

**- Obesity**

# 1 in 10 adolescents overweight or obese

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AROUND 12 percent of adolescents aged 10 to 19 are overweight or obese, a research conducted by the Department of Science and Technology's Food and Nutrition Research Institute showed.

The study, "Determinants of Overweight or Obesity among Filipino Adolescents," interviewed 16,217 adolescents using an online questionnaire.

The study found a rising trend in overweight issues and obesity among adolescents, from 4.9 percent in 2003 to 9.2 percent in 2015 and 11.6 percent in 2018, according to science research specialist Josie Desnacido.

There was a significantly higher risk for obesity or being overweight in adolescents aged 10 to 12 and those in households with higher income but with smaller family sizes, the study showed.

It also found that adolescents living in urban areas were 34 percent more likely to be obese or overweight.

"This may be due to the attributes of the food and physical environment, which promotes a generally unhealthy lifestyle of increased consumption of energy-rich, but nutrient-poor diets and a sedentary lifestyle," Desnacido said.

Previous studies had shown that adolescents who are overweight or obese have an increased risk for Type 2 diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular diseases, sleep disorders, and bone and joint diseases.

"Aside from health risk brought about by being overweight and obese, it also causes certain social and psychosocial problems such as stigmatization and poor self-esteem," Desnacido said.

The study's researchers emphasized the importance of open communication between adolescents and parents to better supervise and influence the youths in their food choices. They also recommended strengthening strategies and promoting a healthy lifestyle.