

THE UNC CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY RESEARCH HEALTH DISPARITIES SEMINAR

“Fat or Fabulous: Gender and Race Effects on Sexual Risk Taking among Obese and Non-Obese Adolescents.”

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Bondurant Hall, Room G074

The prevalence of obesity among adolescents is more than 30%, which reflects a 6-fold increase over the past four decades. In addition to its negative effect on physical health, mounting evidence demonstrates that obesity adversely affects romantic relationship formation. Most notably, obesity has been associated with higher rates of engagement in sexual risk behaviors among adolescent females, with differences among racial groups. These differences may help to explain variations in rates of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections among women and minority groups. This presentation will examine the literature linking obesity and sexual risk behaviors highlighting how gender and race-based beauty norms may account for these differences.