



## Restaurants nearby linked to higher weight

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BUFFALO, N.Y., July 6 (UPI) -- Women are more apt to have a higher body mass index if they live within a 5-minute walk from restaurants, U.S. researchers found.

However, the study, published in the Journal of Planning Education and Research, also found that, on average, women who lived close to supermarkets and grocery stores -- as opposed to convenience stores -- tend to have lower BMI.

Samina Raja, a University at Buffalo (N.Y.) professor of urban and regional planning, and colleagues, said the study has limitations. For example, the researchers did not know where the study subjects shopped for food, only which outlets were closest geographically.

The researchers were not able to classify restaurants based on their quality -- fast-food and sit-down restaurants were treated as a single category.

"The prevalence of obesity is a significant public health concern because it places individuals at a risk for a variety of diseases and the role of environmental factors in contributing to obesity has received a lot of attention," Raja said in a statement. "We have attempted here to explain the paradox of high BMI rates among women living in highly walkable inner city neighborhoods."

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