

Obesity as a Predictor of Self-rated Health

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Objective: To report on the relationship between self-rated health and obesity. **Methods:** Computer-assisted telephone survey of 5001 randomly selected individuals aged 18 years and over residing in California and Texas. **Results:** Obese individuals have a 3-fold greater odds of reporting reduced health. After controlling for the effect of demographic factors, health care utilization, chronic disease, and lifestyle behaviors, this relationship persists (OR:

2.33; 95% CI: 1.7, 3.2). **Conclusion:** Results suggest that obesity is a statistically significant predictor of reduced self-rated health. Directly affecting change in people's self-rating of health would be difficult; however, addressing its correlates, such as obesity, may improve self-rated health status over time.

Key words: self-rated health, obesity, health care utilization, chronic disease, lifestyle behaviors

Am J Health Behav. 2009;33(3):319-329
