



Architectural Form of Future Ideal Landscape, painting by Enrico Prampolini / WikiArt

The Future of Obesity Prevention

Ted Kyle, RPh, MBA

Founder, ConscienHealth

Ted.Kyle@ConscienHealth.org

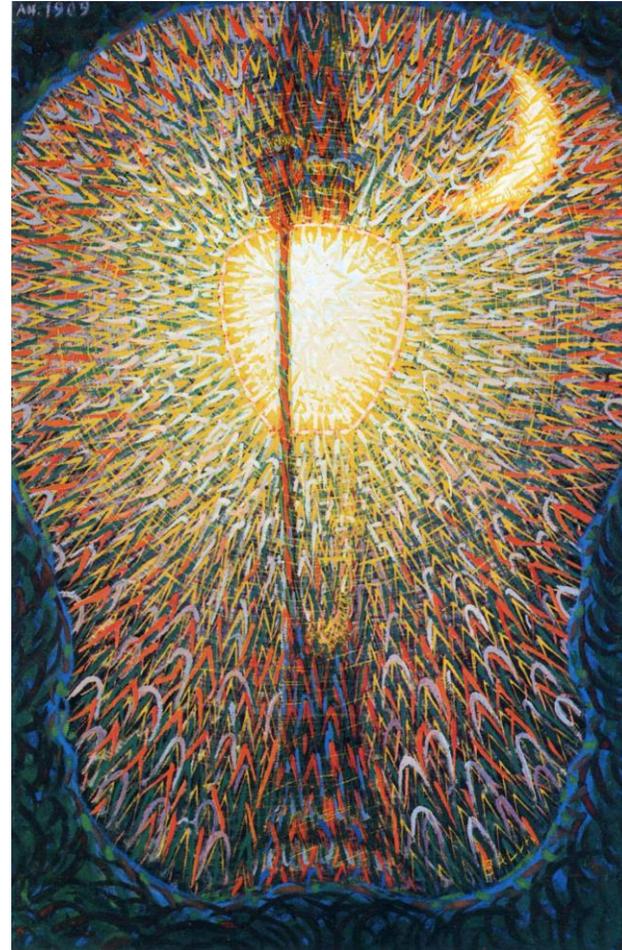
June 14, 2024

Disclosures

- **Professional fees**
 - Boehringer Ingelheim
 - Emerald Lake Safety
 - Novo Nordisk
 - Nutrisystem
 - Roman Health Ventures
- **Personal biases that favor:**
 - Evidence-based interventions, both prevention and treatment
 - Respect for people living with obesity
 - Critical thinking about all evidence

Presentation Objectives

- Discuss the various meanings people attach to obesity prevention
- Describe the outcomes of obesity prevention efforts
- Offer a view of what the future might hold for prevention



Street Light, painting by Giacomo Balla / WikiArt

Obesity Prevention: What Are We Talking About?



Talking, photograph by Pedro Ribeiro Simões / flickr, CC BY 2.0

Fifty Years Ago, We Thought Preventing Obesity Could Be Simple

1974

“Most Obesity Could, with Care, Be Prevented”

doi: [10.1016/S0140-6736\(74\)93004-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(74)93004-9)

THE LANCET

Volume 303, Issue 7845, 5 January 1974, Pages 17-18

Infant and Adult Obesity

OBESITY is the most important nutritional disease in the affluent countries of the world. In the absence of an internationally agreed criterion for diagnosis an exact figure for prevalence cannot be given, but surveys in Britain and the United States show that about a third of the population is overweight to an extent associated with diminished life expectancy.¹

The exact significance of hyperplastic and hypertrophic obesity is still not clear, but on balance the evidence suggests that we need to be more vigilant in preventing obesity throughout childhood. Probably the obese adult can never be “cured”, but most obesity could, with care, be prevented.

doi: [10.1016/S0140-6736\(74\)93004-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(74)93004-9)

Treatment Was Seen by Most as Futile

April 28, 1993

JAMA[®]

Futility and Avoidance

Medical Professionals in the Treatment of Obesity

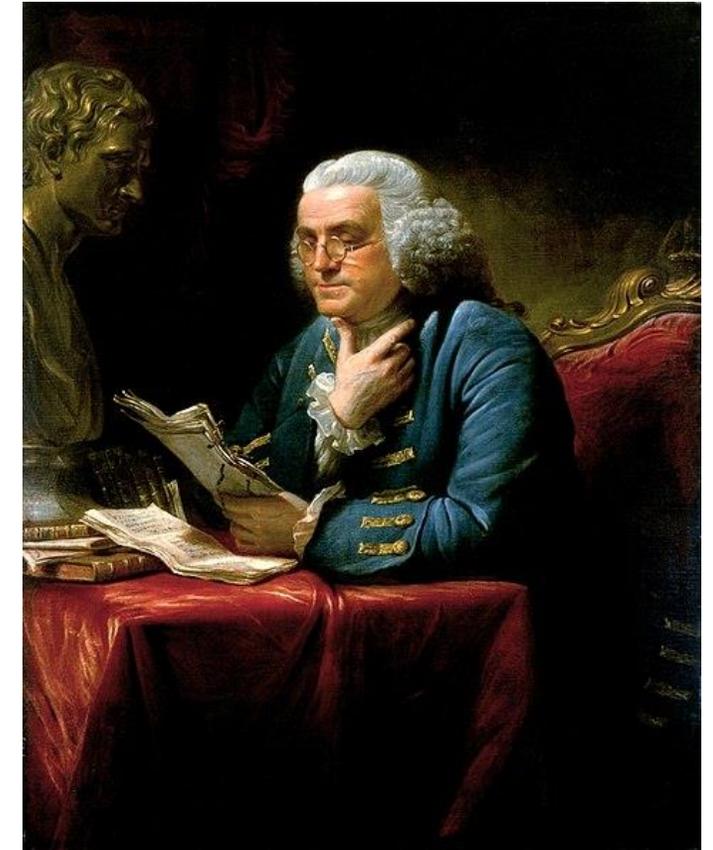
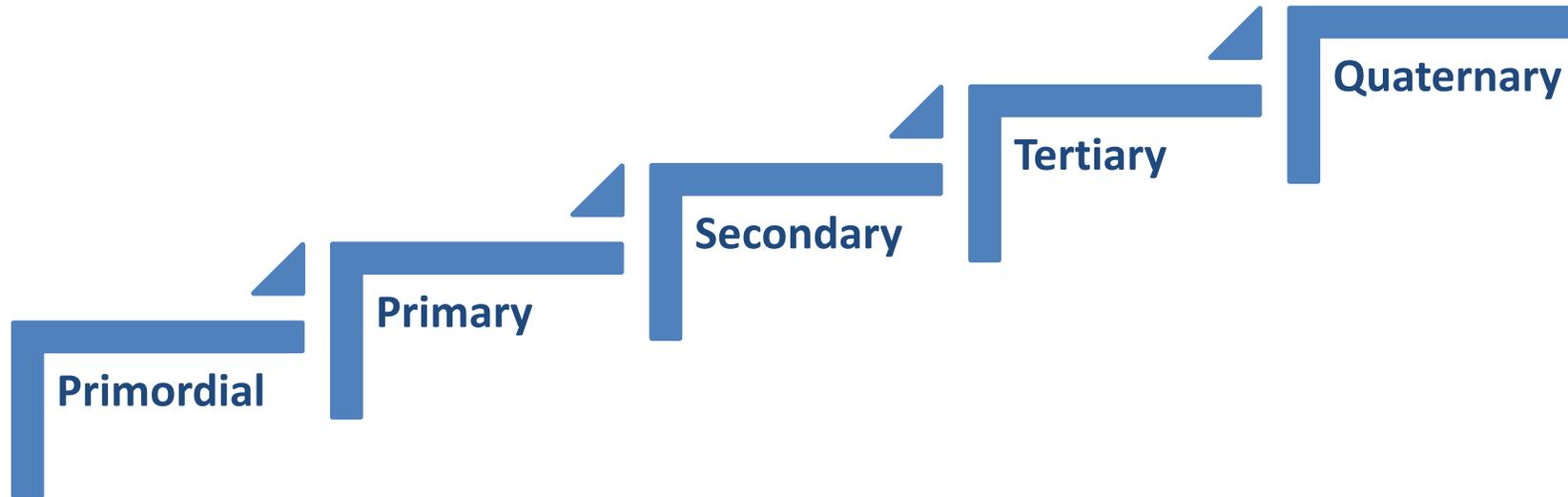
Arthur Frank, MD

JAMA. 1993;269(16):2132-2133. doi:10.1001/jama.1993.03500160102041

Abstract

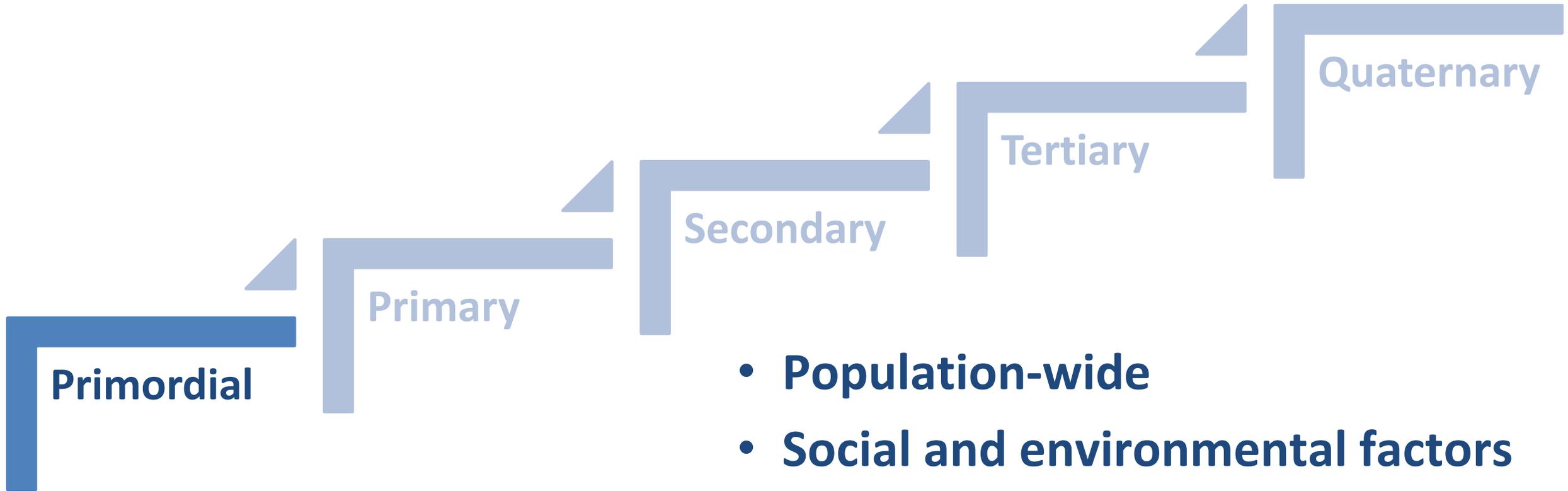
TWENTY years ago, I changed course in my internal medicine practice and decided, rather deliberately, to work on the problem of obesity. My friends, my colleagues, and my family thought I was crazy. The warnings were clear. "Don't risk your credibility and your career." "Don't venture into a part of medicine that no one takes seriously." "Don't move into the world of quacks and charlatans."

