



Question: What is the relationship between frequency and regularity of family meals and measures of body weight in U.S. population groups?

Table 1. Summary of studies examining the relationship between family-shared meals and body weight outcomes

Author, Year Study Design Risk of bias*	Final N; Attrition Sex, Age (mean), Study Duration	Independent Variable Outcomes Results	Summary of Findings
<b>Haines 2013</b>  <b>Randomized controlled trial (RCT); Healthy Habits, Happy Homes Intervention</b>  <b>9/28</b>	111, 8%  48% female, 4.1y  6 mo	Number of days at least some of the family ate meals together in past 7 days  Measured height and weight  <b>Family meals over six months (times/week):</b> NS between groups	No significant (NS) intervention effect was found for family meal frequency and body mass index (BMI).
<b>Fulkerson 2008</b>  <b>Prospective Cohort (PC); Project Eating and Activity in Teens and Young Adults (EAT)-II</b>  <b>1/26</b>	2,516, 47%  55% female, 15y  5y	Number of times all or most of the family living in the household ate a meal together  Measured height and weight at baseline; self-reported at follow-up  <b>Overweight status (Yes/No) and Family meals (ref=3-7+ times per week) (OR (95%CI)):</b>  <i>Females:</i> Middle School: NS; High School: NS <i>Males:</i> Middle School: NS; High School: NS	Family meal frequency was not longitudinally associated with overweight status in males or females from two adolescent cohorts (mid-adolescence to young adulthood, and early adolescence to mid-adolescence).
<b>Gable 2007</b>  <b>PC; Early Childhood Longitudinal Study--Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K)</b>	8,000, 0%  52% female, 5.7y  4y	Combined number of times in a typical week at least some of the family eats breakfast and the evening meal together  Measured height and weight  <b>Overweight onset vs. never overweight:</b> OR=0.93 (95% CI: 0.90-0.97)	Children who ate fewer family meals during kindergarten and 1st grade were more likely to be overweight for the first time at 3rd-grade spring semester.  Children who had fewer family meals from kindergarten through 3rd grade were more likely to be persistently



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2/26		<b>Persistent overweight vs. never overweight:</b> OR=0.92 (95% CI: 0.90-0.94)	overweight during the same timeframe.
<b>Miller 2011</b> <b>PC; ECLS-K</b>  2/26	11,400, 46%  50% female, 6.2y  5y	Number of breakfasts family typically ate together per week; Number of dinners family typically ate together per week  Measured height and weight  <b>Initial BMI:</b>  <i>Number of breakfasts weekly:</i> NS <i>Number of dinners weekly:</i> NS  <b>Change in BMI over time:</b>  <i>Number of breakfasts weekly:</i> -0.0111, (P<0.001) <i>Number of dinners weekly:</i> NS	The number of breakfasts eaten with family was not associated with initial BMI, but children who typically ate more breakfasts with their families had a reduced rate of increase in BMI over time. The number of dinners eaten with family was not associated with initial BMI or change in BMI.
<b>Sen 2006</b> <b>PC; National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97)</b>  6/26	5,014, 6%  48% female, 13.3y  1y	Frequency of family dinners (FFD) in a typical week in the past year  Self-reported height and weight  <b>Adolescents reporting FFD 5-6 in 1997 were less likely to be overweight:</b> OR 0.68, 95% CI: 0.49, 0.95); FFD 1-2, 3-4, or 7: NS.  <b>Longitudinal analysis: OR (95%CI):</b>	Findings were not consistent in a dose-response manner for either whites or blacks and Hispanics. For whites, mixed results (beneficial and null associations) vary by year, and category of family meal frequency. In a black and Hispanic group, results were mixed (null and negative associations) between of family meal frequencies and years.



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		<p><i>For non-Hispanic whites:</i>            1998: FFD 7 greater likelihood of ceasing to be overweight 2.74 (1.32, 6.99) (i.e., more likely to move out of the overweight category); FFD 1-2, 3-4, 5-6 = NS            1999: FFD 3-4 and FFD 5-6 were less likely to become overweight (0.34 (0.11, 0.98) and 0.20 (0.06, 0.59), respectively); FFD 1-2 or 7=NS            2000: NS</p> <p><i>For Blacks and Hispanics:</i>            1998: FFD 1-2 and 5-6 lower odds of ceasing to be overweight (0.23 (0.07, 0.64) and 0.50 (0.23, 1.00, respectively); FFD 3-4, 7: NS            1999: NS            2000: FFD 3-4 greater odds of remaining overweight (2.24 (1.14, 4.37), FFD 7 lower odds of ceasing to be overweight (0.42 (0.17, 0.99); FFD 1-2 and 5-6: NS</p>	
<p><b>Taveras 2005</b>   <b>PC; Growing Up Today Study</b>   <b>2/26</b></p>	<p>14,431, 13%             54% female, 9-14y             1y</p>	<p>Frequency of sitting down with other members of family to eat dinner or supper             Self-reported height and weight   <b>Longitudinal multivariate models:</b> OR between previous year frequency of eating family dinner and 1-year incidence of becoming overweight (Comparator: Children who ate family dinner never or some days):   <i>Children who ate family dinner on most days:</i></p>	<p>The frequency of eating family dinner was not associated with 1-year incidence of becoming overweight.</p>



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		0.95 (95% CI: 0.78, 1.16) <i>Every day</i> : 1.04 (95% CI: 0.85, 1.27)	

\* Based on NEL Bias Assessment Test; lower values represent less bias