultations/ Percentage of children under 5 years of age falling above 2 standard deviations (moderate and severe) from the median weight-for-height of the reference population.

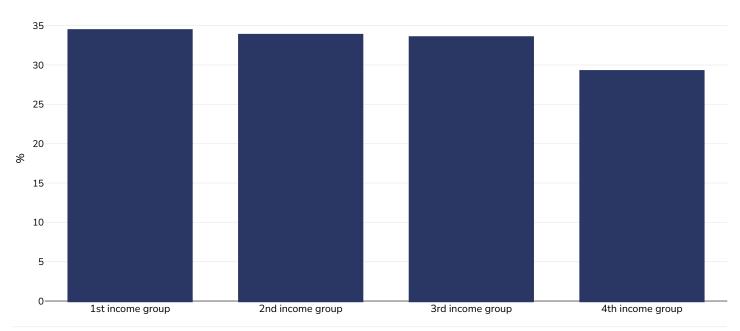
Definitions: =>+2SD



Overweight/obesity by socio-economic group

Adults, 2018

Overweight or obesity



Survey type:
Age: 20+
Area National covered:

References: Nam, Ga Eun, et al. "Obesity Fact Sheet in Korea, 2019: Prevalence of Obesity and Abdominal Obesity from 2009 to 2018 and Social Factors." Journal of Obesity & Metabolic Syndrome, vol. 29, no. 2, 30 June 2020, pp. 124–132, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7338491/, 10.7570/jomes20058. Accessed 18 Oct. 2021.

Notes:

Data from the Korean National Health Insurance Service health checkup database.

Definitions:

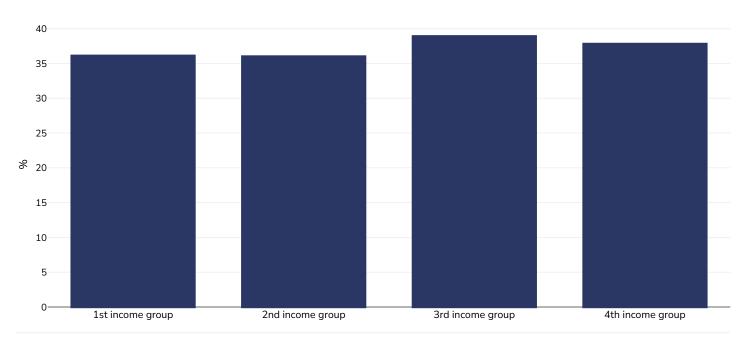
WHO Asia

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².



Men, 2018





Survey	Measured
type:	
Age:	20+
Area	National
covered:	

References: Nam, Ga Eun, et al. "Obesity Fact Sheet in Korea, 2019: Prevalence of Obesity and Abdominal Obesity from 2009 to 2018 and Social Factors." Journal of Obesity & Metabolic Syndrome, vol. 29, no. 2, 30 June 2020, pp. 124–132, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7338491/, 10.7570/jomes20058. Accessed 18 Oct. 2021.

Notes:

Data from the Korean National Health Insurance Service health checkup database.

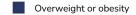
Definitions:

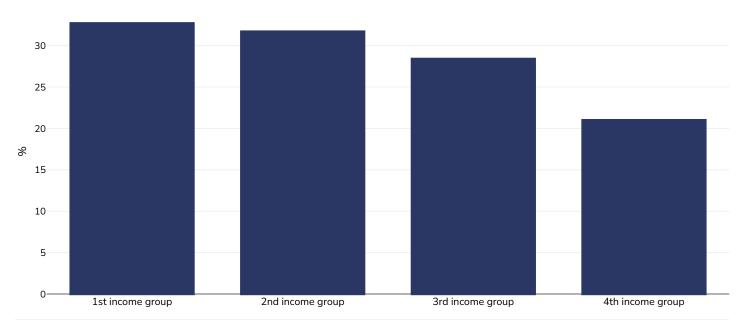
WHO Asia

 $Unless \ otherwise \ noted, overweight \ refers \ to \ a \ BMI \ between \ 25kg \ and \ 29.9kg/m^2, obesity \ refers \ to \ a \ BMI \ greater \ than \ 30kg/m^2.$



Women, 2018





Survey Measured type:

Age: 20+

Area National covered:

References: Nam, Ga Eun, et al. "Obesity Fact Sheet in Korea, 2019: Prevalence of Obesity and Abdominal Obesity from 2009 to 2018 and Social Factors." Journal of Obesity & Metabolic Syndrome, vol. 29, no. 2, 30 June 2020, pp. 124–132, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7338491/, 10.7570/jomes20058. Accessed 18 Oct. 2021.

Notes: Data from the Korean National Health Insurance Service health checkup database.

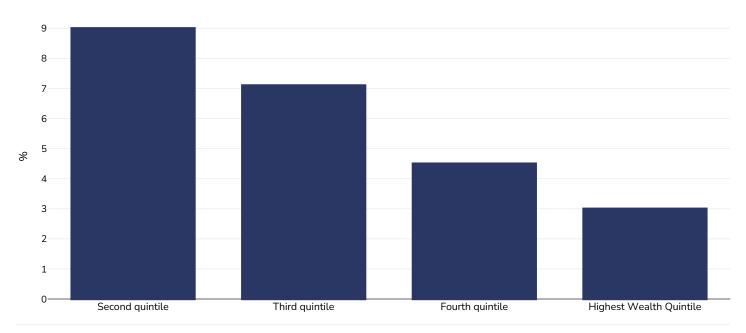
Definitions: WHO Asia

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².