An Ounce of Prevention Comes in Many Forms



Benjamin Franklin, portrait by David Martin

Primordial Prevention



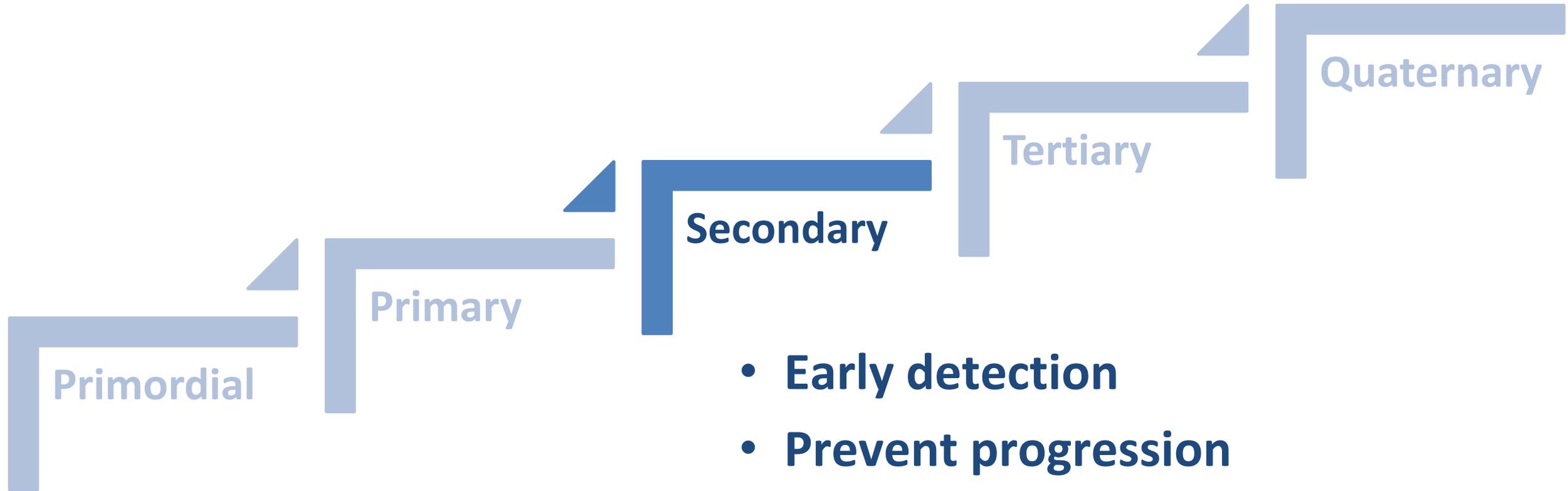
- **Population-wide**
- **Social and environmental factors**
- **Examples: soda taxes, sidewalks**

Primary Prevention



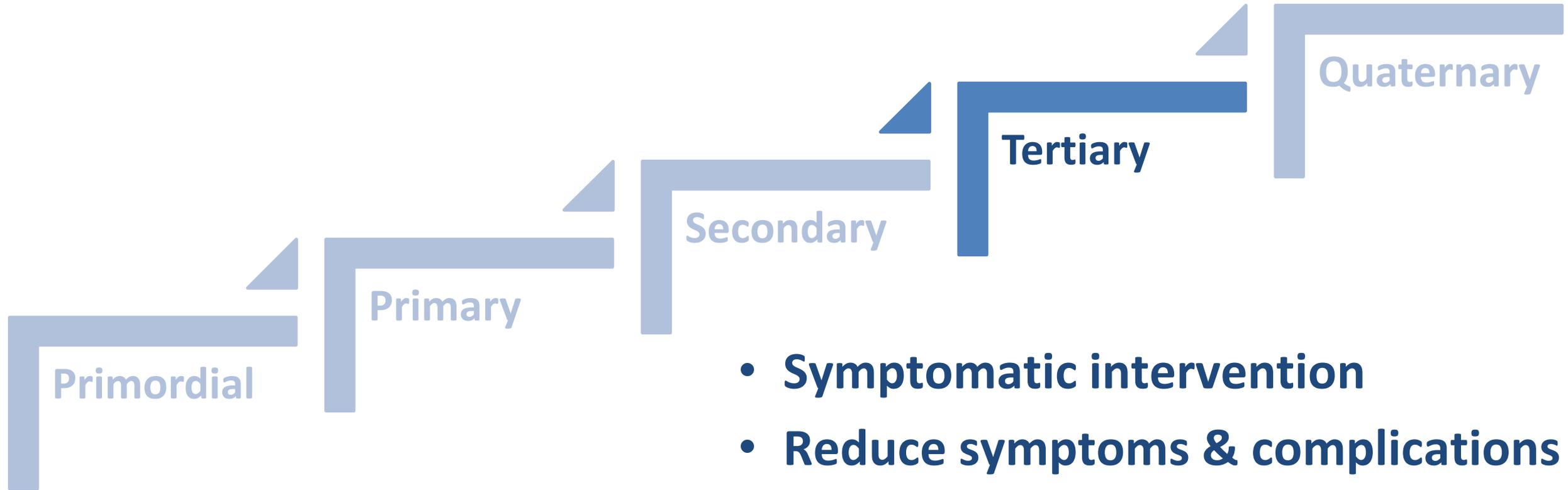
- **Populations at risk**
- **Limit risks in vulnerable groups**
- **Examples: WIC, diet and exercise**

Secondary Prevention



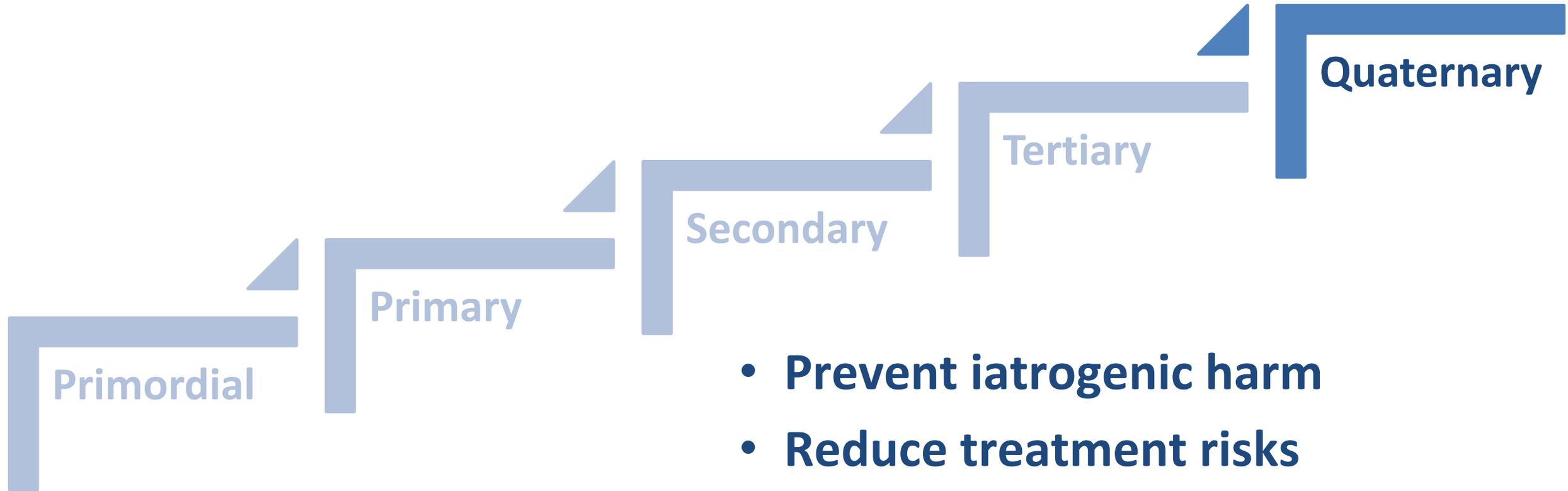
- **Early detection**
- **Prevent progression**
- **Examples: BMI screening, DPP**

Tertiary Prevention



- **Symptomatic intervention**
- **Reduce symptoms & complications**
- **Examples: obesity meds, surgery**

Quaternary Prevention



- Prevent iatrogenic harm
- Reduce treatment risks
- Examples: MBSAQIP, HAES

Confidence in Primordial and Primary Prevention Is Easy to Find

Home / Health
Home / Medical economics



-  Share
-  Twit
-  Share
-  Email

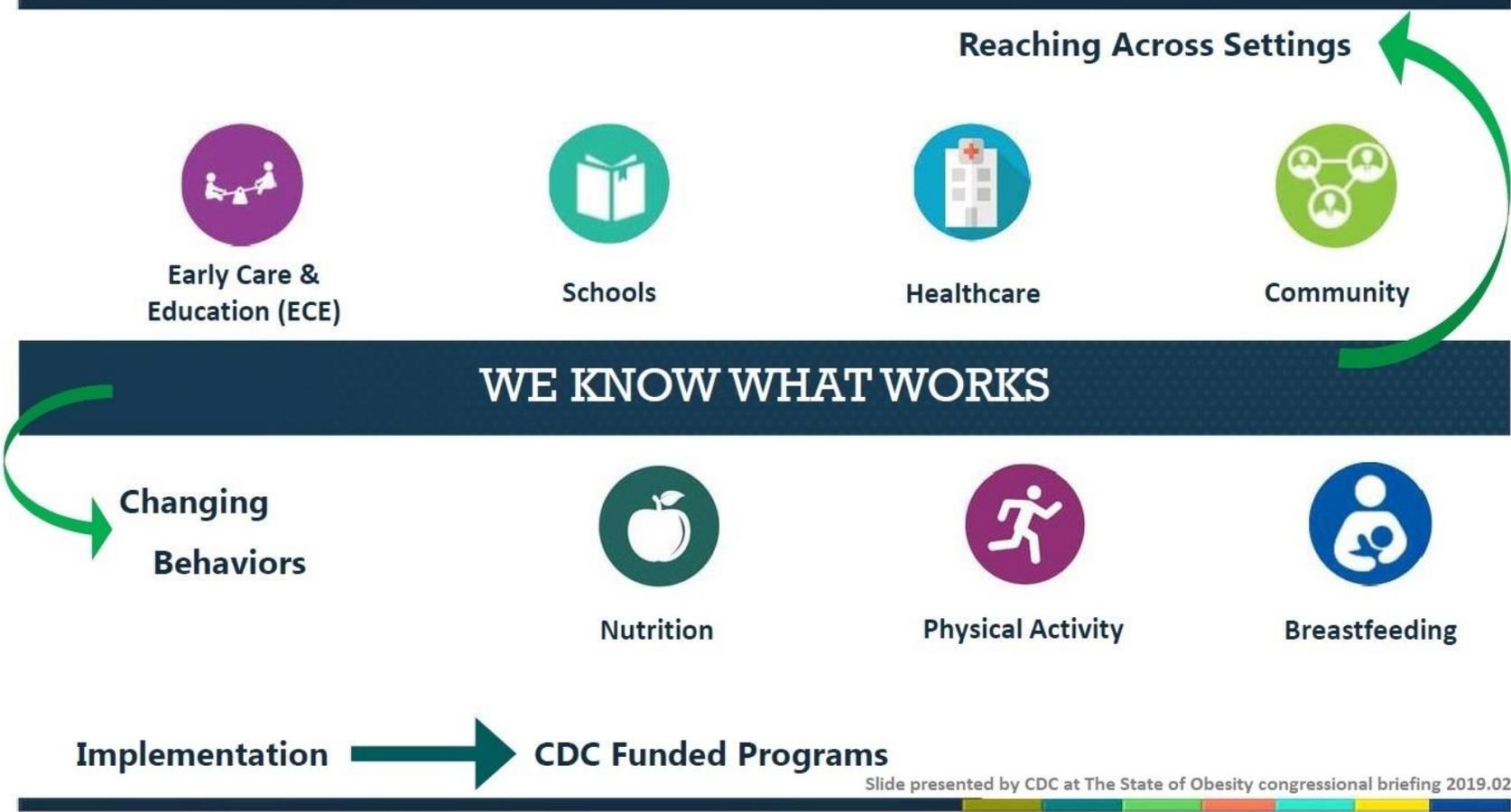
 NOVEMBER 21, 2023

 Editors' notes

A sugar tax in Germany could save as much as 16 billion euros and improve population health

