THE HEALTH BEHAVIOR AND BMI OF MALE FINNISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Average or poor self perceived health (%) in different education groups

Men's health in Finland is very good, but the socioeconomic differences in health and health behavior are increasing. The men in lower socioeconomic groups die many years earlier, they have more health problems and their self perceived health is lower. Some of these health differences are caused by differences in health behavior, but not all.
Risk use of alcohol (AUDIT-C score ≥ ...
Obesity (BMI ≥ 30) and education
Depression (self reported) and education

Both overweight and obesity as well as underweight could be associated with mental problems. How common obesity and these problems are in university students?
The average weight of young men in military service in Finland has increased 7 kg in 20 years (Turun Sanomat 21.3.2015). Also university students average weight has increased. We are working with young men who are going in future represent the highest socioeconomic group. It is possible that health differences between socioeconomic groups are decreasing, but unfortunately, in a negative way.
The fourth national Finnish Student Health Survey

- was carried in 2012
- covered university students (age < 35 years)
- representative sample of 5000 students
- The response rate of this online or postal questionnaire survey was 39 % for men, N=911.
- The health and health behavior of students with low (<19), normal (19-24.9) and high (≥25) BMI were compared.
BMI of male Finnish university students

- 1.90
- 58.8
- 39.3

BMI
- < 19
- 19-24.9
- > 25

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Average or poor self perceived health in different BMI groups

![Bar chart showing self perceived health average or poor (P-value <0.0001)]
Diseases (diagnosed) in different BMI groups (%)

- Diagnosed disease (p-value=0.5116)
- Musculoskeletal problems (P-value=0.0275)
- Atopic eczema (p-value=0.0044)
- Anxiety disorder (P-value=0.0228)
- Depression (p-value=0.0006)
Use of FSHS services

![Bar chart showing the use of FSHS services by different categories of healthcare providers: Nurse, GP, Psychologist, Psychiatrist. The chart compares the use of services by age groups: < 19, 19-24.9, > 25.](chart.png)

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What about health behavior? There were no statistical differences in eating habits, physical activity or smoking between these groups.
Alcohol consumption (AUDIT scores) and BMI (p-value =0.0378)

But, there were differences in alcohol consumption: the men with high BMI used more alcohol than others. It might be the reason for their obesity. And, maybe that is why they had more often headache than the others.
As a Conclusion: In this age group, low BMI seems to be associated with mental health problems like anxiety and depression. It is possible that mental health problems associated with high BMI will appear later. The overweight students’ alcohol consumption must be noted and we have to find tools to decrease young men’s drinking.