Higher Birthweight and Maternal Pre-pregnancy BMI Persist with Obesity Association at Age 9 in High Risk Latino Children

Similarly to global trends, childhood obesity in the US has increased over the past decades. Among the general population, Mexican Americans, the largest group of Latino children in the US, appear to have higher rates of obesity compared to non-Latino white children. In this at-risk group, some of the consequences of childhood obesity include “a higher prevalence of hypertension in adolescence, non-alcoholic liver disease, and diabetes mellitus.” To gain a better understanding of the long-term impact of perinatal risk factors for obesity, this study aimed to “identify perinatal infant and maternal risk factors as predictors for obesity in high-risk, low-income Latino children persisting until middle childhood.”

This study was “the first to look at perinatal and maternal risk factors for long-term obesity in Latino children to pre-pubescence.” Overall, the study highlighted that a higher birthweight was associated with increased risk of childhood obesity by age 9. Perinatal risk factors including higher birthweight as well as maternal pre-pregnancy Body Mass Index persist at age 9 among the urban Latino population in the US. It could therefore be highly beneficial to focus on the perinatal period to prevent childhood obesity in high-risk and vulnerable populations.