by Technical University Munich

Confidence in Primordial and Primary Prevention Is Easy to Find

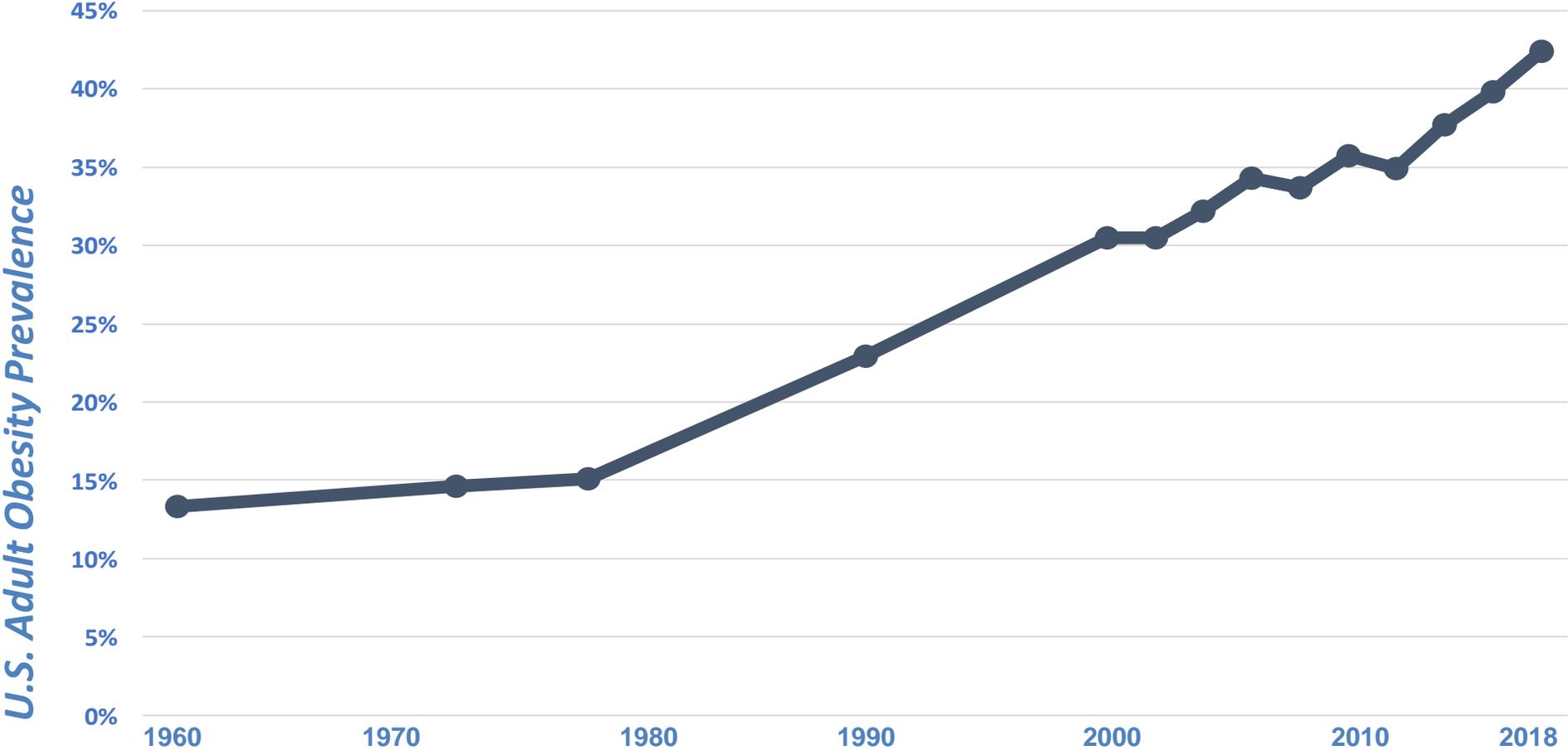


Obesity Prevention: What Progress Have We Made and Why?



FDA Chemist Inspects Results, photograph by FDA / Wikimedia Commons

Obesity Continues to Rise Relentlessly



Little Evidence That Primordial Prevention Is Working

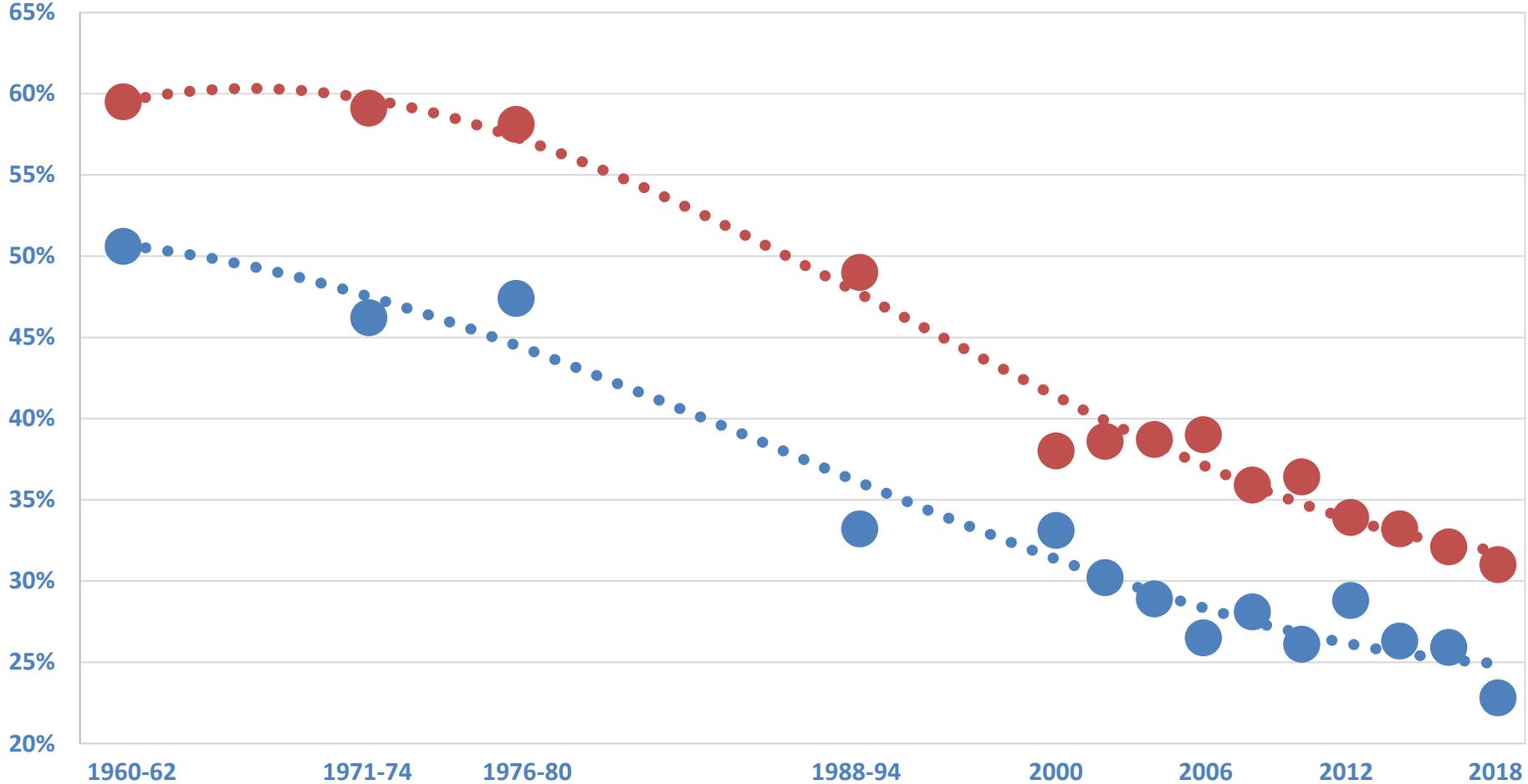
☰  health Life, But Better Fitness Food Sleep Mindfulness Relationships

