

## Study: Japan Men Getting Fatter

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TOKYO (AP) - Japanese men are getting fatter, according to a government report that blames fatty foods and desk jobs for tipping the scales.

According to a Ministry of Health and Welfare study, the ratio of men in their 20s considered overweight ballooned to 19 percent in 1998 from 9.2 percent in 1979, when the ministry last analyzed dietary habits, a report Saturday in the Yomiuri newspaper said.

The survey of 15,000 men and women found that waistlines have expanded most among men between ages 15 and 39, although young women are getting thinner, the mass-circulation newspaper said.

One Japanese man in four is now considered overweight, while slightly fewer than one Japanese woman in five fits that definition, the report said.

The data in the Health Ministry's survey was based on the body-mass index, a widely used index to measure body fat.

The study suggested that Japanese men are getting fatter by consuming more junk food, eating at irregular times and because they are holding more desk jobs than they once did.

The ministry attributed the surge in women who are underweight to the slim-is-beautiful fashion consciousness of recent years.

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*Note: Similar increases are being seen across Asia.*