Strong religious beliefs may be linked to higher weight

August 7 2017

(HealthDay)—There is evidence of a significant association between

religious affiliation and body weight, with religiosity being significantly associated with higher body weight, according to research published online Aug. 2 in *Obesity Reviews*.

Karen Hye-cheon Kim Yeary, Ph.D., from University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock, and colleagues conducted a systematic literature search to identify quantitative studies of religion and weight. Findings were summarized for two categories of religion variables: religious affiliation and religiosity.

The researchers found that for religious affiliation there were significant associations with body weight in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies. Specifically, in cross-sectional analyses, Seventh-Day Adventists had lower body weight than other denominations. There were significant associations between greater religiosity and higher body weight in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies. A greater proportion of studies with a representative sample, longitudinal analyses, and male-only samples reported significant associations between religiosity and weight.

"More longitudinal studies and analyses of mediators are needed to provide stronger evidence and further elucidate religion-weight relationships," the authors write.

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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