Obesity is becoming more common in a growing number of states, CDC data show

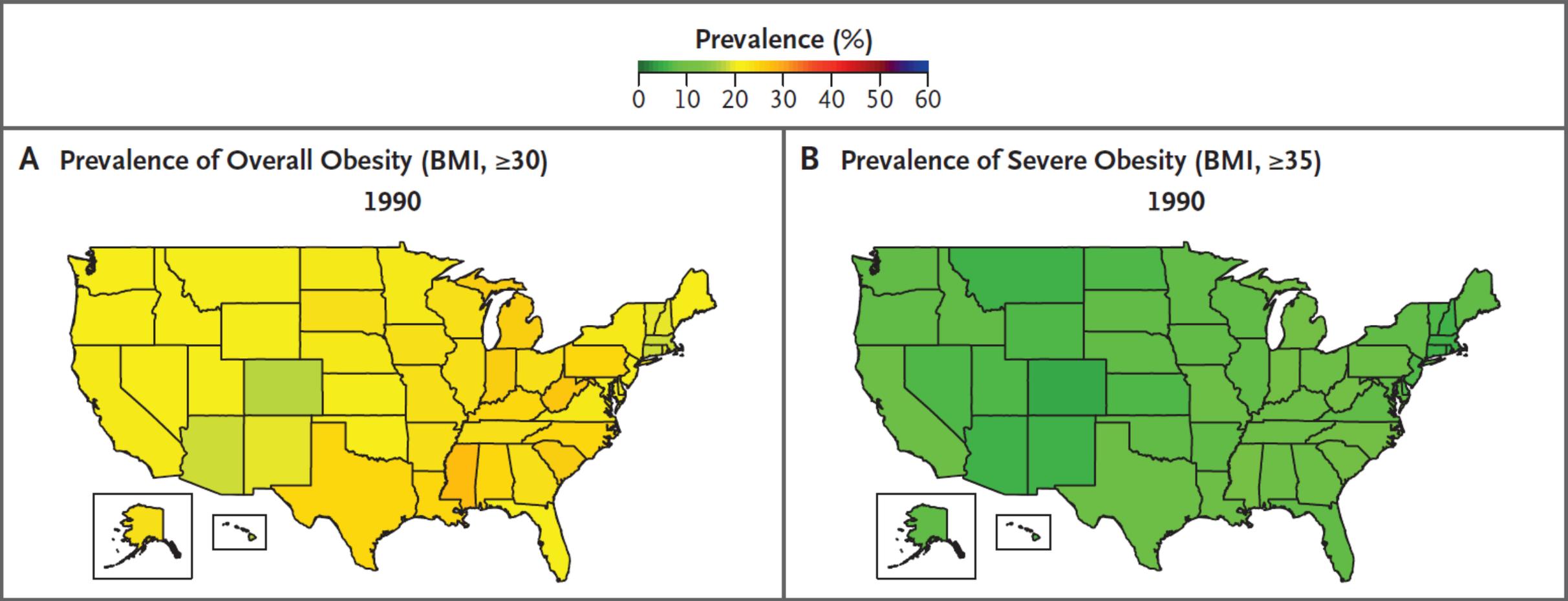
By Deidre McPhillips, CNN

Published 3:48 PM EDT, Thu September 21, 2023

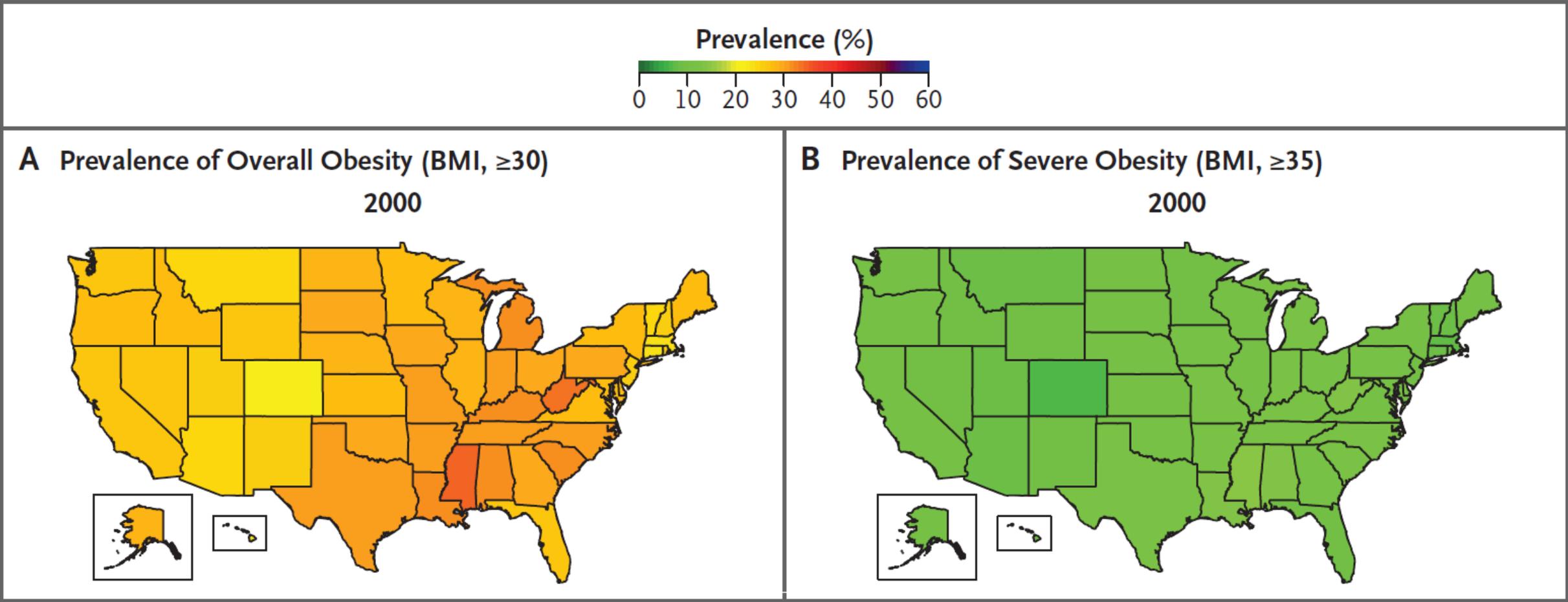
Prevalence of BMI < 25 May Bottom Out at 25%



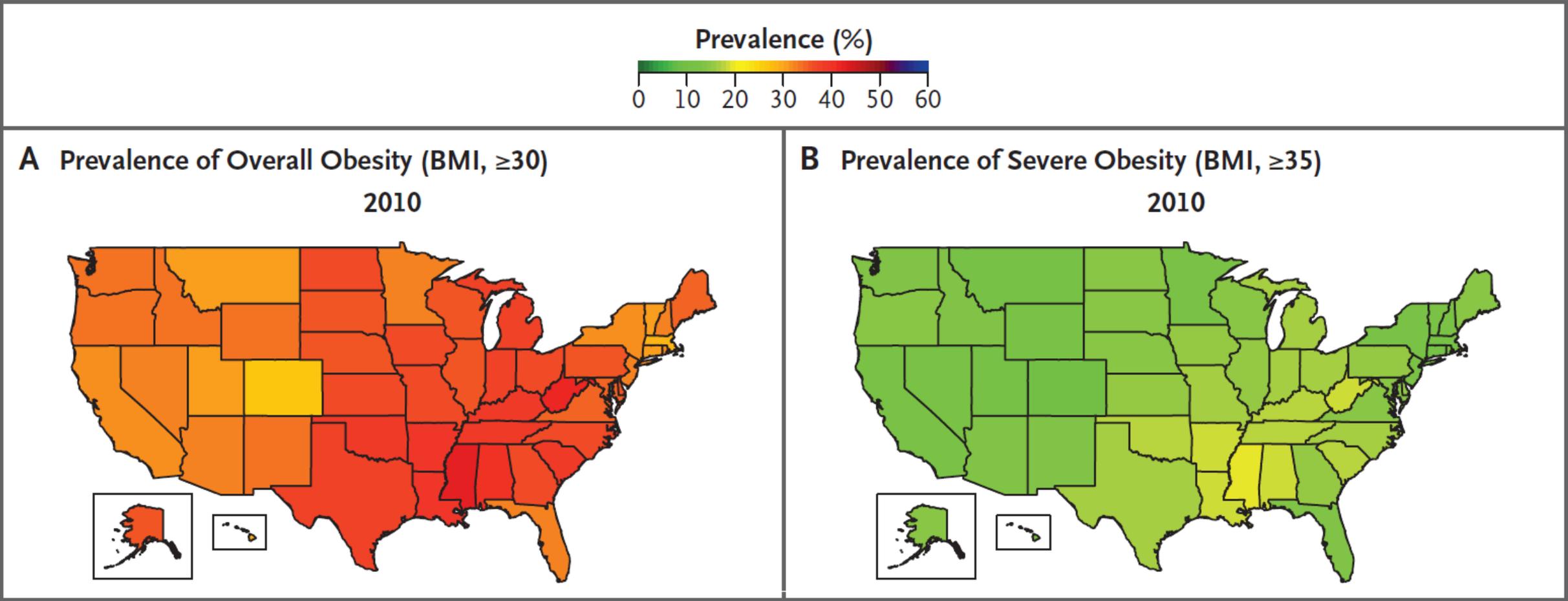
But Obesity and Severe Obesity Are Still Growing



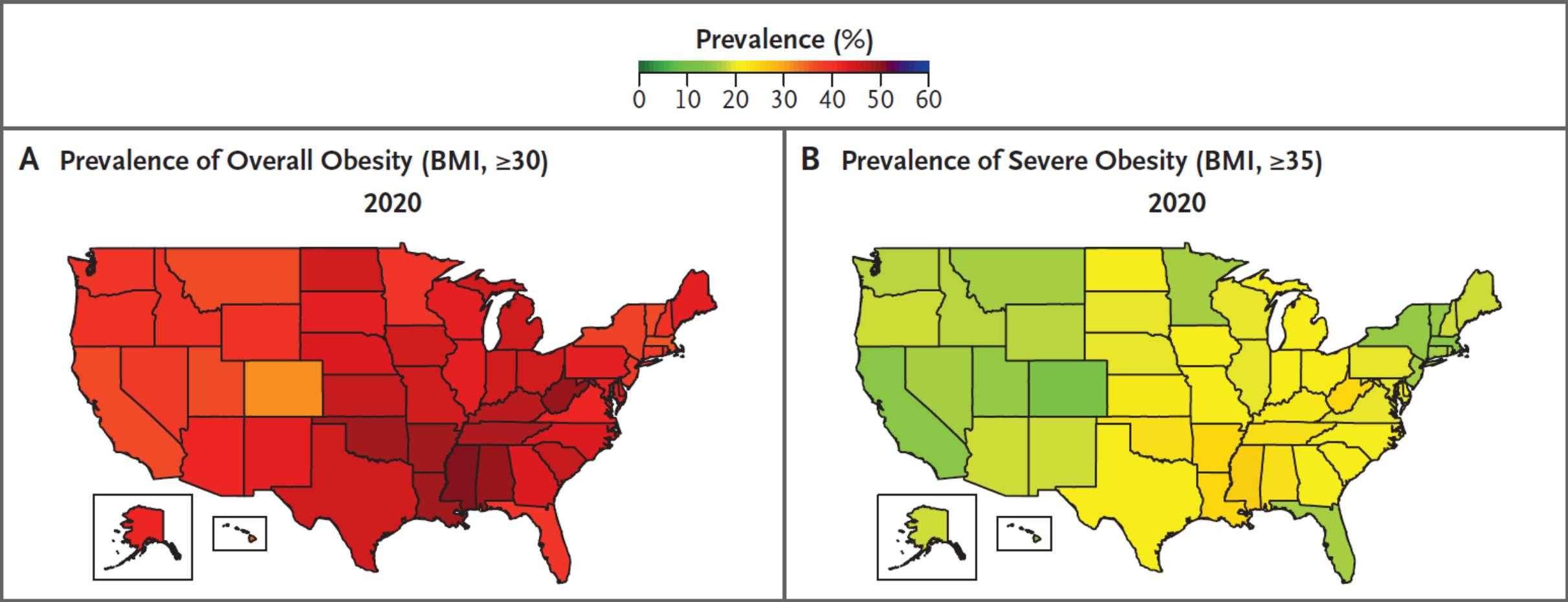
But Obesity and Severe Obesity Are Still Growing



