NEIGHBOURHOOD WALKABILITY, SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND OBESITY

Neighbourhood Built Environment

Physical activity is associated with many health benefits and can protect against overweight and obesity. Higher levels of physical activity are found among those who live in neighbourhoods with features that support walking.[1]

A mix of land uses and destinations

Connected pedestrian networks

High residential density

Neighbourhood Socioeconomic Status

Compared to neighbourhoods of higher socioeconomic status (SES), disadvantaged neighbourhoods tend to have:[2]

- fewer and less maintained sidewalks
- more trash and graffiti
- vacant and rundown land
- fewer recreational facilities
- less access to healthy food

A recent study* estimated the associations between neighbourhood walkability (Walk Score®) and SES, and waist circumference (WC), waist-to-hip ratio (WHR), and body mass index (BMI) among urban Canadian adults.

Obesity risk was found to be related to both neighbourhood walkability and neighbourhood SES.

↓ Obesity = ↑ Walkability

↑ Obesity = ↓ SES
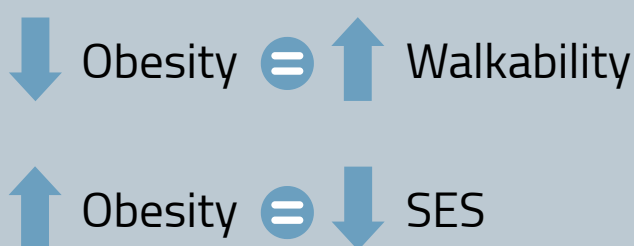
Neighbourhood built environments and socioeconomic status are associated with weight outcomes in Canadian adults.

*For more information:
McCormack GR, Blackstaffe A, Nettel-Aguirre A, Csizmadi I, Sandalack B, Uribe FA, Rayes A, Friedenreich C, Potestio ML. *The independent associations between Walk Score® and neighborhood socioeconomic status, waist circumference, waist-to-hip ratio and body mass index among urban adults.* International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. 2018;15(6):1226. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15061226

*References:
1) Ferdinand AO, et al.. *The relationship between built environments and physical activity: a systematic review.* American Journal of Public Health. 2012;102(10):e7-13.
2) Hill JO, Peters JC. *Environmental contributions to the obesity epidemic.* Science. 1998;280(5368):1371-4.
3) Carr LJ, et al.. *Walk score™ as a global estimate of neighborhood walkability.* American Journal of Preventive Medicine. 2010;39(5):460-3.

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