

Talking about weight tied to poor self-Image, depression: study

March 23 2012



'Fat talk' involves repeat comments on diet, exercise, fears of weight gain, researchers say.

(HealthDay) -- People who often make comments about their weight are more likely to have a poor body image and to suffer depression, according to a new study.

Researchers used two series on online [questionnaires](#) to assess the impact that "fat talk" had on [undergraduate students](#) at the University of Arizona. In all, 85 women and 33 men participated.

Examples of fat talk include people making comments about what their eating and [exercise habits](#) should be, fears of becoming [overweight](#), and perception of their own weight and shape, as well as voicing comparisons with other people in these areas.

The more often a person engaged in fat talk, the lower his or her [body](#)

[satisfaction](#) and the higher the level of depression. The researchers also found that lower body satisfaction was associated with greater amounts of fat talk, which, in turn, was linked with increase depression and greater perceived pressure to be thin.

Hearing another person engage in fat talk was neither a cause or result of body weight or mental health issues.

The study was recently published online in the *Journal of Applied Communication Research*.

"These results suggest that expressing weight-related concerns, which is common especially among women, has negative effects," lead author Analisa Arroyo, a graduate student in communications at the University of Arizona, Tucson, said in a journal news release. "We found that fat talk predicts changes in depression, body satisfaction and perceived pressure to be thin across time."

More information: The U.S. Office on Women's Health has more about [body image](#).

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Citation: Talking about weight tied to poor self-Image, depression: study (2012, March 23) retrieved 4 July 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-03-weight-tied-poor-self-image-depression.html>

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