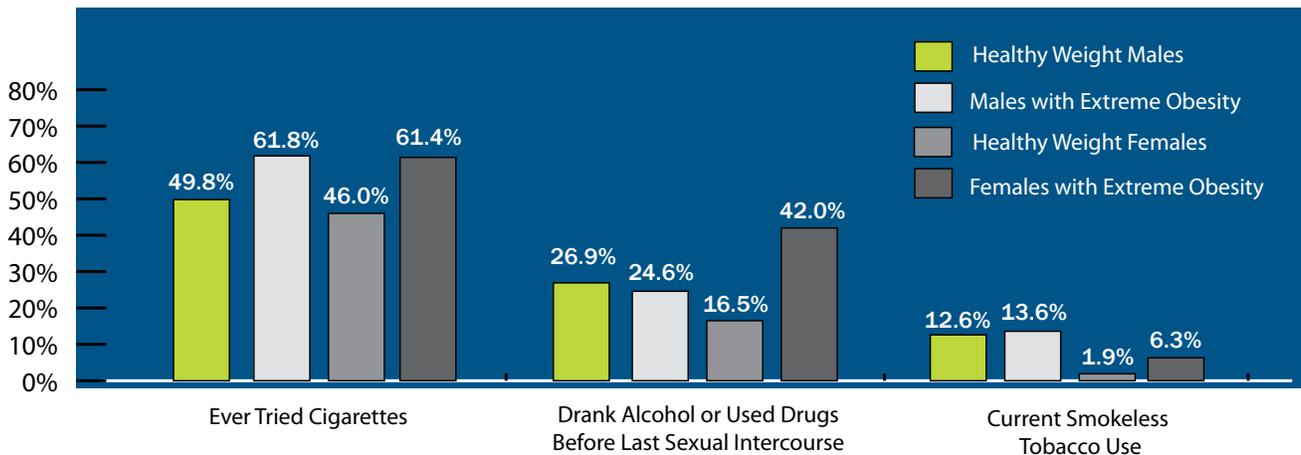




## High School Students with Extreme Obesity More Likely to Engage in Some High-Risk Behaviors

Data collected by the 2007 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)<sup>1</sup> indicate that high school students with extreme obesity<sup>2</sup> are at heightened risk of engaging in particular high-risk behaviors. Relative to healthy weight teens,<sup>3</sup> both male and female students with extreme obesity were more likely to ever have tried cigarette smoking (61.8% of males with extreme obesity vs. 49.8% of healthy weight males; 61.4% of females with extreme obesity vs. 46.0% of healthy weight females). Female students with extreme obesity were also more likely than their healthy weight female counterparts to currently use smokeless tobacco (6.3% vs. 1.9%) and drink alcohol or use drugs prior to their last sexual intercourse (42.0% vs. 16.5%). The authors note that because teens with extreme obesity have greater risk of developing other co-occurring health conditions, identifying what high-risk behaviors they may engage in is important to develop appropriate interventions for this group.

**Percentage of High School Students Who Engaged in Selected High-Risk Behaviors, 2007**



**Source:**

Ratcliff, M. B., Jenkins, T. M., Reiter-Purtill, J., Noll, J. G., and Zeller, M. H. (2011.) Risk-taking behaviors of adolescents with extreme obesity: Normative or not? *Pediatrics*, 127(5), 827-834.

**Notes:**

- <sup>1</sup> The YRBS survey is conducted every two years by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and collects self-reported data from high school students at 158 public and private schools located in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- <sup>2</sup> Teens with extreme obesity have a body mass index in a percentile greater than the 99<sup>th</sup> for their age and gender.
- <sup>3</sup> Healthy weight teens are those with body mass indexes in the 5<sup>th</sup> to 84<sup>th</sup> percentile for their age and gender.

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