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Study addresses extreme thinness standards in fashion industry

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In a recent study, female fashion models reported high levels of pressure to lose weight, which was associated with higher odds of engaging in unhealthy behaviors to control weight. The study is the largest to date to explore disordered eating among professional models, and in particular to examine rates of specific unhealthy weight control behaviors.

When considering potential policy approaches aiming to improve working conditions, models rated approaches that increased worker protections as most feasible. In contrast, imposing restrictions on a minimum body mass index, as has been suggested by some regulators, was rated as the least impactful.

"The American fashion industry has the opportunity now to join France, Israel, Milan, Madrid, and others, where governments have taken important steps to protect the health of models. Our study findings help to shine a light on the working conditions these young models are facing and offer insights for how we can do better," said Dr. Rachel Rodgers, lead author of the *International Journal of Eating Disorders* study. "Every model deserves a guarantee of safe and healthy working conditions and these are reflected in the images that young people see. It's a healthier environment for everyone."

More information: Rachel F. Rodgers et al, Results of a strategic science study to inform policies targeting extreme thinness standards in the fashion industry, *International Journal of Eating Disorders* (2017). DOI: 10.1002/eat.22682

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