Infrastructure of Obesity

Why Worry? Obesity prevalence.
Direct health care cost projections

Projected Costs (Billions of 1998 dollars)

Kenneth R. Stanton 2007

Overall cost estimates

- Economic impact of chronic disease
  - $1.1 trillion
- Reducing obesity prevalence could save
  - $60 billion reduction in treatment costs
  - $254 billion in productivity gains

Kenneth R. Stanton 2007
Maryland on the back of an envelope…

- The arithmetic:
  - Population Maryland = approximately 5.6 million
  - Population USA = approximately 300 million
  - $5.6/300 = 0.0187 or 1.9%$
  - 1.87 percent of $130 billion = $2.4 billion
- Direct medical costs only…
- Maryland’s structural deficit = $1.7 billion

Why Worry II

- Human Costs
  - Diabetes II
    » Often combined with poverty
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Cancer
- Early onset of puberty
- Other serious health problems
East Harlem

- Estimates of 16 to 20 percent with Type 2 diabetes (as many as 1 in 5)
- Combined with poverty and other social disadvantages
  - Limb amputations and blindness
- Importance of access to adequate medical care

Access to medical care

- Sloan Kettering and Johns Hopkins
- Simultaneously, the uninsured are growing in number
  - Zero access
  - Death because of preventable dental infection right here in Baltimore in 2007 because of the barrier imposed by cost
Actions so far…

Enacted Obesity Control Legislation By Type (August 2006)

- Obesity Control Legislation
  - Physical Education
  - Nutrition Standards
  - Vending Machine Usage
  - Obesity Research
  - Obesity Treatment in Health Insurance
  - BMI Measured in Schools

The Challenges

- State versus state arbitrage
- Examples:
  - Snack tax and politics
  - Lobbying
Farm Policy

1970s, Big Bud