



CWHS

Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE 2009 CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

Parents serve as important role models for their children's eating and physical activity habits.¹⁻⁵ Additionally, parental obesity, especially maternal obesity, is a significant predictor of obesity in children.⁶ Obesity, as well as fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity are important not only to women's health, but also to their children because of the influence of these behaviors. This report focuses on the prevalence of obesity and obesity-related behaviors among women who have children living in their household and the influence of social determinants on these behaviors.

In the 2007, 2008, and 2009 California Women's Health Survey, participants were asked about their weight, height, fruit and vegetable consumption, physical activity habits, and the number of children living in the household. For this analysis, women with children, was defined as women who reported one or more child living in their household. Obesity was defined as having a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher. Fruit and vegetable consumption was defined as eating five or more servings of fruit and vegetables a day on average. Physical activity was defined as moderate-to-vigorous physical activity five or more days a week for 30 or more minutes.

The sample size for a single year by various demographic factors was too small for robust analysis; therefore, data from 2007, 2008, and 2009 was combined for this report. During that period, 15,272 women completed the survey, and of those 50.9 percent had at least one child living in the household. Responses were weighted by

age and race/ethnicity to reflect the 2000 U.S. Census adult female population. Chi square analysis was performed to test for statistical significance.

The highlights of the analysis were:

- Women living with children were significantly less likely to eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day than women who did not live with children (19.2 percent vs. 22.2 percent, $P < .001$).
- No difference was found in prevalence of obesity and moderate or vigorous physical activity between women living with children vs. women who did not live with children.

Racial/ethnic disparities were found (Figure 1):

- The prevalence of obesity among women living with children was highest among African Americans/Blacks (32.3 percent) compared with other ethnic groups (26.4 percent of Hispanics, 19.4 percent of Whites, and 13.3 percent of Asians/Others; $P < .001$).
- More than one-quarter of Whites (25.8 percent) reported consuming five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day than Asians/Others (15.5 percent), African Americans/Blacks (14.3 percent), and Hispanics (14.1 percent) ($P < .001$).
- Whites reported engaging in more moderate or vigorous physical activity

Prevalence of Obesity and Obesity-Related Behaviors Among California Women With Children Living in the Household, 2007-2009

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Public Health Message:

Women with children in the household were less likely to consume the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables than women not living with children. Among women with children, this report found a higher prevalence of obesity and obesity-related behaviors among African-Americans/Blacks, Hispanics and those below the federal poverty level. Focusing interventions on the food environment, and nutrition education, as well as increasing participation in exercise in families during early stages of children's lives can effectively improve diet and physical activity in these adults and their children among these higher risk groups.^{8,9}

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(41.9 percent) than Hispanics (38.1 percent), African Americans/Blacks (34.5 percent), and Asians/Others (27.4 percent) ($P < .001$).

Differences between women of different socioeconomic status were also evident (Figure 2):

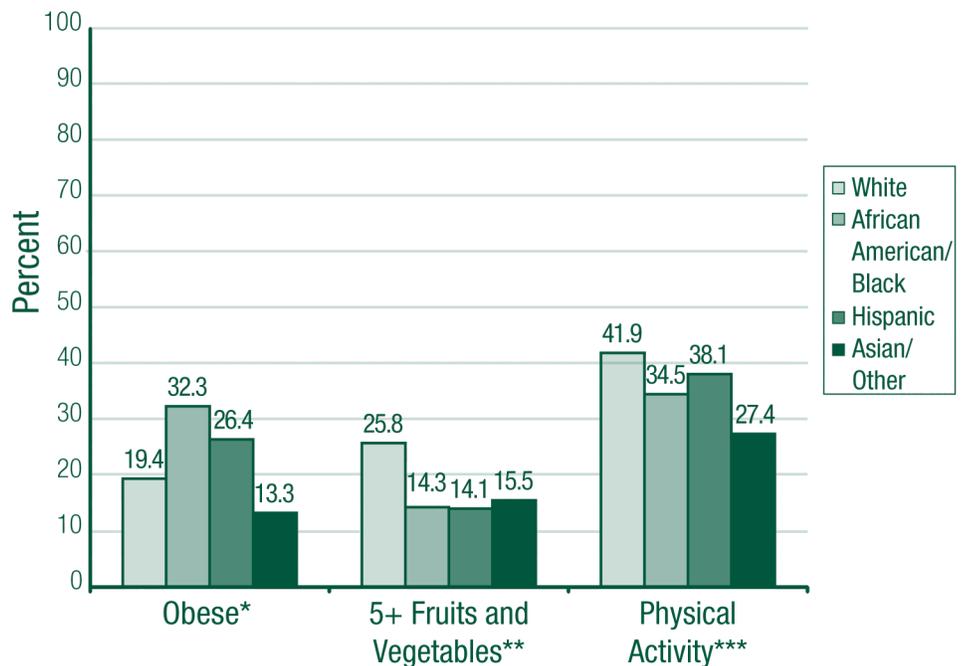
- The prevalence of obesity in women with children living in the household was higher among those below the federal poverty level (FPL) (27.8 percent) than those in other income groups (26.1 percent for those with incomes of 100 - 200 percent of the FPL and 17.8 percent for those with > 200

