

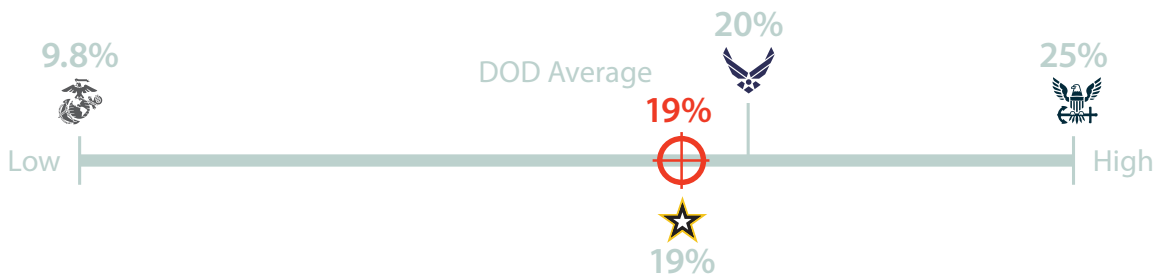
Obesity

Obesity negatively impacts physical performance and military readiness and is associated with long-term health problems such as hypertension, diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, and risk for all-cause mortality. Studies also suggest that health care utilization is higher among obese Service members than their normal-weight counterparts.²⁹

The Clinical Data Repository (CDR) vital sign table and Genesis vitals table within the MHS Data Repository (MDR) were used to identify all records for AC Service members with a height and weight measurement available on the same day; pregnant Service members were excluded. Body mass index (BMI) was calculated utilizing the latest height and weight record in a given year. In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a BMI ≥ 30 was considered obese.³⁰

The overall prevalence of obesity among AC Service members was 19% in 2020. Obesity rates were higher among male (20%) compared to female Service members (15%). The lowest prevalence of obesity was in Service members less than 25 years old (11%) and the highest was among those aged 35–44 years (30%). **The overall prevalence of obesity increased slightly between 2016 and 2020.**

Prior studies have demonstrated an increasing trend of obesity among Service members in all branches and sociodemographic groups.^{31,32} To combat this concerning rise, there should be an increased focus on evidence-based initiatives to reduce obesity such as programs to provide healthier food and beverage options on military bases, technology-based approaches to improving fitness, and sustainable weight management training and follow-up services.³³



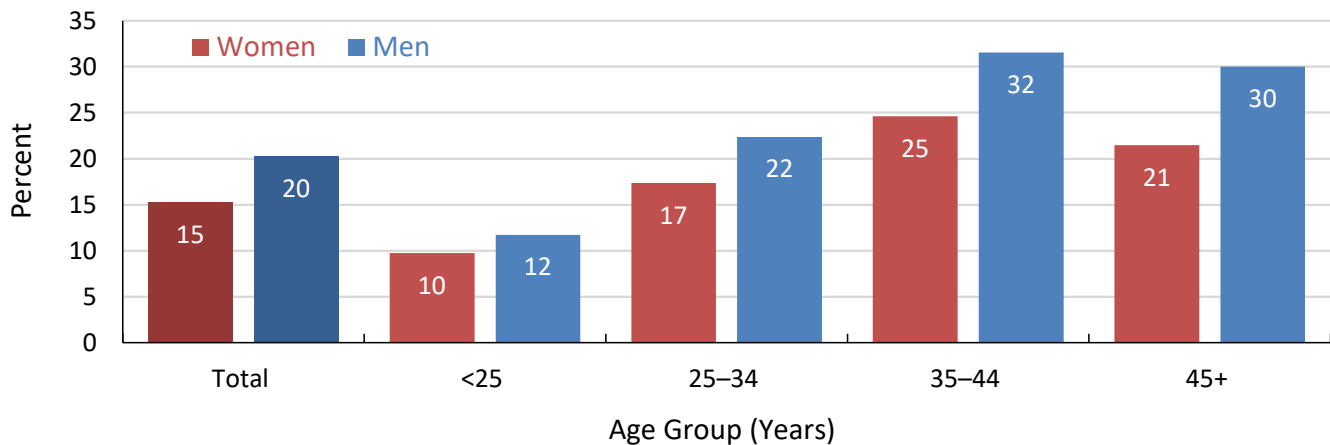
Overall, 19% of AC Service members were classified as obese in 2020.

Rates ranged from 9.8% to 25% across Services.



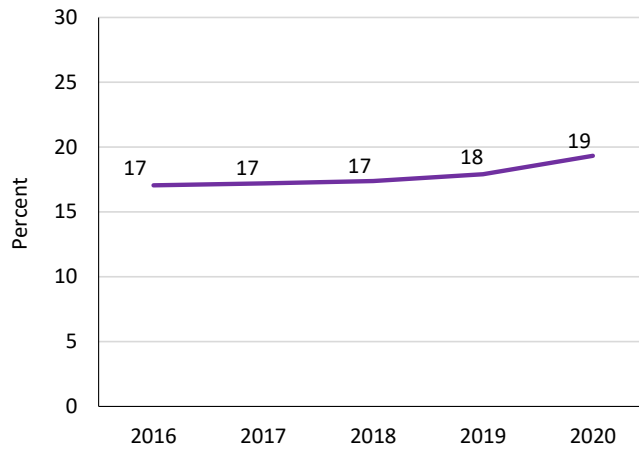
Prevalence of Obesity by Sex and Age Group, AC Service Members, 2020

Obesity rates were higher among male (20%) compared to female Service members (15%). The prevalence of obesity increased with increasing age through 35–44 years then decreased among those aged 45 years or older.



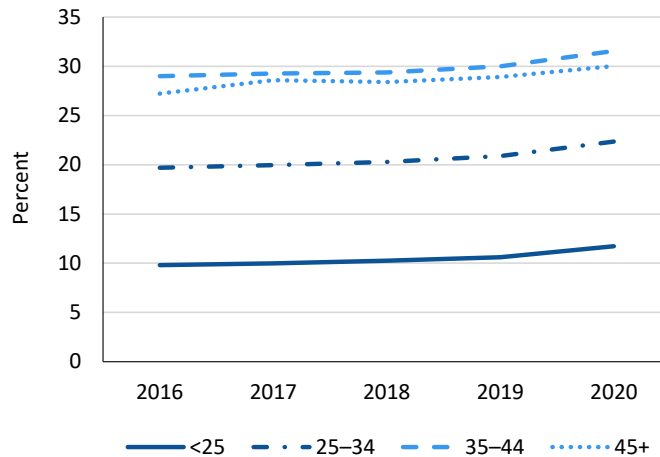
Prevalence of Obesity, AC Service Members, 2016–2020

The prevalence of obesity increased from 17% in 2016 to 19% in 2020.



Prevalence of Obesity by Age Group, Male AC Service Members, 2016–2020

Between 2016 and 2020, the prevalence of obesity increased among male Service members in all age groups.



Prevalence of Obesity by Age Group, Female AC Service Members, 2016–2020

Between 2016 and 2020, the prevalence of obesity increased among female Service members in all age groups.