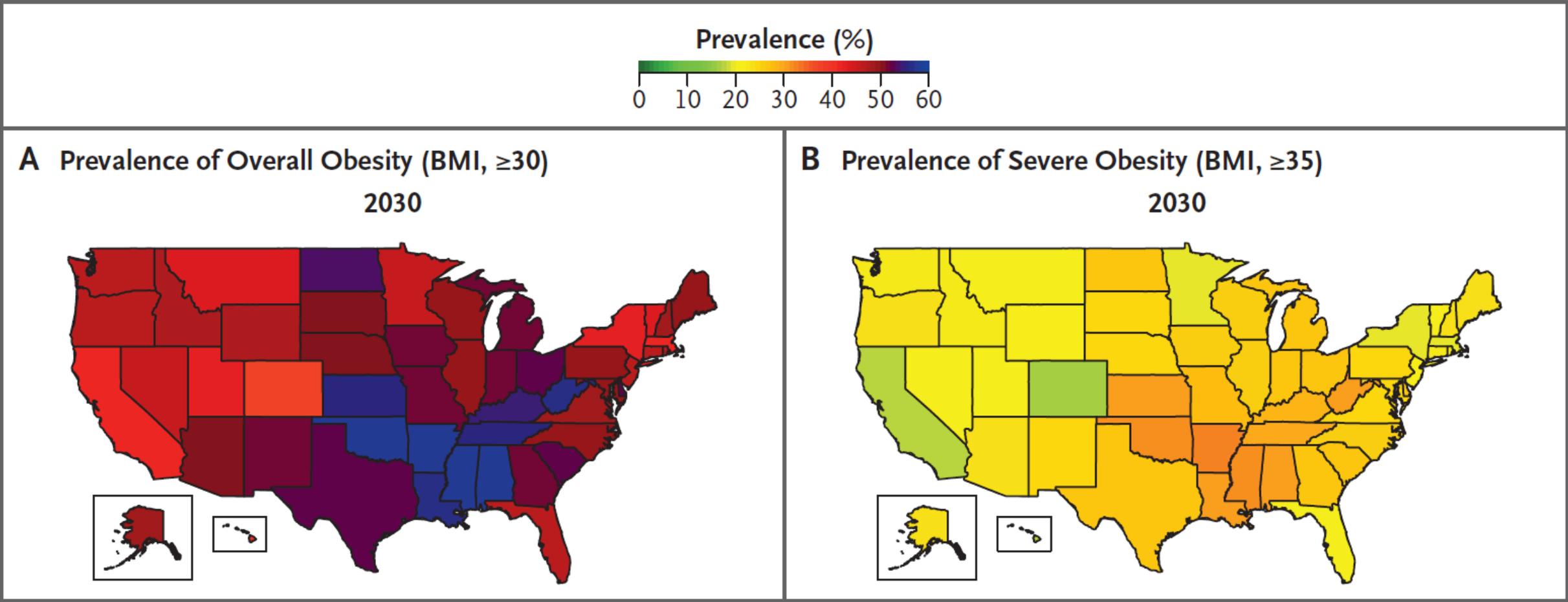
But Obesity and Severe Obesity Are Still Growing



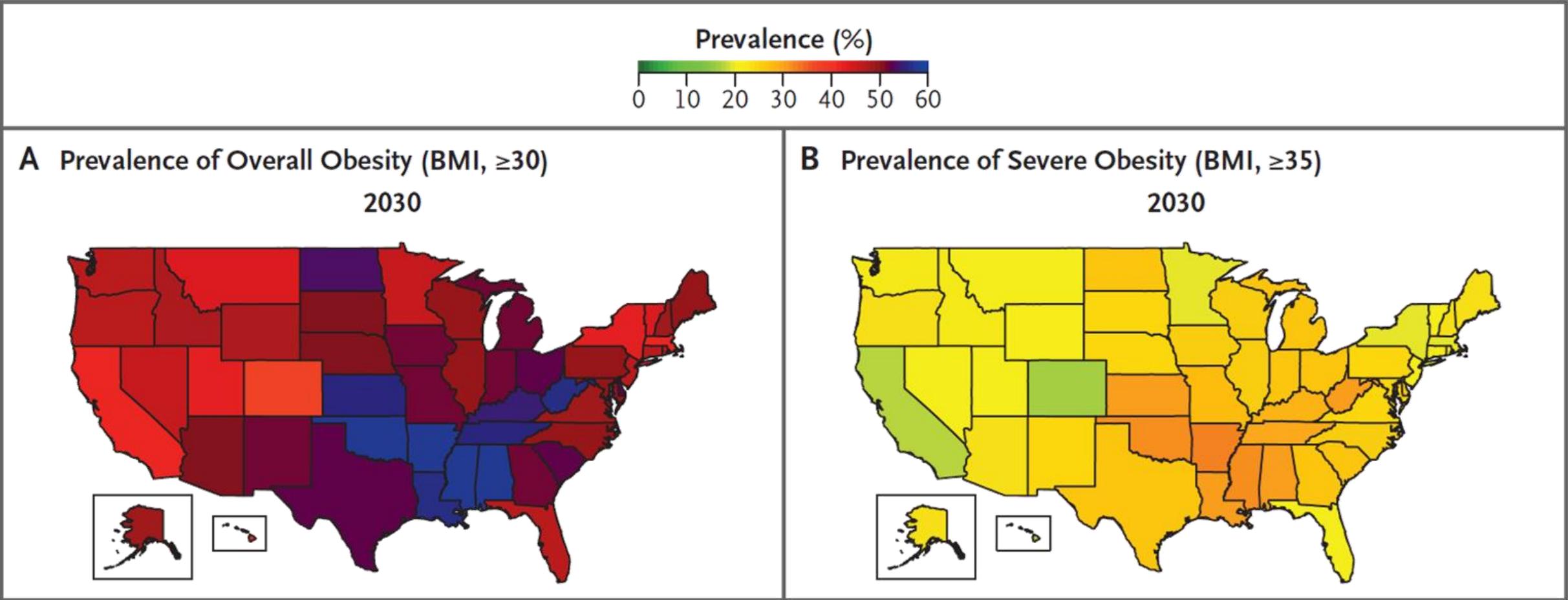
But Obesity and Severe Obesity Are Still Growing



Obesity Will Reach 50% Prevalence by 2030

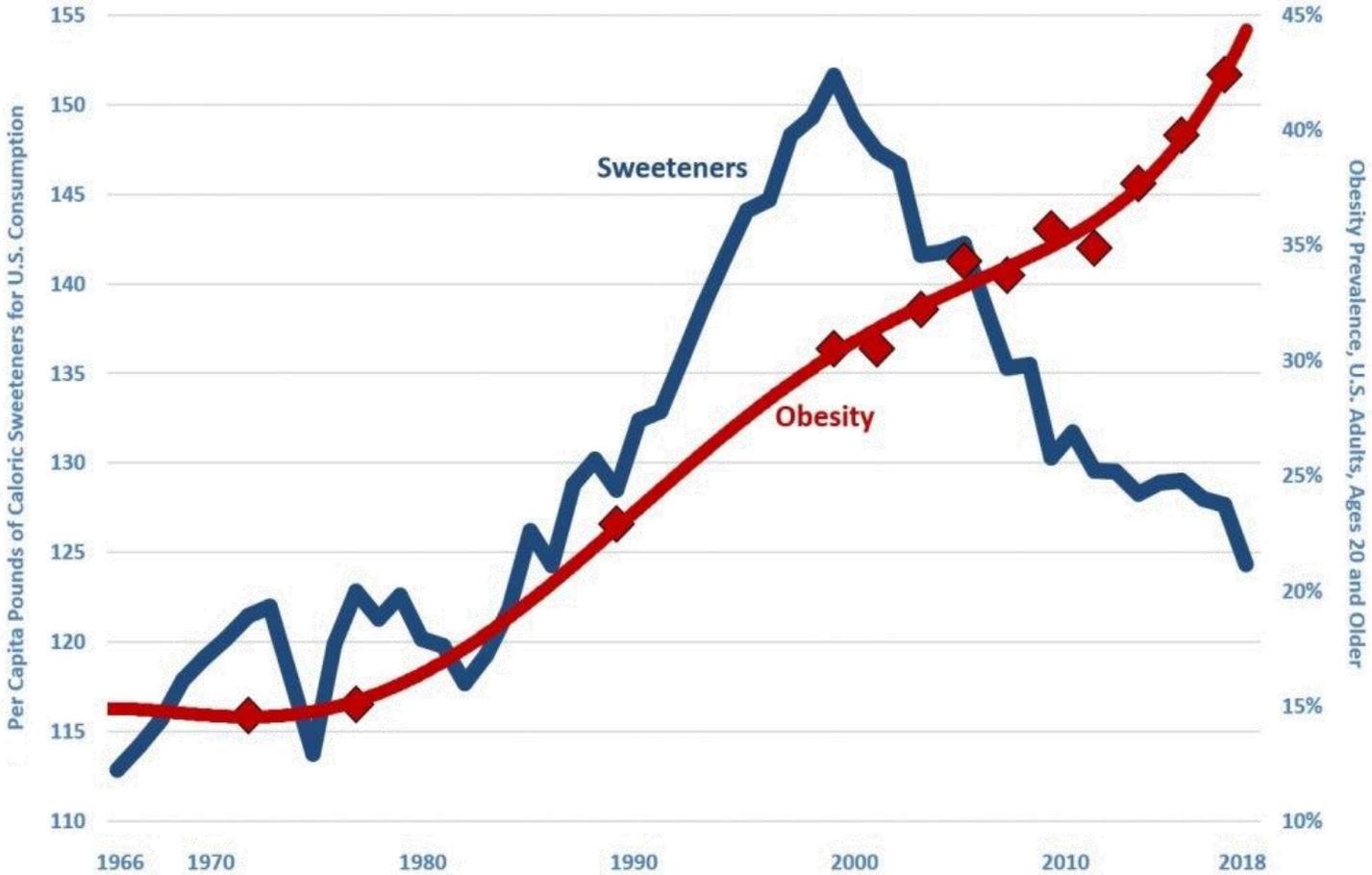


Growing Fastest, Severe Obesity Will Reach 25%



Reducing Sugar Consumption Has Not Reduced Obesity Prevalence

U.S. Trends in Caloric Sweeteners and Obesity



Sources: USDA ERS Food Availability Reports, NHANES Obesity Estimates

The Promise of Dramatic Results from a Soda Tax Implemented a Decade Ago...