Infants, 2019-2021

Overweight or obesity



Sample 1414207

size:

References: NHANES: South Korea National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2019-21

Notes:

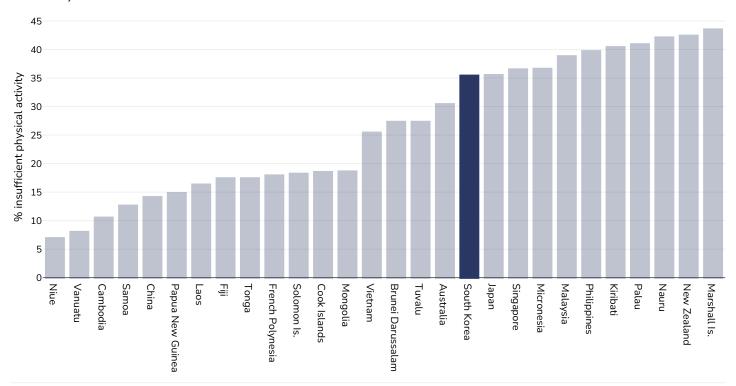
UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates Expanded Database: Overweight (Survey Estimates), May 2023, New York. For more information about the methodology, please consult https://data.unicef.org/resources/jme-2023-country-consultations/ Percentage of children under 5 years of age falling above 2 standard deviations (moderate and severe) from the median weight-for-height of the reference population.

Definitions: =>+2SD



Insufficient physical activity

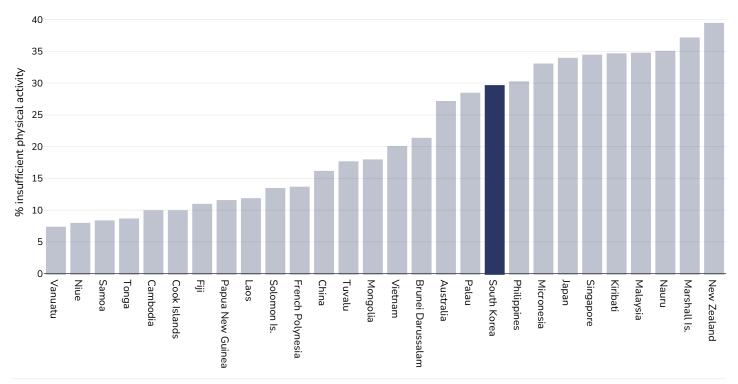
Adults, 2016



References: Guthold R, Stevens GA, Riley LM, Bull FC. Worldwide trends in insufficient physical activity from 2001 to 2016: a pooled analysis of 358 population-based surveys with 1.9 million participants. Lancet 2018 http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X
(18)30357-7



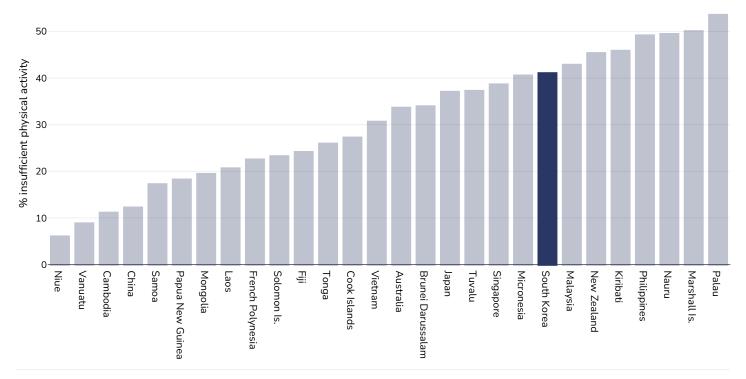
Men, 2016



References: Guthold R, Stevens GA, Riley LM, Bull FC. Worldwide trends in insufficient physical activity from 2001 to 2016: a pooled analysis of 358 population-based surveys with 1.9 million participants. Lancet 2018 http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X (18)30357-7



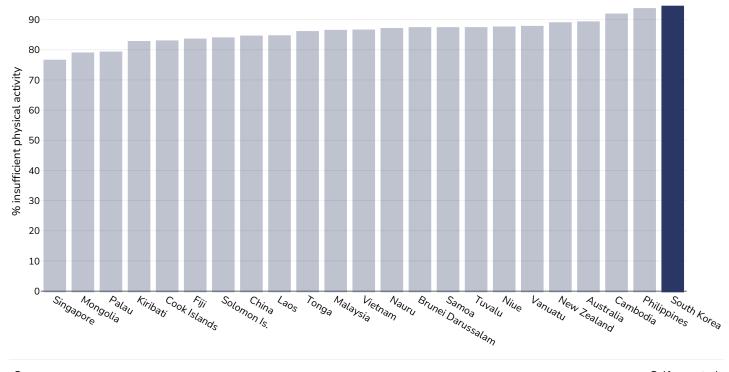
Women, 2016



References: Guthold R, Stevens GA, Riley LM, Bull FC. Worldwide trends in insufficient physical activity from 2001 to 2016: a pooled analysis of 358 population-based surveys with 1.9 million participants. Lancet 2018 http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X
(18)30357-7



