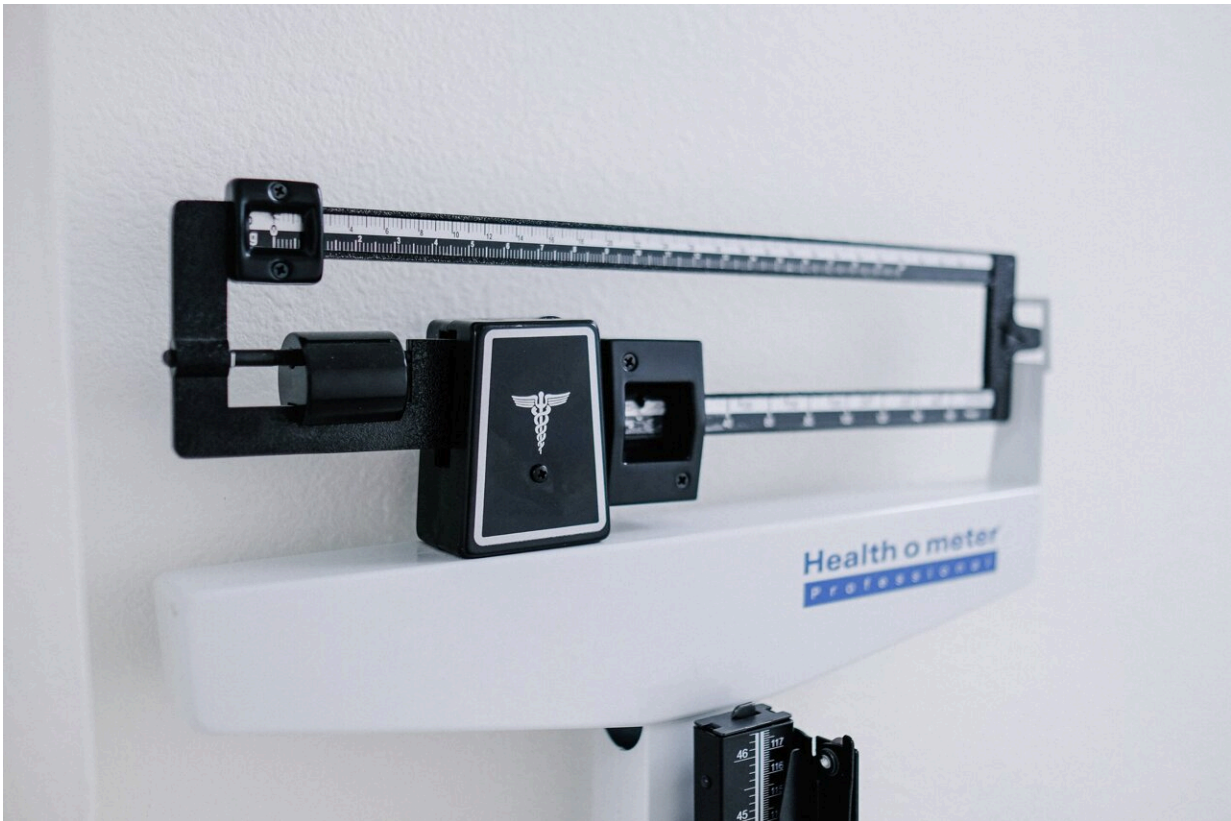


Abnormal biomarkers associated with obesity identified in very young Latino children

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In the United States, low-income, Latino youth are disproportionately affected by obesity, with 25.8% of Latino youth aged 2-19 considered to have obesity, which is approximately two times more likely when

compared to their non-Latino white counterparts. A higher level of obesity results in an increased risk of cardiometabolic diseases, which are a group of related diseases caused by an unhealthy lifestyle and/or an increased genetic predisposition.

A new study led by Allison McKay, RDN, department manager for the Department of Nutrition and Food Studies, has identified elevated insulin, hemoglobin A1C, triglycerides, and other cardiometabolic biomarkers in early elementary-aged Latino youth. Similar abnormal biomarkers are found in adults. McKay compared cardiometabolic biomarkers between age and sex-matched pairs of [elementary school](#)-aged Latino children with obesity vs. healthy weight peers.

"Tracking the [biomarker](#) difference in children with obesity and children with healthy weight may help to identify those at greater risk of developing several diseases and health issues. This will allow earlier interventions and reduce the number and severity of children who are affected by [obesity](#) and its related diseases later in life," said McKay.

The findings are published in the *Southern Medical Journal*. Additionally, the study found elevated liver markers in both groups, which may indicate a genetic or ethnic predisposition for abnormal liver function, but more research is needed.

More information: Allison J. McKay et al, Differences in Cardiometabolic Biomarkers between Elementary School–Age Latinx Children with Obesity versus Healthy Weight, *Southern Medical Journal* (2023). [DOI: 10.14423/SMJ.0000000000001506](https://doi.org/10.14423/SMJ.0000000000001506)

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