

Your supermarket may affect your weight

April 4 2012

Your supermarket may affect your weight, according to a report published Apr. 4 in the open access journal *PLoS ONE*.

The study, conducted in Paris from 2007 to 2008, found that participants who shop at discount supermarkets, in supermarkets in areas with poorly educated consumers, or in supermarkets far from their own neighborhood had higher body mass indices (BMI) and waste circumferences. As Basile Chaix indicates, "shopping at discount supermarkets was more strongly associated with higher body weight and abdominal fat among low educated than among high educated participants."

Supermarket size and produce quality, on the other hand, were not correlated with either BMI or [waist circumference](#).

Previous work of this type has largely focused on general [neighborhood characteristics](#) instead of specific personal behavior, but the current study, which included 7,131 participants, revealed that only 11.4% shopped for food primarily in their residential neighborhood. This result emphasizes the importance of evaluating people personal [food environments](#).

The authors, led by Basile Chaix of INSERM in France, conclude that supermarkets may be a useful site for public health interventions to change food purchasing behavior.

More information: Chaix B, Bean K, Daniel M, Zenk SN, Kestens Y,

et al. (2012) Associations of Supermarket Characteristics with Weight Status and Body Fat: A Multilevel Analysis of Individuals within Supermarkets (RECORD Study). PLoS ONE 7(4): e32908.

[doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0032908](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0032908)

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