Children, 2016

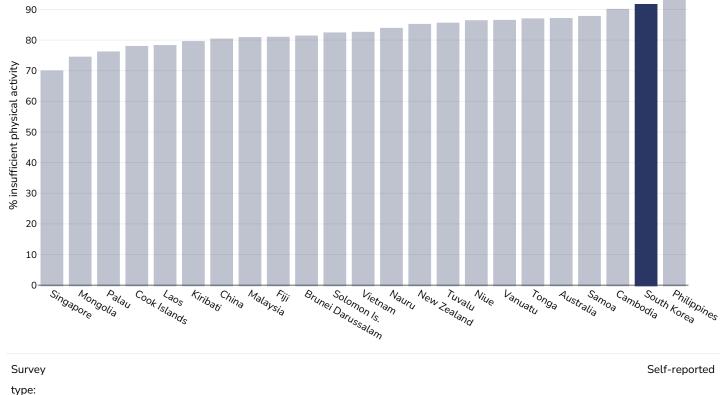


Survey	Self-reported Self-reported
type:	
Age:	11-17
References:	Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation, https://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A893ADO?lang=en (last accessed 16.03.21)
Notes:	% of school going adolescents not meeting WHO recommendations on Physical Activity for Health, i.e. doing less than 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily.
Definitions:	% Adolescents insufficiently active (age standardised estimate)



Boys, 2016

References:



Saivey	reported
type:	
Age:	11-17

https://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A893ADO?lang=en (last accessed 16.03.21)

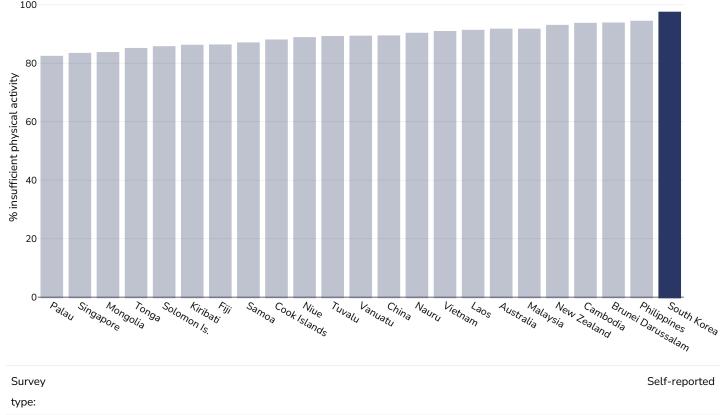
Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation,

Notes: % of school going adolescents not meeting WHO recommendations on Physical Activity for Health, i.e. doing less than 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily.

Definitions: % Adolescents insufficiently active (age standardised estimate)



Girls, 2016



Age: 11-17

References: Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation,

https://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A893ADO?lang=en (last accessed 16.03.21)

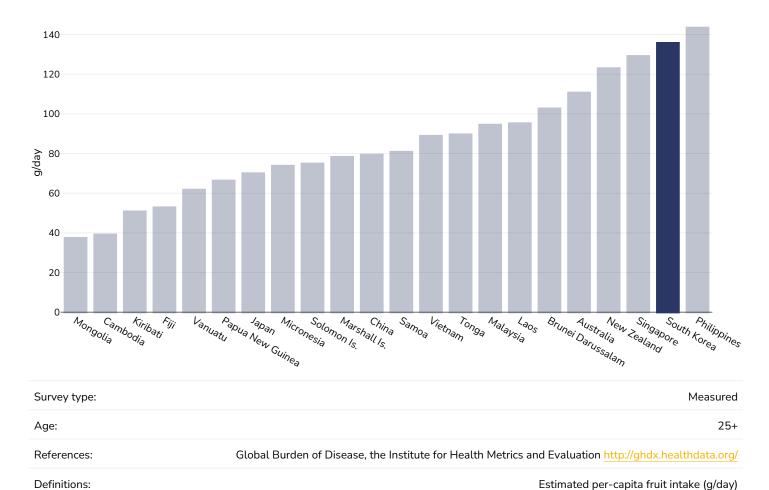
Notes: % of school going adolescents not meeting WHO recommendations on Physical Activity for Health, i.e. doing less than 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily.

Definitions: % Adolescents insufficiently active (age standardised estimate)



