

# Student Abstract

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**Title:** Tackling Obesity in the United States: The Fat Tax

**Abstract:** Results from the 1999-2002 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), using measured heights and weights, indicate that an estimated 65 percent of U.S. adults are either overweight or obese. Obesity leads to increased risk of chronic disease and disability as well as decreased productivity and quality of life. It is clear that intervention is necessary in order to reverse the trend in weight gain in this country. Low level taxes on foods like sodas and snacks have been imposed in several states to raise state revenues, but never for the expressed purpose of decreasing purchase of such products. This paper will investigate the role of a "fat tax" as a public policy measure to address the nation's trend of increasing obesity. The obesity problem and its impact, arguments justifying a "fat tax" and a comparative analysis to the tax on tobacco, alternative solutions, and methods for implementation of the tax will be discussed. Following on the heels of big tobacco, a "fat tax" is an effective tool for dealing with obesity.