

Potential Links Between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Obesity

A recent World Trade Center (WTC) Health Registry study investigated a potential correlation between obesity and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among enrollees. The main objective was to assess how PTSD affected body mass index (BMI) and weight changes over time.

Study participants were grouped based on the severity of their PTSD symptoms: none, intermittent or persistent. Researchers analyzed participants' BMIs according to weight categories (underweight, normal, overweight and obese) and changes in their weight over a specified period.

Higher Weight Associated With PTSD Across Groups

The study revealed that obesity was notably more prevalent among participants with persistent PTSD symptoms (**39.5%**) and participants with intermittent PTSD symptoms (**36.6%**) compared with participants with no PTSD symptoms (**29.3%**).

While weight gain was similar across all groups of participants ages 25 to 59, all participants with persistent and intermittent PTSD had higher estimated mean weights over time.

Weight Loss Associated With PTSD Symptoms in Older Adults

Weight loss was observed in men and women age 60 and older. Women with persistent PTSD symptoms lost weight at a faster rate than women with no PTSD symptoms.

These findings align with previous research, corroborating that younger people with a history of PTSD after being exposed to 9/11 are more likely to experience obesity. The study underscores the need to prioritize both physical and mental health to enhance overall well-being and outcomes.

To learn more about other 9/11-related physical and mental health conditions, visit nyc.gov/911health and click on the **Enrollees** tab, then **Health Conditions**.

For mental health or substance use support, call or text **988** or chat at nyc.gov/988. Text and chat services are available in English and Spanish, and counselors are available by phone call 24/7 in more than 200 languages.

For questions about the WTC Health Registry, email wtchr@health.nyc.gov.