Estimated per capita fruit intake

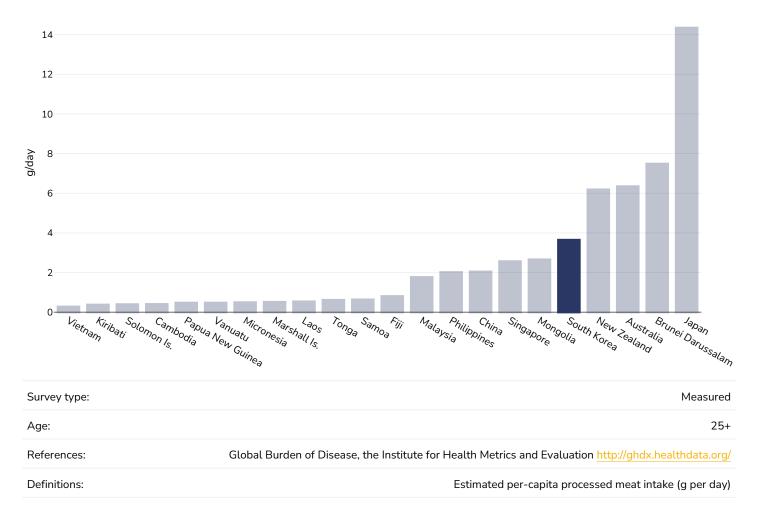
Adults, 2017





Estimated per-capita processed meat intake

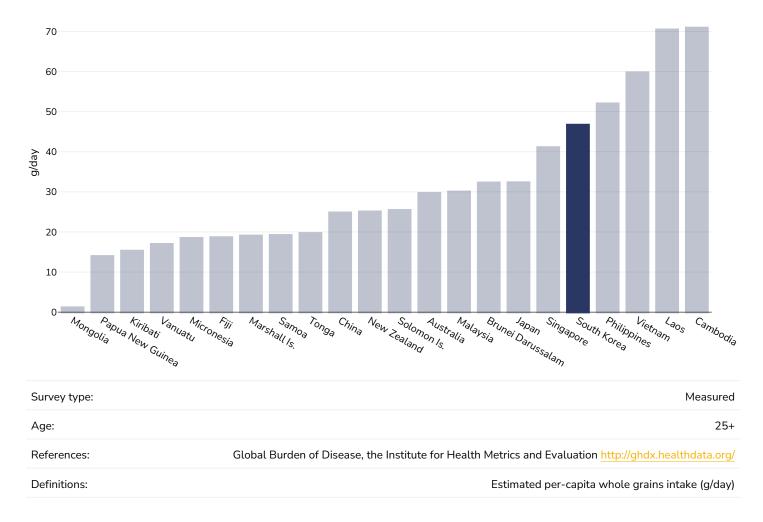
Adults, 2017





Estimated per capita whole grains intake

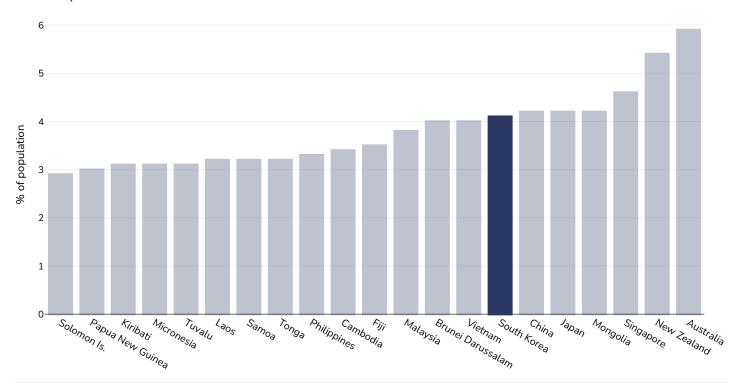
Adults, 2017





Mental health - depression disorders

Adults, 2015



References: Prevalence data from Global Burden of Disease study 2015 (http://ghdx.healthdata.org) published in: Depression and Other Common Mental Disorders: Global Health Estimates. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

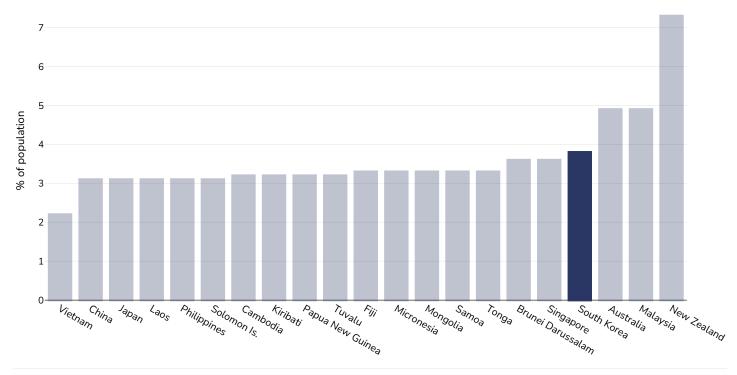
Definitions:

% of population with depression disorders



Mental health - anxiety disorders

Adults, 2015



References: Prevalence data from Global Burden of Disease study 2015 (http://ghdx.healthdata.org) published in: Depression and Other Common Mental Disorders: Global Health Estimates. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

Definitions: % of population with anxiety disorders



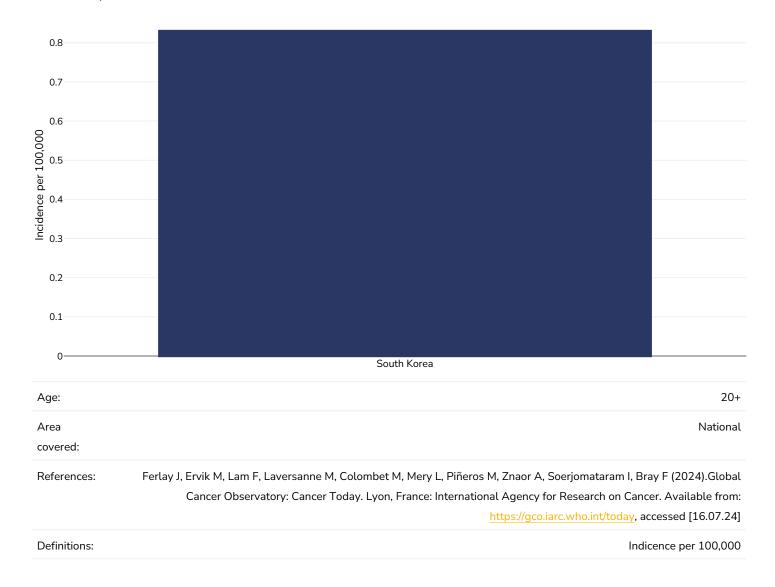
Oesophageal cancer

Men, 2022





Women, 2022

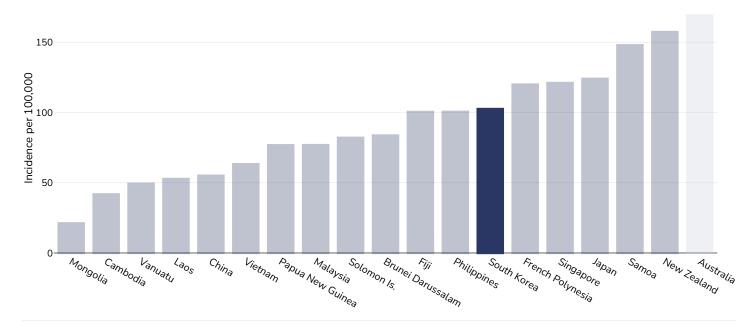




Breast cancer

Women, 2022





Area National covered:

References:

Ferlay J, Ervik M, Lam F, Laversanne M, Colombet M, Mery L, Piñeros M, Znaor A, Soerjomataram I, Bray F (2024). Global Cancer Observatory: Cancer Today. Lyon, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer. Available from:

https://gco.iarc.who.int/today, accessed [16.07.24]

Definitions: Incidence per 100,000



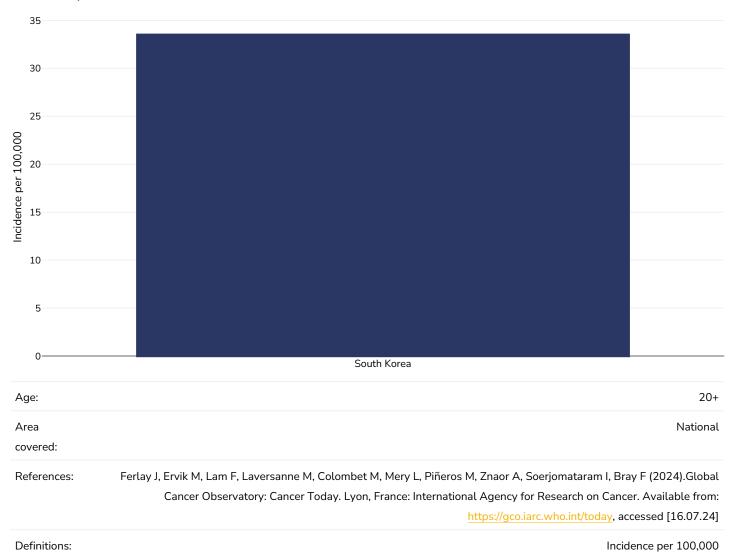
Colorectal cancer

Men, 2022





Women, 2022

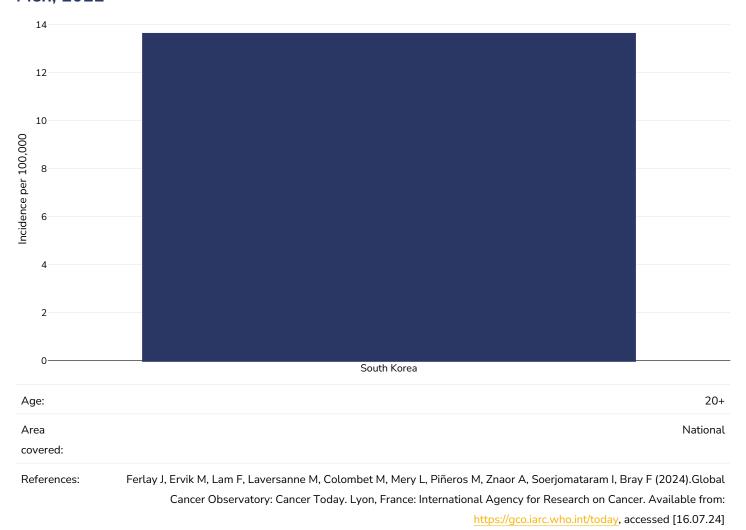




Pancreatic cancer

Men, 2022

Definitions:



Incidence per 100,000

37



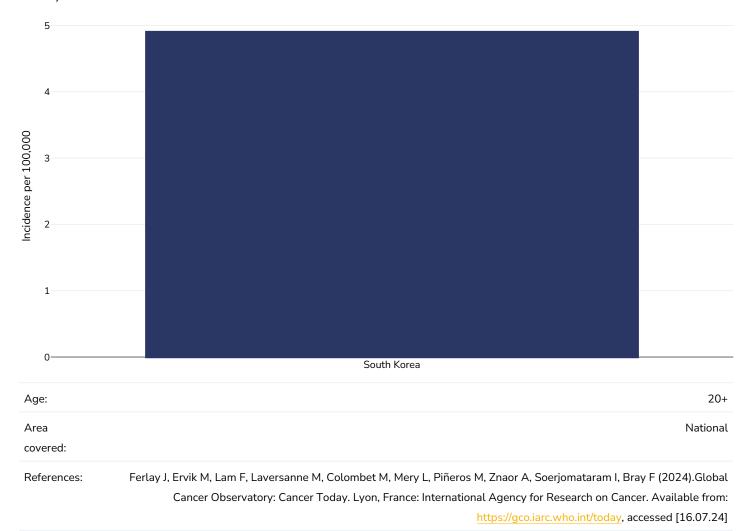




Gallbladder cancer

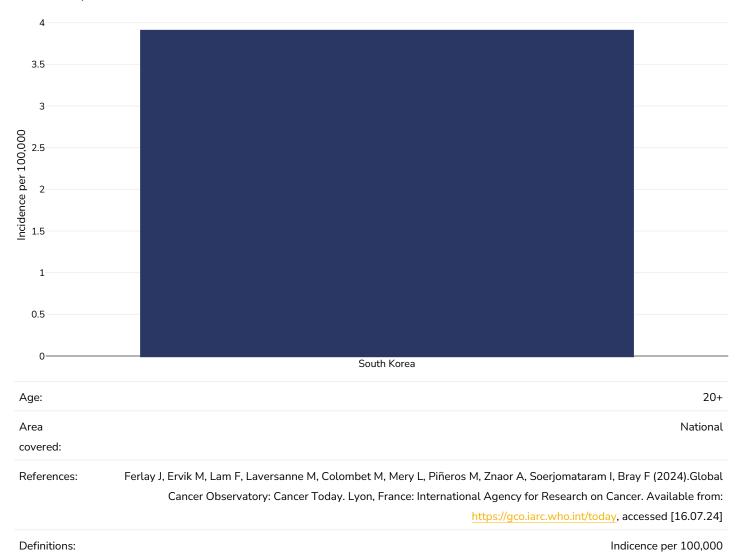
Men, 2022

Definitions:



