



Degree of Obesity Raises Risk of Stroke, Regardless of Gender, Race

ScienceDaily (Jan. 21, 2010) — The higher a person's degree of obesity, the higher their risk of stroke -- regardless of race, gender and how obesity is measured, according to a new study published in *Stroke: Journal of the American Heart Association*.

"It has not been clear whether overweight and obesity are risk factors for stroke, especially among blacks," said Hiroshi Yatsuya, M.D., Ph.D., study lead author and visiting associate professor at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. "There are also questions about which measure of excess weight (body mass index [BMI], waist circumference or waist-to-hip ratio) is most closely associated with disease risk."

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Pregnant Women Who Are Overweight Put Their Infants at Risk

ScienceDaily (Jan. 20, 2010) — In recent years, there has been a large increase in the prevalence of overweight and obese women of childbearing age, with approximately 51% of non-pregnant women ages 20 to 39 being classified as overweight or obese.

A new article published in the journal *Nursing for Women's Health* finds that obesity in pregnant women is associated with pregnancy complications, birth defects, as well as a greater risk of childhood and adult obesity in infants born to obese mothers.

Merrie Rebecca Walters, RN, and Julie Smith Taylor, PhD, RNC, WHNP-BC, reviewed the potential consequences of maternal obesity. Results show that obese women are more likely to have an infant with a neural tube defect, heart defects, or multiple anomalies than women with a normal BMI.

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Even Small Dietary Reductions in Salt Could Mean Fewer Heart Attacks, Strokes and Deaths

ScienceDaily (Jan. 21, 2010) — Reducing salt in the American diet by as little as one-half teaspoon (or three grams) per day could prevent nearly 100,000 heart attacks and 92,000 deaths each year, according to a new study. Such benefits are on par with the benefits from reductions in smoking and could save the United States about \$24 billion in healthcare costs, the researchers add.

A team from the University of California, San Francisco, Stanford University Medical Center and Columbia University Medical Center conducted the study.

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Michelle Obama to fight child obesity at grass roots

WASHINGTON — Calling obesity an epidemic and one of the greatest threats to America's health and economy, first lady Michelle Obama said Wednesday that she would launch a major initiative next month to combat the problem in childhood.

Obama, speaking at a meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, said the idea was simple: "To put in place common-sense initiatives and solutions that empower families and communities to make healthy decisions for their kids."

The initiative will involve the federal government working with local officials and leaders in the business and non-profit sectors, she said, to provide more nutritious food in schools, allow more opportunities for kids to be physically active and give more communities access to affordable, healthful food.

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Healthy marks for lunchrooms

CAMDEN — New Jersey school lunchrooms offer some of the most nutritious options in the country, according to a school health profile report compiled by the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The CDC recognized the Garden State as one of the 10 best nationwide for its percentage of high schools selling more nutritious food and drinks.

Fewer high schools have vending machines, cafeterias or school stores selling soda, candy bars or fattier chips. And the state is in the top percentile of states offering more fruits and non-fried vegetables, according to the CDC's 2008 School Health Profile.

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CSPI Urges FDA Crackdown on False & Misleading Food Labeling

WASHINGTON—Can orange juice really help prevent or treat arthritis? That's the implication on the label of a Minute Maid orange juice fortified with glucosamine hydrochloride "designed to help protect healthy joints." And it's exactly the kind of misleading health claim that the Center for Science in the Public Interest wants the federal government to stop. Today the group is sending the Food and Drug Administration a 158-page report that documents some of the most egregious examples of false claims, ingredient obfuscations, and other labeling shenanigans.

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