Los Angeles Times

BY MELISSA HEALY | STAFF WRITER

NOV. 3, 2016 9:14 AM PT

Mexico's soda tax will save 18,900 lives and more than \$983 million over 10 years, study says

...Has Yielded Underwhelming Results

- Obesity rates are rising fast as ever
- Diabetes prevalence is becoming very problematic
- "It's a diabetes time bomb," says Professor Barry Popkin

Americas



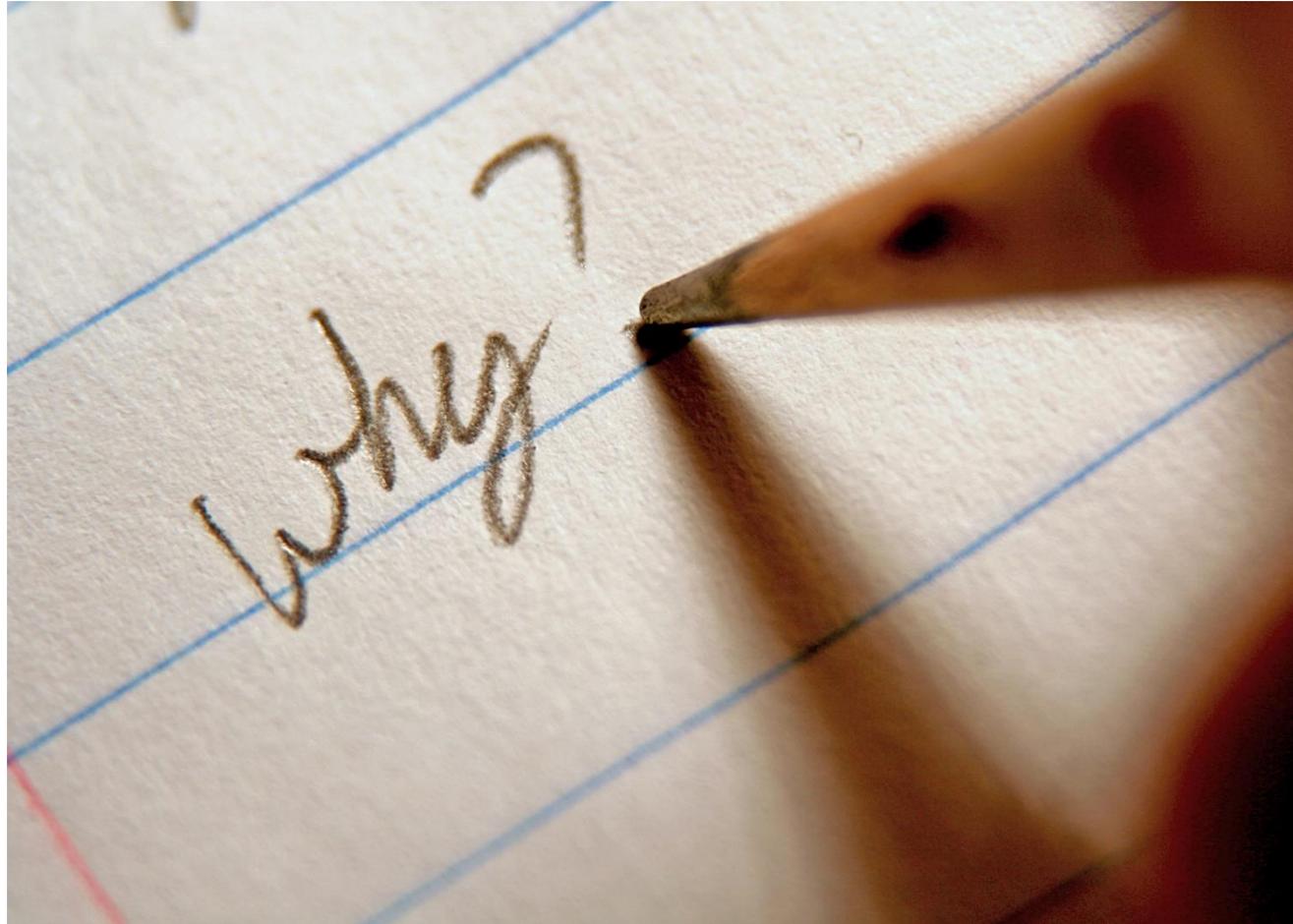
Temptation everywhere: Mexican children struggle with obesity

By Stefanie Eschenbacher and Carlos Jasso

June 17, 2021 6:51 AM EDT · Updated 2 years ago



Why Has Progress Been So Elusive?

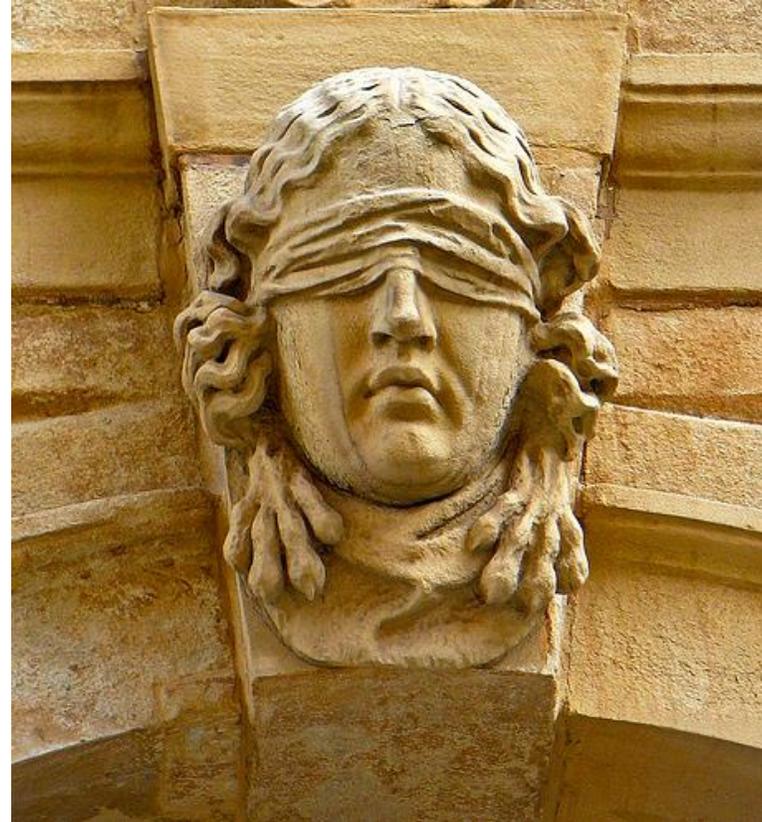


Good Question, photograph © Eric (e-magic) / flickr

Pervasive Bias Gets in the Way of Progress

Bias is an inclination or outlook to present or hold a **partial perspective**, often accompanied by a **refusal to consider** the possible merits of **alternative points of view**. Biases are learned implicitly within cultural contexts. People may develop biases toward or **against** an **individual**, an ethnic **group**, a nation, a religion, a social class, a political party, theoretical **paradigms** and **ideologies** within academic domains, or a species.

– Adapted from
Psychology: Contemporary Perspectives
Paul Okami



Two Kinds of Bias Get in the Way of Reducing the Harm of Obesity

- **Intellectual bias**
favoring personal convictions
- **Weight bias**
directed at people with obesity



God Judging Adam, Etching by William Blake / WikiArt

Prevalent Bias About Obesity

The best place to start is by simply telling the patient the truth.

“Sir or Madam, it’s not OK to be obese. Obesity is bad. You are overweight because you eat too much. You also need to exercise more. Your obesity cannot be blamed on the fast food or carbonated beverage industry or on anyone or anything else.