Indicence per 100,000

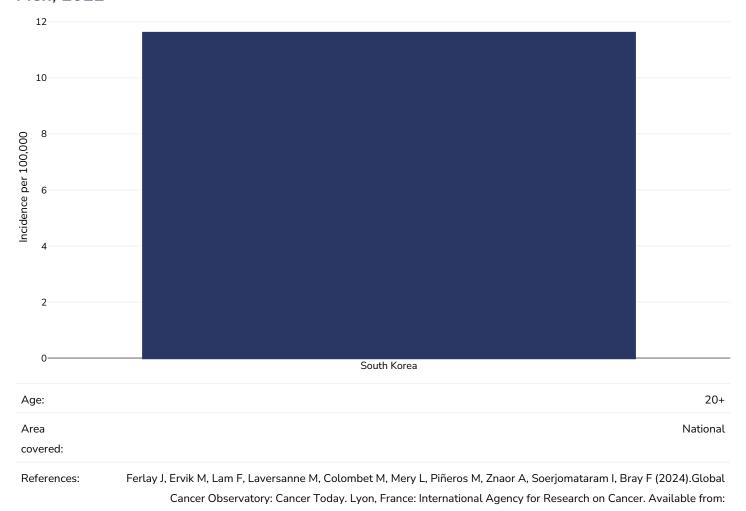






Kidney cancer

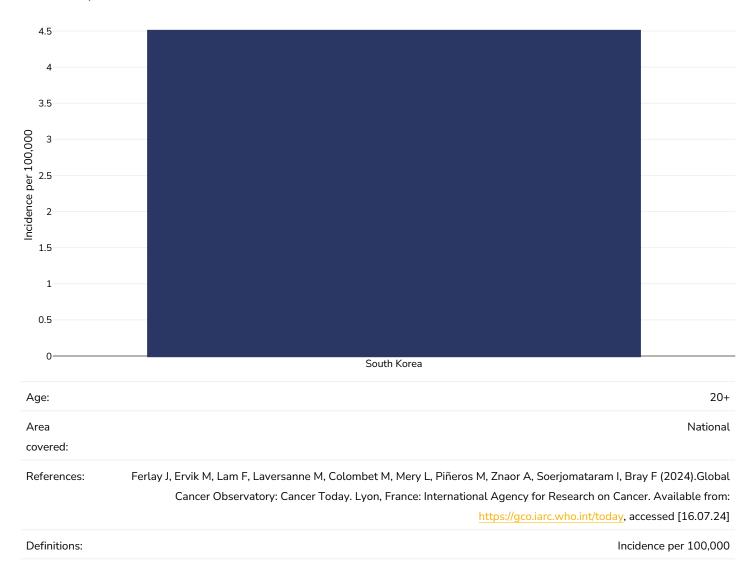
Men, 2022



Definitions: Incidence per 100,000

https://gco.iarc.who.int/today, accessed [16.07.24]







Cancer of the uterus

Women, 2022



Age: 20+

References:

Ferlay J, Ervik M, Lam F, Laversanne M, Colombet M, Mery L, Piñeros M, Znaor A, Soerjomataram I, Bray F (2024). Global Cancer Observatory: Cancer Today. Lyon, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer. Available from:

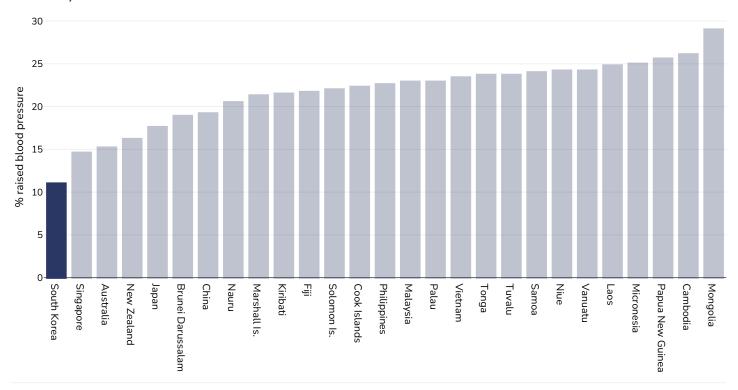
https://gco.iarc.who.int/today, accessed [16.07.24]

Definitions: Incidence per 100,000



Raised blood pressure

Adults, 2015



References:

Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation,

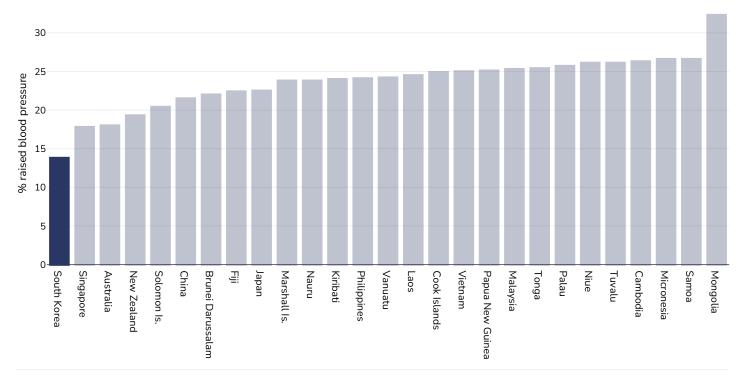
http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A875?lang=en

Definitions:

Age Standardised estimated % Raised blood pressure 2015 (SBP>=140 OR DBP>=90).



