

Comparison of perceived health to physiological measures of health in Black and White women.

[Duncan GE](#)¹, [Anton SD](#), [Newton RL Jr](#), [Perri MG](#).

Author information

Abstract

BACKGROUND: Obesity and sedentary lifestyles are prevalent among minority women. This study compared perceived and physiological measures of health in 35 non-Hispanic Black (NHB) and 155 non-Hispanic White (NHW) sedentary women.

METHODS: Self-perception of body weight, physical shape and appearance, physical fitness, and eating habits were assessed via questionnaire using 10-point scales (1 = poor, 10 = excellent), and height, weight, aerobic capacity ($V(O_2)(max)$), and 4-day food records were directly measured.

RESULTS: Although body mass index (BMI, 30.3 +/- 5.3 vs 27.2 +/- 4.5 kg/m²) and weight (82.7 +/- 16.5 vs 73.1 +/- 12.9 kg) were greater (both $P = 0.0001$) in NHB, groups were similar in self-perception of physical shape and appearance and weight. $V(O_2)(max)$ was lower in NHB compared to NHW (20.7 +/- 4.5 vs 23.5 +/- 4.6 ml x kg⁻¹ x min⁻¹), $P = 0.002$, despite no difference between groups in self-perception of physical fitness. Finally, there was no difference between groups for self-perception of eating habits and percentage of calories derived from fat (%fat). The results were unchanged after adjusting for age, education, and income, except that %fat was greater in NHB compared to NHW (35.7 +/- 6.3 vs 33.8 +/- 6.9%, $P = 0.03$).

CONCLUSIONS: Although NHB were heavier, more obese, less fit, and consumed a greater %fat than NHW, they perceived their weight, physical shape and appearance, physical fitness, and eating habits to be no worse than those of their White counterparts. The perceptions of NHB regarding their weight, fitness, and eating habits may represent barriers to change.

PMID: 12689808

[Indexed for MEDLINE]

Publication types, MeSH terms, Grant support

LinkOut - more resources