***You weigh too much because you eat too much.
Your health and your weight are your responsibility.”***

Robert Doroghazi, MD

AJM, Mar 2015

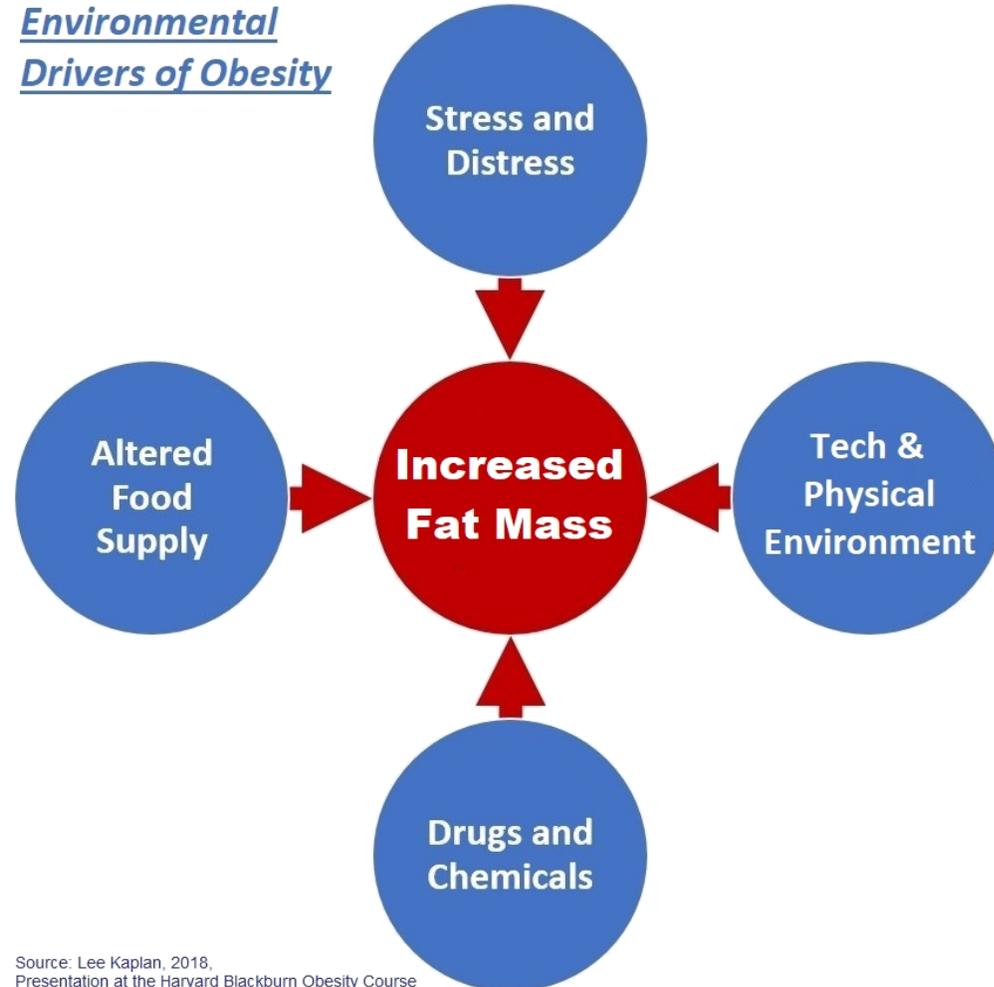
Bias Favors Simplistic Policy Solutions



The Truth of Obesity Is More Complex

Multiple factors are driving obesity rates

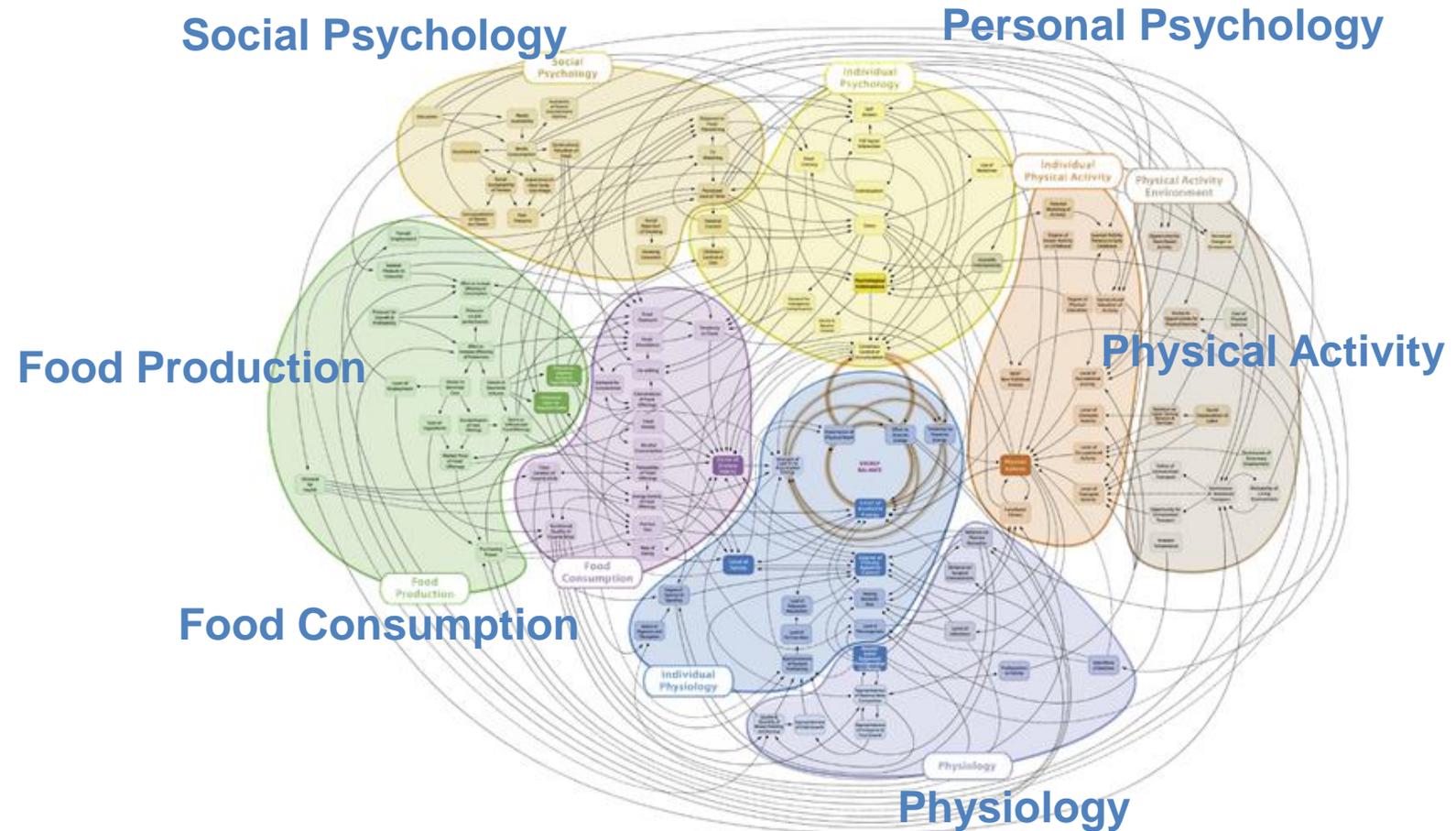
Environmental Drivers of Obesity



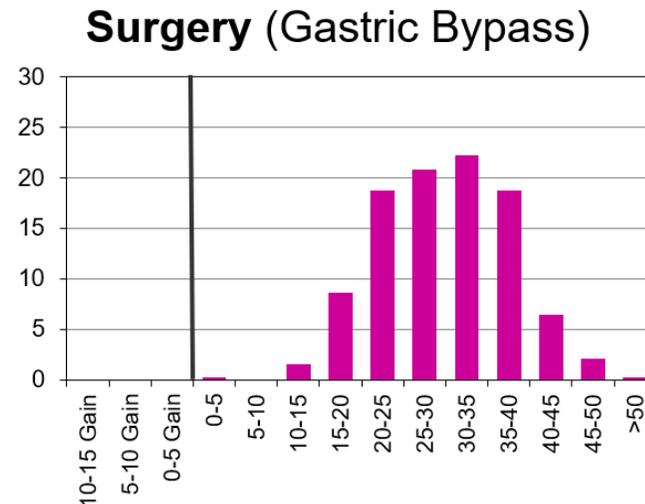
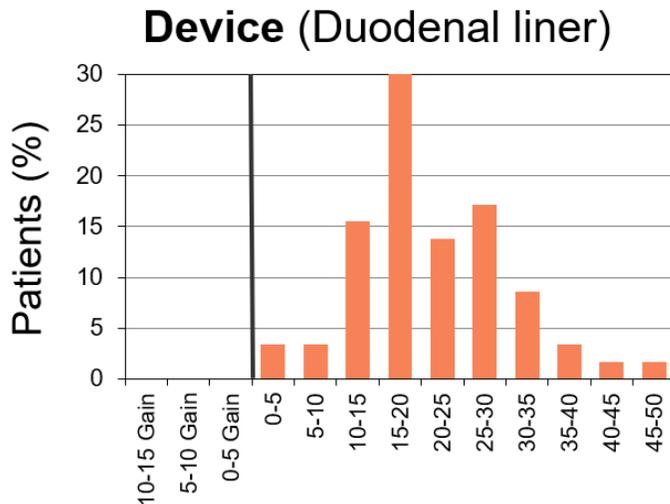
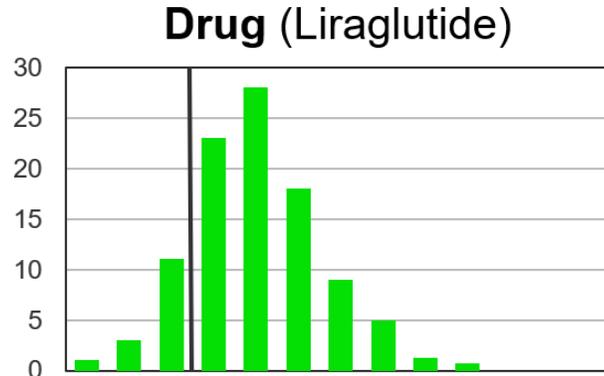
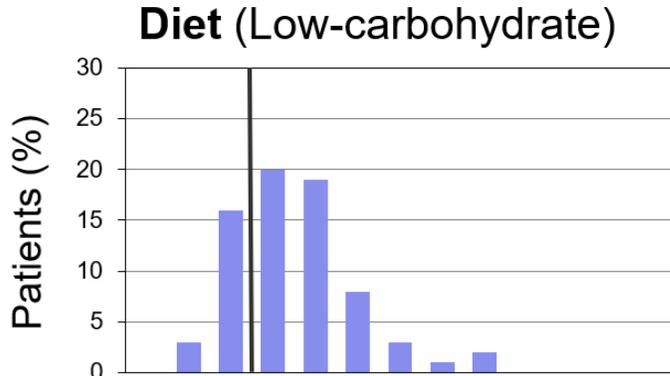
Source: Lee Kaplan, 2018.
Presentation at the Harvard Blackburn Obesity Course

The Truth of Obesity Is More Complex

Those factors interact with complex adaptive systems to drive obesity rates



Obesity Is a Heterogeneous Disease



- Triggered by different factors in different people
- One-size-fits-all treatment is inadequate
- One-size-fits-all prevention is not likely to be adequate

Source: Presentation by Lee Kaplan, 30th Blackburn Course in Obesity Medicine, Treating Obesity 2017

Obesity Prevention: What Might Future Progress Look Like?



Happy Highway Future, illustration by James Vaughan / flickr, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

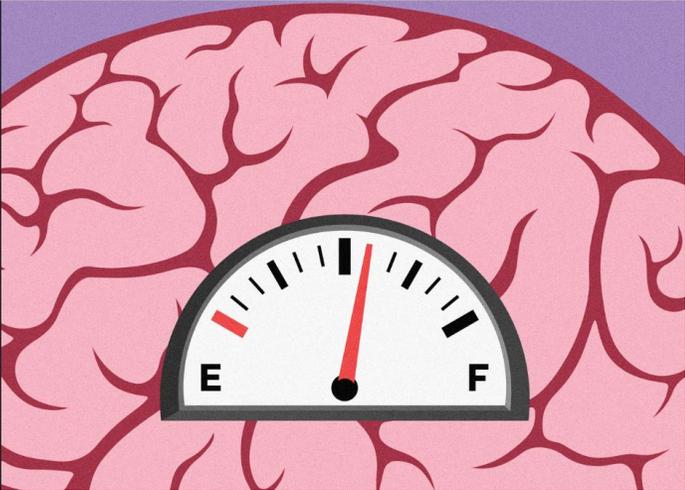
Secondary and Tertiary Options for Prevention Are Better Than Ever

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

English Edition | Print Edition | Video | Audio | Latest Headlines | More | World Business U.S. Politics Economy Tech Finance Opinion Arts & Culture Lifestyle Real Estate Personal Finance **Health** Science Style Sports

Ozempic Settles the Obesity Debate: It's Biology Over Willpower

Weight-loss drugs affect the brain in ways that help researchers understand how the body regulates weight



The Guardian

News Opinion Sport Culture

Weight loss drug could reduce heart attack risk by 20%, study finds

Researchers say semaglutide, the active ingredient in Wegovy and Ozempic, could be biggest medical breakthrough since statins

Medscape

NEWS & PERSPECTIVE DRUGS & DISEASES CME & EDUCATION VIDEO DECISION POINT

Medscape Medical News > Conference News > EASL Congress 2024

Tirzepatide Shows Improvements in MASH Resolution, Fibrosis

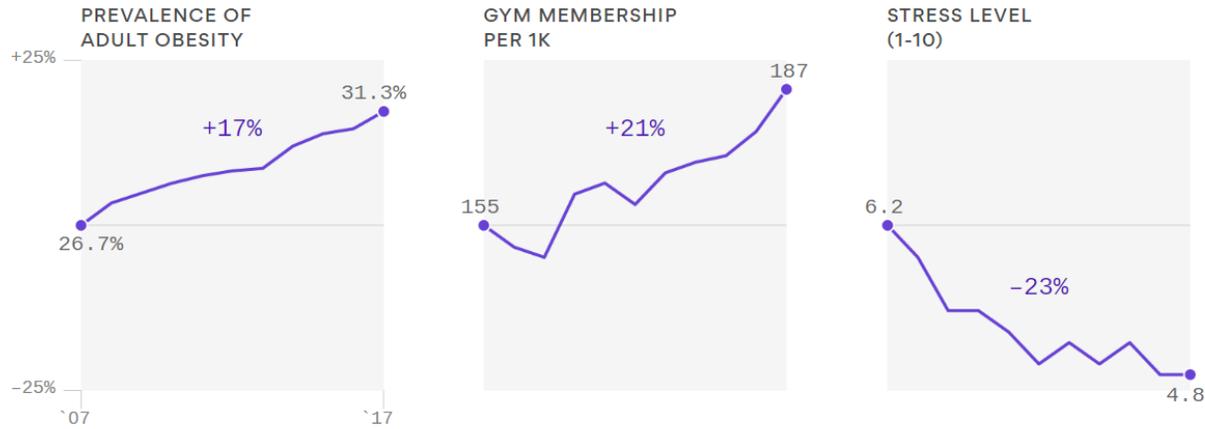
Becky McCall
June 10, 2024

Primordial and Primary Prevention Are Lagging

Health and wellness are booming, but we're fatter than ever



Select U.S. health indicators
Percent change, 2007-17



Understanding of Obesity Drivers Is Incomplete

Professor John Speakman

“The causes of obesity turn out to be exceedingly complex. Although I’ve learned a lot, we’ve not reached any sort of conclusion about what it is.”

Professor Jonathan Wells

“My feeling is there’s still a gap between the kind of obesity research that’s done and the kind that is actually going to have an impact.

“Prevention is better than cure. We don’t want people to gain excess weight. We want to have a food system in which people can eat healthily and not actually become fat.”

Source:

Causes of Obesity, meeting at the Royal Society, London, 2022

<https://conscienhealth.org/2022/10/obesity-causes-so-just-fix-the-it-already/>

Contrasting Views on the Way Forward

IU SPH Dean David Allison

“I sincerely wish that we will be able to prevent childhood and adolescent obesity.

“But, sitting here today, I must be honest and state that there is currently no compelling evidence that we can do so with current methods.”

