

# Child obesity linked to higher mortality risk in young adulthood

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(HealthDay)—Obesity in children is associated with an increased risk

for premature mortality in young adulthood and with an increased risk for anxiety and depression, according to two studies published online in March in *PLOS Medicine* and *BMC Medicine*.

Louise Lindberg, from the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, and colleagues conducted a prospective study to compare mortality risk in young adulthood for children with and without [obesity](#) using data from 41,359 individuals. The researchers identified 104 deaths over 190,752 person-years of follow-up (median, 3.6 years). Overall, 0.55 and 0.19 percent of the childhood obesity and comparison cohorts died during follow-up, respectively. Among individuals in the [childhood obesity](#) cohort, more than one-quarter of the deaths had obesity recorded as a primary or contributing cause of death.

In a second study, Lindberg and colleagues compared the risk for anxiety and depression among children aged 6 to 17 years with obesity (12,507 children) and in a matched group from the general population (60,063 children). The researchers found that after adjustment for Nordic background, [neuropsychiatric disorders](#), family history of anxiety/depression, and [socioeconomic status](#), obesity remained a significant risk factor for anxiety and depression in children and adolescents. The risk for anxiety and depression was increased for girls and for boys in the obesity cohort compared with the general population (adjusted hazard ratios, 1.43 and 1.33, respectively).

"Taken together our studies highlight the vulnerable situation that children with obesity are in," Lindberg said in a statement. "It is important that children with obesity are offered adequate and long-term treatment early in life to reduce these risks."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text 1](#)  
[Abstract/Full Text 2](#)

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