

Rethinking obesity: More about genes than willpower

[A] nationally representative [survey](#) of 1,509 adults...by NORC at the University of Chicago, an independent research institution...found that concerns about obesity have risen.

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Researchers say obesity, which affects one-third of Americans, is caused by interactions between the environment and [genetics](#) and has little to do with sloth or gluttony. There are hundreds of genes that can predispose to obesity in an environment where food is cheap and portions are abundant.

Ninety-four percent of the survey participants who were obese had tried to lose weight with diet or exercise, to no avail. Yet three-quarters of survey participants said obesity resulted from a lack of willpower. The best treatment, they said, is to take responsibility for yourself, go on a diet and exercise.

Obesity specialists said the survey painted an alarming picture. They said the findings went against evidence about the science behind the disease, and showed that outdated notions about obesity persisted, to the detriment of those affected.

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It's not that diet and exercise are useless, noted Penny Gordon-Larsen, a professor of nutrition at the University of North Carolina...But lifestyle advice also depends on whether the issue is prevention or treatment and, if treatment, whether the person is extremely obese, obese or just overweight, she said.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Americans Blame Obesity on Willpower, Despite Evidence It's Genetic](#)