

# DH urges public on World Obesity Day to manage weight through healthy lifestyle

Today (March 4) is World Obesity Day and the Controller of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health (DH), Dr Edwin Tsui, reminded the public that obesity increases the risk of many chronic diseases and urged them to pay attention to the problem of obesity and develop a healthy lifestyle to achieve and maintain an appropriate body weight.

The World Obesity Federation has designated March 4 each year as [World Obesity Day](#) to promote and support the maintenance of a healthy body weight and to address the global obesity crisis. The theme of this year's World Obesity Day is "Changing Systems, Healthier Lives", which calls on the public to focus on the factors that contribute to the increasing rates of obesity around the world and strive to improve food systems, the environment and health systems, etc.

In Hong Kong, a body mass index (BMI) of adults from 23 to less than 25 is regarded as overweight, while a BMI of 25 or more is considered obese. According to the [Population Health Survey](#) conducted by the DH, the prevalence of overweight and obesity among people aged between 15 and 84 in Hong Kong increased from 50 per cent in 2014/15 to 54.6 per cent in 2020-22.

As for students who attended the DH's Student Health Service Centres for an annual health assessment, the prevalence of overweight (including obesity) among primary students decreased from 19.5 per cent in 2022/23 school year to 16.4 per cent in 2023/24 school year, which was a record low since 2014/15 school year. However, the prevalence of overweight (including obesity) among secondary students remained high at 20 per cent.

"Extensive research over the world has shown that increasing obesity is associated with increasing mortality. Obesity is a major risk factor for a number of chronic diseases, including hypertension, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes mellitus, cancer, musculoskeletal disorders and sleep apnoea. To achieve and maintain a healthy weight, members of the public are encouraged to practice healthy living from an early age, including maintaining a balanced diet, being physically active and reducing the amount of time spent being sedentary," Dr Tsui said.

The DH has been working with other government departments and community partners to promote healthy lifestyles, including the [EatSmart Restaurant Star+](#) campaign, the [StartSmart@school.hk](#), [EatSmart@school.hk](#) campaigns, and the "[10 000 Steps a Day](#)" campaign. "The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address" also announced the establishment of a Life-course Health Promotion Strategy and strengthening of the DH's [Whole School Health Programme](#).

In addition, to shift the emphasis of the healthcare system and mindset

from treatment-oriented to prevention-oriented, the Government is reforming healthcare services with the establishment of District Health Centres (DHCs) that provide health promotions, health-risk factor assessments, disease screenings and chronic disease management. The DHCs also conduct various kinds of health promotion activities, including offering guidance on healthy eating patterns, weight management and the provision of exercise classes.