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**Obese People More Likely To Die In Car Crashes**  
 Tracy Samilton (2010-12-29)  
 ANN ARBOR, MI (MICHIGAN RADIO) - Add one more health risk related to obesity.

A new study finds that moderately obese people are 22-percent more likely to die after a crash. And extremely obese people are 56-percent more likely to die.

Study co-author Seth Gemme is a researcher at the University at Buffalo School of Medicine. He speculates that because obese people are physically larger, they are more likely to be injured in a crash.

And he says it may also be harder for an obese person to survive trauma, because of underlying health conditions.

"Obese individuals - they're at are at increased risk of having high blood pressure or other cardiovascular disease," says Gemme. "They are at high risk of dying in a crash."

Gemme says one surprise is what the study showed for just overweight people.

"They actually have less of a risk. We think that's due to some sort of cushioning effect - and not too much cushion."

Researchers analyzed 80,000 fatal car crash records for the study.

Gemme says obese people might want to consider buying larger vehicles to better protect them if they end up in a car crash. And he says the auto industry is aware of the problem.

The study also found that underweight people are more likely to be injured in a crash than normal weight or overweight people. Gemme says very thin people are more likely to be injured in a crash than normal weight or overweight people.

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