

Severe obesity in youth even riskier than thought

March 3 2015



(HealthDay)—Extremely obese children—such as those at least 100 pounds overweight—are in deeper trouble in terms of cardiovascular disease risks than doctors have thought, new research suggests. The study appears online March 2 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

"Severe obesity in the adolescent age group is associated with numerous cardiovascular [risk factors](#) that were previously thought to only affect adults," study author Marc Michalsky, M.D., an associate professor of clinical surgery and pediatrics at The Ohio State University College of Medicine in Columbus, told *HealthDay*. The study didn't examine whether the children—with an average age of 17—faced a higher risk of premature death. But it did show that the risk factors for [cardiovascular disease](#) are more severe in heavier children.

The researchers looked at 242 children under the age of 19 who were waiting for weight-loss surgery between 2007 and 2011. The typical child had a [body mass index](#) of 50 kg/m², which translates to 340 pounds for a person who's 5-foot-9. About half the children had elevated blood pressure or dyslipidemia, and 14 percent had diabetes. Ninety-five percent had at least one risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Five percent had four risk factors. Boys—who made up about a quarter of the study participants—were more likely to suffer from elevated blood pressure and dyslipidemia.

The findings suggest that early diagnosis and treatment of risk factors could make a difference in stopping diseases from getting worse, Michalsky said.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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Citation: Severe obesity in youth even riskier than thought (2015, March 3) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-03-severe-obesity-youth-riskier-thought.html>

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