

Children of divorced parents in higher risk of obesity, study finds

May 30 2014



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Divorce rates, family quarrels and the habit to eat out influence child obesity rates, new studies presented at the European Congress on Obesity in Sofia suggested on Friday.

In one study, Norwegian researchers found that changes to [family](#)

[structure](#) can affect a child's weight.

By measuring the height, weight and [waist circumference](#) of 3,166 Norwegian third graders, and comparing the data against their parental marital status, the team concluded that children of divorced parents were 1.54 times more likely to be [overweight](#) than those of married parents.

Another study from Norway among 7,915 children in eight European countries suggested that children who eat breakfast and dinner with their parents are less likely to be overweight than those who do not.

The researchers concluded that children who ate breakfast with their parents 5-7 times per week were 40 percent less likely to be overweight compared with children who had breakfast with their parents 2-4 times or less per week.

Those who also had dinner with their parents 5-7 times per week were 30 percent less likely to be overweight than those who shared less evening meals at home.

Lunch was different, the data showed, with children who regularly had lunch with their [parents](#) 20 percent more prone to obesity.

Another study by a team of Danish researchers showed that family conflicts around mealtime were highly related to pickiness in [children](#) aged 2 to 6, who refused certain foods because they associated them with their parental disputes.

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Citation: Children of divorced parents in higher risk of obesity, study finds (2014, May 30) retrieved 17 April 2024 from

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