

Arab Countries with the Highest Obesity Levels

According to the World Health Organization's (WHO) World Health Observatory [report](#), nine Middle Eastern countries have ranked highest in the obesity statistics among adults aged 18 and above.

The figures show that the prevalence of obesity among adults in the Middle East has nearly tripled since 1975, leading to a population burdened with cardiovascular diseases and other lifestyle ailments.

According to a [2016 study](#) from the *World Journal of Diabetes*, the Middle Eastern and North African region has the second highest rate of increases in diabetes in the world and the number of people with diabetes is projected to increase by 96.2% by 2035. This could be due to genetic risk, rapid urbanization and lack of exercise.

Rising obesity levels have also led to a growth of a very lucrative cosmetic surgery market in the GCC. Arabian Gulf countries have [the highest percentage](#) of bariatric procedures (a variety of procedures used to treat obesity) performed which include sleeve gastrectomy, gastric bypass and the placement of gastric band.

Below are the countries with the highest prevalence of obesity (in percentage) in the Middle East. The report measures levels of obesity using the Body Mass Index (BMI) which is a person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters.

1.

Kuwait - 37.9%

2.

Jordan - 35.5%

3.

Saudi Arabia - 35.4%

4.

Qatar - 35.1%

5.

Libya - 32.5%

6.

Egypt and Lebanon - 32%

7.

United Arab Emirates - 31.7%

8.

Iraq - 30.4%

<https://forbesmiddleeast.com/arab-countries-highest-obesity-levels>