

# Average Body Mass Index (Obesity) By Chicago Zip Code



- High BMI
- Average BMI
- Low BMI
- Excluded

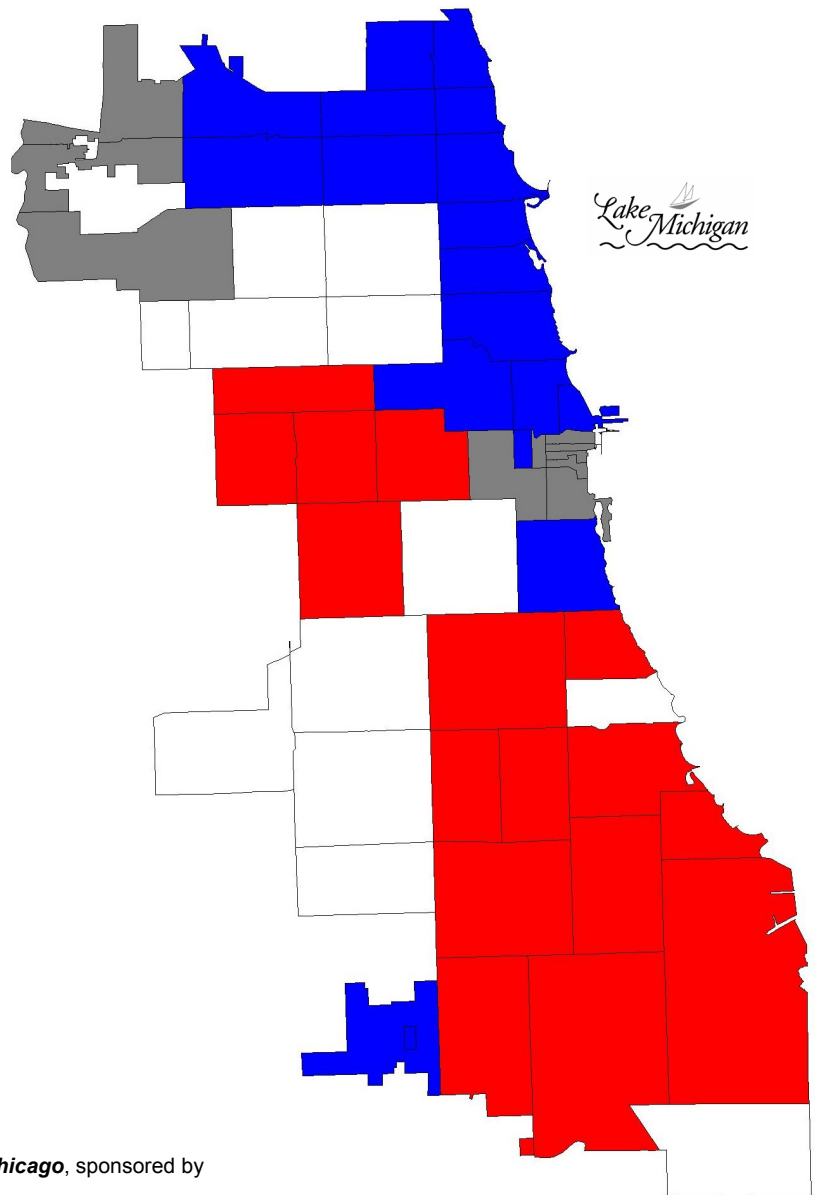
Our Study, *Examining the Impact of Food Deserts on Public Health in Chicago*, included a robust, albeit self-reported, sample of height and weight from driver's license records by Zip Code. Height and weight, included in those records, allows the calculation of body mass index (BMI), an accepted measure for obesity. The data are grouped into tertiles (thirds). The map shows a striking clustering pattern: Chicago's North and Northwest sides have the lowest rates of BMI and the West and South sides have the highest rates of BMI.

**Obesity and health are tied together**, and many factors influence both: genetics, eating habits, culture, income, education, and race.

### **What about access to a grocery store?**

Grocery store locations proved in our study to be a statistically significant factor in obesity outcomes: **the farther the grocery store, the higher the obesity rate**. That poor health outcomes can be moderated by access to food and to food balance is an important finding. Translation: something can be done about it. The built environment constitutes a set of deliberate choices: to develop, subsidize, or finance a grocery store – or not to – happens by choice, not by chance.

For more information, and for cautionary notes on to how to best interpret the data, view the full report from a link on our website:



*Examining the Impact of Food Deserts on Public Health in Chicago*, sponsored by

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