

# Illegal drug use is associated with abnormal weight in teens

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A survey of more than 33,000 Italian high school students reveals that both underweight and overweight teens consume 20 to 40% more illegal drugs than their normal-weight peers.

Further analysis showed that the relationship between these two factors was largely mediated by [psychosocial factors](#) such as self-esteem, parents' educational level, and friendships.

Based on these results, the authors conclude that abnormal weight and substance abuse are not directly related in a cause-effect relationship, but instead are likely both due to common underlying social factors and dissatisfaction.

"Eating disorders have largely increased during the last decades, and obesity is a major public-health problem, especially since the phenomenon is spreading among children. Thus we believe that the results are important to better define targeted interventions", says Dr. Sabrina Moinaro.

**More information:** Denoth F, Siciliano V, Iozzo P, Fortunato L, Molinaro S (2011) The Association between Overweight and Illegal Drug Consumption in Adolescents: Is There an Underlying Influence of the Sociocultural Environment? PLoS ONE 6(11): e27358.

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