Source:

<https://conscienhealth.org/2024/06/distinguishing-wishes-and-beliefs-from-facts-in-evidence/>

Hua, Collis, and Block

“In cost-effectiveness analyses, beverage taxes, calorie labeling, and changes to federal nutrition assistance programs are projected to be cost-saving or cost-efficient in decreasing the increase in obesity prevalence.”

Source:

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gtc.2023.03.013>

Can we adapt?

Rose and Amélie, painting by Edvard Munch / WikiArt



Yes, and Here's How

- Reject bias and stigma
- Stick to the facts
- Let go of false presumptions
- Foster a deeper understanding of obesity science
- Seek effective primary prevention
- Build systems to deliver better care



War Production poster by J. Howard Miller

Reject Bias and Stigma

Dimension	Explicit Bias Trend 2007-2020	Implicit Bias Trend 2007-2020
Sexuality	↓	↓
Race	↓	↓
Skin Tone	↓	↓
Age	↓	↔
Disability	↓	↔
Weight	↓	↑ ↔

Explicit bias no longer goes unnoticed, but implicit bias is sneaky and prevalent

Source: Charlesworth & Banaji, 2022, *Psychological Science*

Build Awareness of Key Facts

- It is undeniable that obesity is a chronic disease.
- Obesity is driven by powerful underlying biology, not choice.
- The many health effects of excess weight can start early.
- Obesity is treatable.
- Weight bias, stigma, and discrimination are harmful.

Source: Working group of the international obesity collaborative

Let Go of False Presumptions



We don't have to choose between obesity prevention and obesity care...

Source: Allison Hempenstall, MD, MPH, via Twitter

Let Go of False Presumptions



...Because good obesity care is indeed preventive care.

Source: Allison Hempenstall, MD, MPH, via Twitter

Let Go of False Presumptions

Recognizing the importance of physiology does not diminish the value of lifestyle strategies for coping

Obesity

Nicola Davis
Science
correspondent

🐦@NicolaKSDavis

Sun 5 Feb 2023

New diabetes drugs do not tackle root causes of obesity, experts warn

Doctors say preventing obesity by avoiding unhealthy food is better than trying to reverse its effects



Let Go of False Presumptions

We don't have to choose between caring for people who live with obesity or live with an eating disorder



The screenshot shows the top portion of the NPR website. On the left is the NPR logo (npr) in red, black, and blue. To its right is the logo for 90.5 WESA, a Pittsburgh NPR News Station. Further right are links for 'SIGN IN' and 'NPR SHOP'. Below these is a dark navigation bar with icons and text for 'NEWS', 'CULTURE', 'MUSIC', 'PODCASTS & SHOWS', and 'SEARCH'.



CHILDREN'S HEALTH

New childhood obesity guidance raises worries over the risk of eating disorders

Updated February 22, 2023 · 8:15 PM ET

KAITLYN RADDE

Let Go of False Presumptions

*BMI alone is not a measure of health,
but it can be suggestive of excess adiposity*

 The New York Times

Is B.M.I. a Scam?

There are few single measures in health care that seem to carry as much weight as body mass index, or B.M.I. We encounter it not just at...

May 18, 2021



Let Go of False Presumptions

People living with obesity are no more or less worthy of medical care than those living with diabetes or other chronic diseases



People

SUBSCRIBE

LIFESTYLE > HEALTH

Anthony Anderson on the Weight Loss Drug Trend That's 'Creating a Shortage' for Diabetes Patients

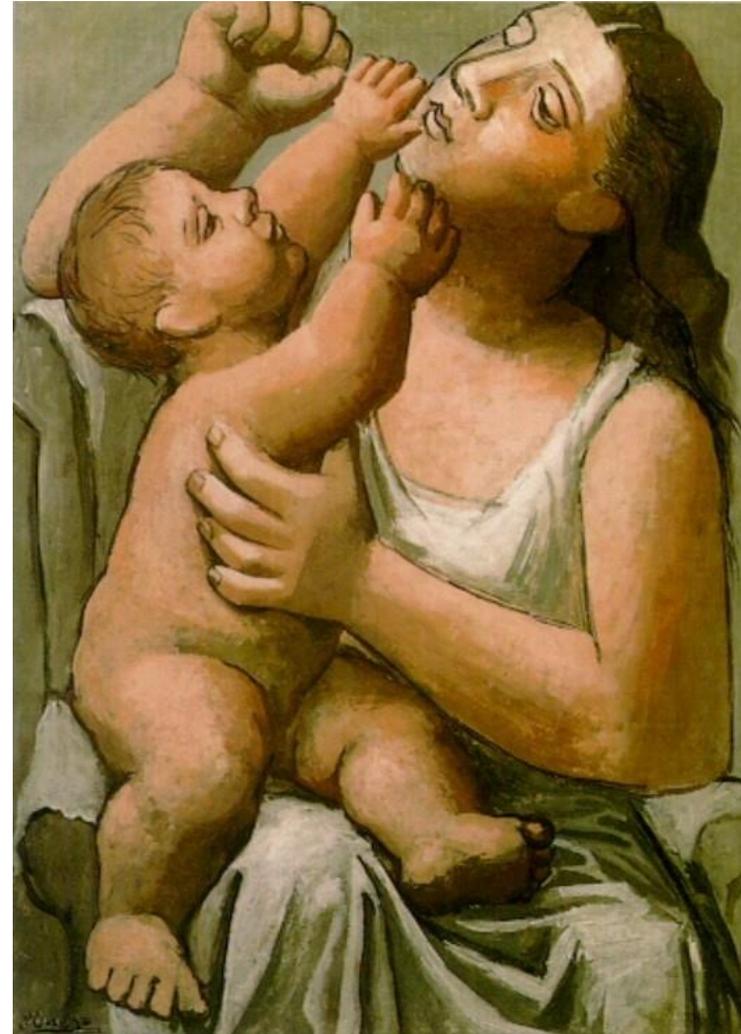
"Hopefully this trend will stop," Anthony Anderson, who has Type 2 diabetes, told PEOPLE of the life-saving drugs that have found popularity as a weight loss aide among Hollywood and TikTok

By [Lanae Brody](#) and [Glenn Garner](#) | Published on February 12, 2023 01:50 PM



Seek Effective Primary and Primordial Prevention

- Address the complex, adaptive systems that drive obesity
- Move beyond the narrow focus on diet and exercise
- Account for social stresses and environmental obesogens
- Bring more curiosity and objectivity



Mother and Child, painting by Pablo Picasso / WikiArt

Build Systems to Deliver Better Care



KFF

DONATE

Will Where You Live Determine Access and Coverage of Emerging Anti-Obesity Drugs?

Rakesh Singh and Patrick Drake
Aug 30, 2023

Bloomberg

- Live Now
- Markets
- Economics
- Industries
- Tech
- AI
- Politics
- Wealth
- Pursuits
- Opinion

Opinion | Lisa Jarvis, Columnist

Insurers Can't Avoid Covering Weight-Loss Drugs Forever

Evidence is mounting that drugs like Ozempic and Wegovy not only help patients lose weight but also help prevent heart attacks and strokes.

August 8, 2023 at 1:00 PM EDT



By **Lisa Jarvis**

Lisa Jarvis is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering biotech, health care and the pharmaceutical industry. Previously, she was executive editor of Chemical & Engineering News.

Build Systems to Deliver Better Care



News

Weather

Sports

VERIFY



HEALTH

Class-action lawsuits allege healthcare companies discriminate by not covering obesity treatments

The Washington State Health Care Authority and Regence Blueshield are accused of unlawfully excluding obesity treatments like Ozempic.

Author: KING 5 Staff

Published: 1:20 PM PDT October 10, 2023

Updated: 9:00 PM PDT October 10, 2023

The Future of Prevention Is Bright and Will Be Different

- Obesity care can prevent disease progression
- It's evolving to prevent complications
 - Cardiovascular
 - Metabolic
 - Oncologic
 - Respiratory
 - Hepatic
 - Musculoskeletal
 - Renal
- Current understanding of obesity drivers is incomplete
- Better insight will bring effective primordial and primary prevention



Future, painting by Giacomo Balla / WikiArt

In Sum, a Mixed Picture

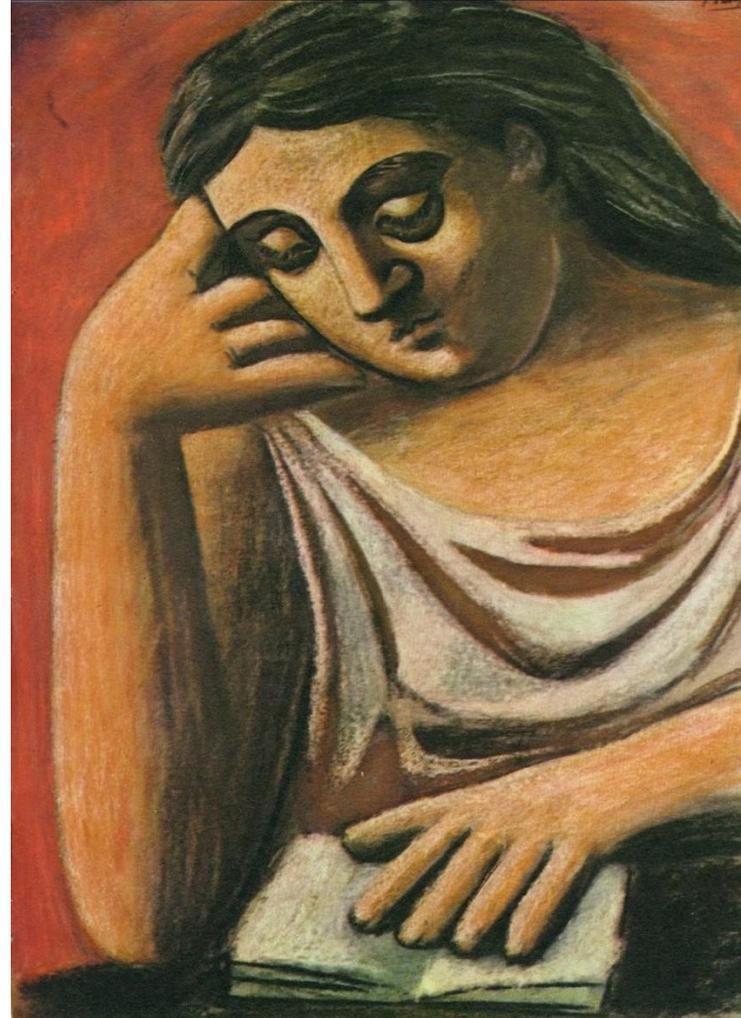
- Progress has accelerated in obesity care
- Prospects for secondary and tertiary prevention are bright
- Costs will decline
- Access will improve
- Expect a rocky ride



Rocky Landscape, painting by August Macke / WikiArt

In Sum, a Mixed Picture

- Primordial and primary prevention are stuck on old paradigms
- Progress will require new insights and more complete approaches



Reading, painting by Pablo Picasso / WikiArt

More Information

 conscienhealth.org/news

 [@ConscienHealth](https://twitter.com/ConscienHealth)

 linkedin.com/in/ted-kyle-conscienhealth/

 Facebook.com/ConscienHealth

 instagram.com/ConscienHealth/

For these slides:

<https://conscienhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/FuturePrevention.pdf>