Men, 2015



References:

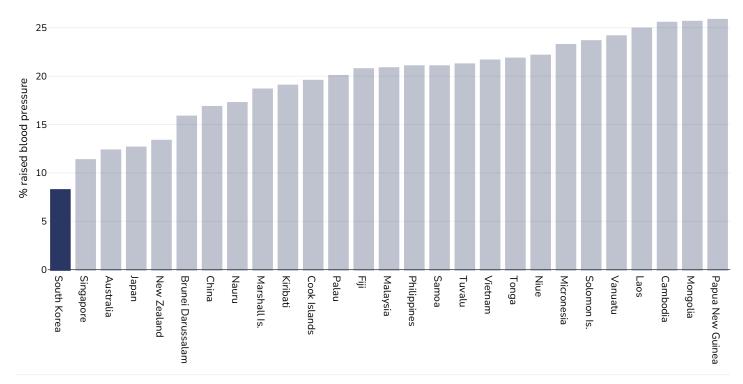
Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation,

http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A875?lang=en

Definitions:

Age Standardised estimated % Raised blood pressure 2015 (SBP>=140 OR DBP>=90).





References:

Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation,

http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A875?lang=en

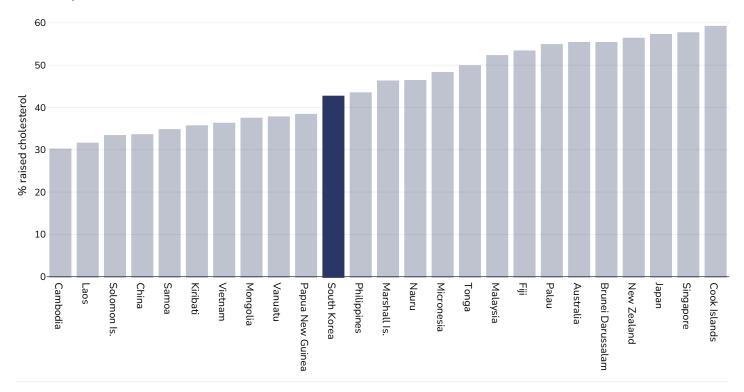
Definitions:

Age Standardised estimated % Raised blood pressure 2015 (SBP>=140 OR DBP>=90).



Raised cholesterol

Adults, 2008



References:

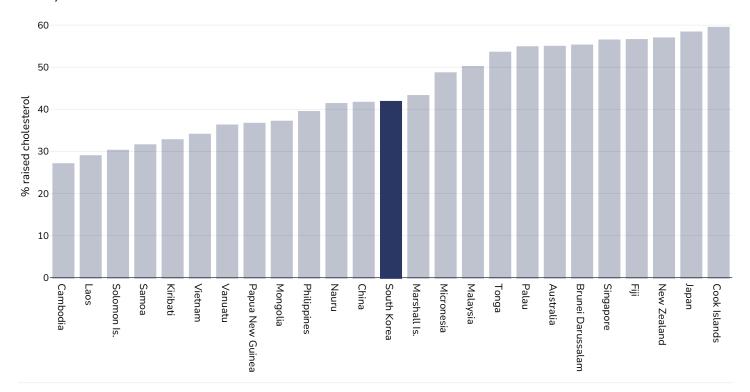
Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation, http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A885

Definitions:

% Raised total cholesterol (>= 5.0 mmol/L) (age-standardized estimate).



Men, 2008



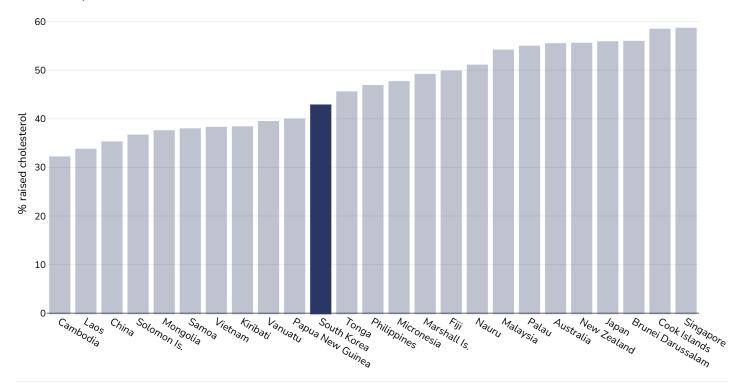
References:

Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation, http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A885

Definitions:

% Raised total cholesterol (>= 5.0 mmol/L) (age-standardized estimate).





