

# Influence of neighbourhood ethnic density, diet and physical activity on ethnic differences in weight status: A study of 214,807 adults in Australia

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**Reference:** Astell-Burt, T., X. Feng, K. Croteau and G. S. Kolt (2013). "Influence of neighbourhood ethnic density, diet and physical activity on ethnic differences in weight status: A study of 214,807 adults in Australia." *Social Science and Medicine* 93.

**Key Words:**

45 & Up Study, BMI, ethnicity

**Research aim:**

We investigated whether ethnic and country of birth differences in adult Body Mass Index (BMI) were associated with differences in diet, physical activity and ethnic density (the percentage of an ethnic group within the neighbourhood environment).

**Results/Conclusion:**

Compared to Australian-born Australians (age-gender adjusted mean BMI=27.1, 95%CI 27.1, 27.2), overseas-born groups often had lower mean BMI, especially the Chinese born in China (23.2, 23.0, 23.4). Exceptions included the Italians (BMI=28.1), Greeks (28.5), Maltese (27.6), Lebanese (28.4) and Croatians (27.8) born in their ethnic-country of origin. Regardless of birthplace, BMI was lower for the English, Scottish, and Chinese, but higher for Italians and Greeks. Some ethnic differences reflected the 'healthy migrant' hypothesis, whereas others did not. For some groups, but not all, living among others of the same ethnic group may proxy unmeasured health-promoting factors and these contexts, along with other factors that harm health (e.g. racial discrimination) warrant further investigation.

**Implications:**

**Cultural Group(s):**

Several (38) CALD groups represented in results

**Location of study:**

New South Wales

**Age group:**

45+

**Number included in study:**

214,807

**Type of participants:**

participants in the 45 & Up Study

**Research approach:**

Quantitative

**Type of data:**

Secondary

**Secondary data sources used:**

**Specific scales or analytical techniques used:**

**Implications/ Recommendations:**

**Notes:**

45 and Up Study