percent of the FPL) ($P < .001$) (Figure 2).

- Almost one-quarter (24.3 percent) of those with higher income households (> 200 percent of the FPL) reported consuming five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day, compared with those in the 100 to 200 percent of the FPL group (15.7 percent) and those at or below 100 percent of the FPL (12.8 percent) ($P < .001$).
- No difference was found in physical activity by socioeconomic status.

Figure 1

Obesity and Obesity-Related Behaviors Among Women Who Have Children Living in the Household by Race/Ethnicity, 2007-2009



*Obese: BMI \geq 30.0.

**Ate five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day on average.

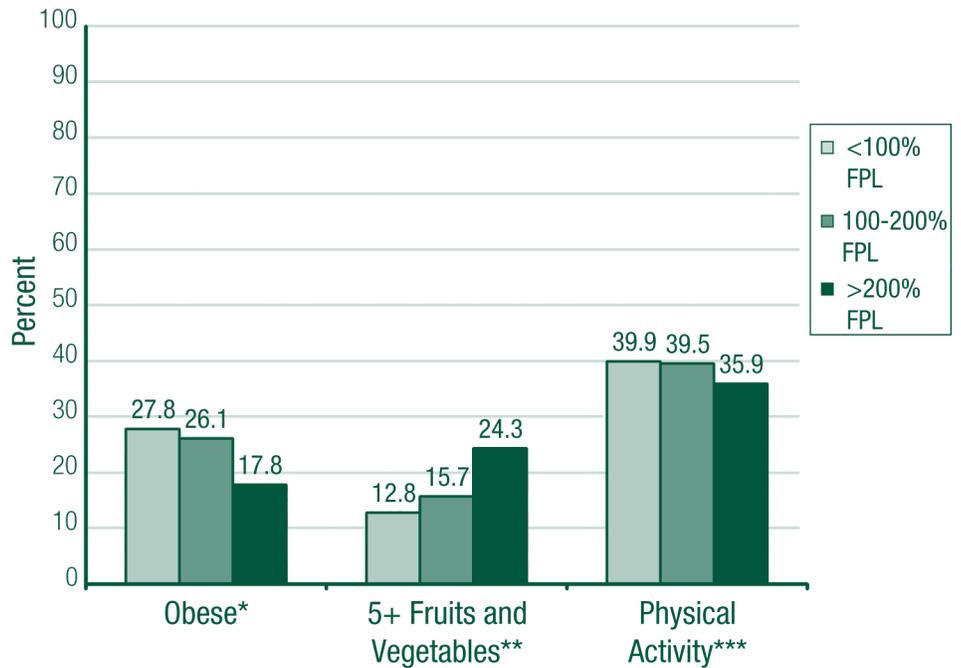
***Physical Activity: Moderate-to-vigorous physical activity five or more days a week for 30 or more minutes.

Source: California Women’s Health Survey, 2007-2009

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Figure 2 **Obesity and Obesity-Related Behaviors Among Women Who Have Children Living in the Household by Federal Poverty Level, 2007-2009**



*Obese: BMI \geq 30.0.

**Ate five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day on average.

***Physical Activity: Moderate to vigorous physical activity five or more days a week for 30 or more minutes.

Source: California Women's Health Survey, 2007-2009

*Prevalence of Obesity
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Analysis and writing of this report was completed while the author was employed with the Survey Research Group of the California Department of Public Health's Cancer Surveillance and Research Branch.

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