References:

Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation, http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A885

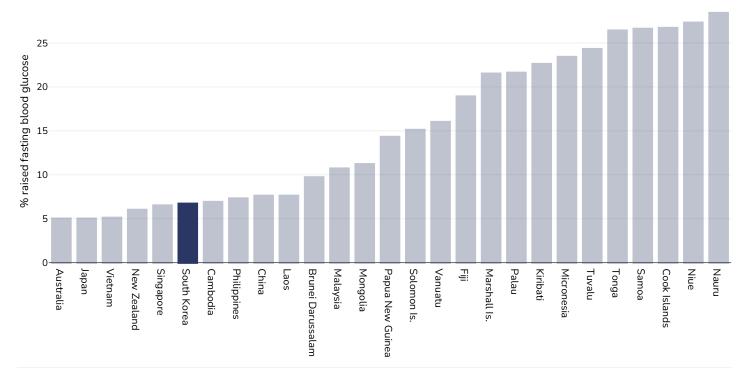
Definitions:

% Raised total cholesterol (>= 5.0 mmol/L) (age-standardized estimate).



Raised fasting blood glucose

Men, 2014



References:

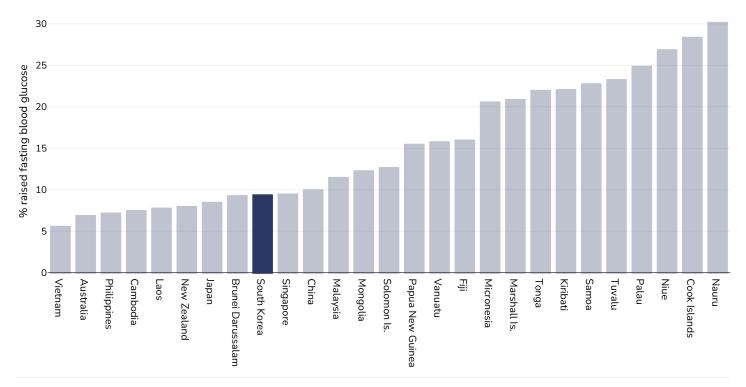
Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation,

http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A869?lang=en

Definitions:

Age Standardised % raised fasting blood glucose (>= 7.0 mmol/L or on medication).





References:

Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation,

http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A869?lang=en

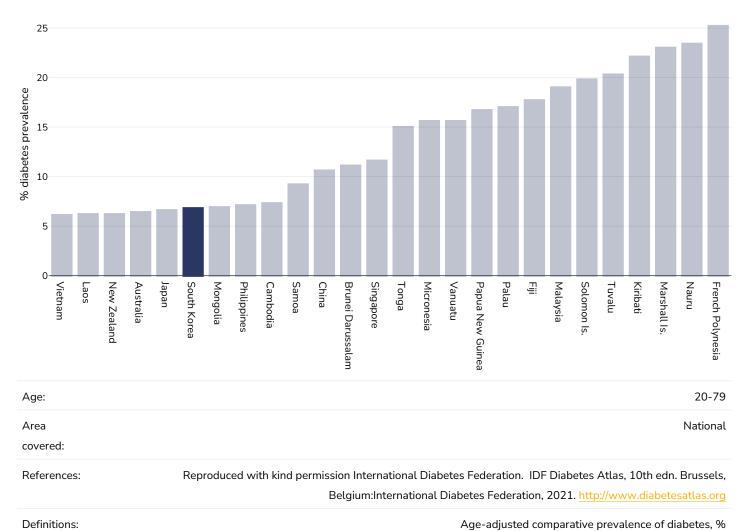
Definitions:

Age Standardised % raised fasting blood glucose (\geq 7.0 mmol/L or on medication).



Diabetes prevalence

Adults, 2021



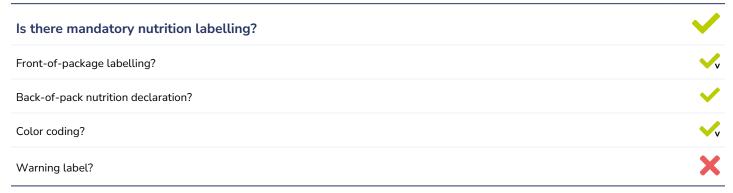


Contextual factors

Disclaimer: These contextual factors should be interpreted with care. Results are updated as regularly as possible and use very specific criteria. The criteria used and full definitions are available for download at the bottom of this page.



Labelling







Regulation and marketing

Are there fiscal policies on unhealthy products?	X
Tax on unhealthy foods?	×
Tax on unhealthy drinks?	×
Are there fiscal policies on healthy products?	X
Subsidy on fruits?	×
Subsidy on vegetables?	×
Subsidy on other healthy products?	×
Mandatory limit or ban of trans fat (all settings)?	X
Mandatory limit of trans fats in place (all settings)?	×
Ban on trans-fats or phos in place (all settings)?	×
Are there any mandatory policies/marketing restrictions on the promotion of unhealthy food/drinks to children?	~
Mandatory restriction on broadcast media?	~
Mandatory restriction on non-broadcast media?	~
Voluntary policies/marketing restrictions on the promotion of unhealthy food/drinks to children?	~
Are there mandatory standards for food in schools?	~
Are there any mandatory nutrient limits in any manufactured food products?	X
Nutrition standards for public sector procurement?	X





Political will and support

National obesity strategy or nutrition and physical activity national strategy?	/
National obesity strategy?	~
National childhood obesity strategy?	~
Comprehensive nutrition strategy?	~
Comprehensive physical activity strategy?	~
Evidence-based dietary guidelines and/or RDAs?	~
National target(s) on reducing obesity?	~
Guidelines/policy on obesity treatment?	~
Promotion of breastfeeding?	~
Monitoring and surveillance	
Monitoring of the prevalence and incidence for the main obesity-related NCDs and risk factors?	~
Within 5 years?	~
Governance and resource	
Multi-sectoral national co-ordination mechanism for obesity or nutrition (including obesity)?	×
Key	
Present Present Incoming Absent Unknown	
(voluntary)	

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