

# Articles

## THE INTERNATIONAL LAW OF OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY

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### ABSTRACT

*The number of overweight and obese persons is equal to the number of those starving. This finding has triggered an alarmed response from the global public health system, which sees itself confronted by rising health-care costs from “lifestyle diseases” even as it continues to struggle with the economic and social burden of contagious disease. Although global attention to the “obesity epidemic” is only starting, the combination of causes and effects spanning economic, political, social, and cultural aspects of eating and exercise makes the global health environment more complex and more contentious than it has ever been.*

*This article sets out the fundamentals of international overweight and obesity law, emphasizing the global public health and human rights law interests. It sets out a framework for examining how weight can be approached by international legal rules that must respond to societal concerns while protecting individuals’ dignity, even where those interests collide.*

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**KEYWORDS:** *weight, obesity, overweight, health, right to food, right to health, discrimination, public health, individual rights*