

# Germans claim 'fattest Europeans' title

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Germany has laid claim to the dubious distinction of being the most obese country in Europe, the International Association for the Study of Obesity reports.

The report said 75 percent of German males and 59 percent of German females are overweight, and cited several factors, the *Suddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper reported. Among them were poor diet, mounting consumption of alcohol, and less and less physical activity in a country where 60 percent of people would rather drive than walk.

Germany nudged out last year's three-way tying countries of Britain, Cyprus and the Czech Republic.

Overall, more than 50 percent of Europeans are overweight, the report said, warning of serious economic consequences if left unchecked, particularly among children.

Health specialists said extra weight will cause premature aging and disease, leaving that generation less functional, the report said.

"Measures against obesity should be regarded as a healthcare priority, and obesity therapy should be as serious as that of any other ailment," said Dr. Vojtech Hainer, president of the European Association for the Study of Obesity.

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