

## Life expectancies at age 30 and 50 with and without disability by Body Mass Index categories in Belgium 1997-2011 (Health data from Belgium Health Interview Survey 1997 and 2001)

At age 30 and 50, for both sexes, life expectancy (LE) was the highest in overweight individuals with a steep increase between underweight and normal weight categories. LE slightly decreased for obese men and remained constant for obese women. DFLE in men was the lowest in the underweight category, similar in normal and overweight individuals and lower in obese men. In women, the DFLE showed an inverted U-form with the highest DFLE in normal weight women. DLE and the expected years lived with severe disability (DLE\_S) were larger with increasing BMI category. Especially in obese women the DLE and DLE\_S were substantially larger. E.g. at age 50, LE was respectively 27.0, 34.3, 35.3 and 35.6 years for underweight, normal weight, overweight and obese women; DFLE was respectively 13.5, 19.2, 17.9, 15.2 years, while the DLE was 13.5, 15.2, 17.4, 20.4 years of which 3.7, 4.0, 4.7 and 8.1 years in severe disability.

Although high BMI categories have been associated in this study with a slight gain in life expectancy as compared with the normal weight category, overweight and especially obese adults also experienced a higher proportion of years lived with disability. Especially in women, obesity contributed to excess years with severe disability. This study confirms that the negative health effect of overweight and in particular obesity is more important on disability than on mortality.

