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Shorter men and **overweight** women earn £1,500 less per year than colleagues  
  
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Shorter men and **overweight** women are more likely to earn £1,500 a year less than their colleagues, a new study has found.

Scientists at the University of Exeter studied data from 120,000 people between the ages of 40 and 70 and found that there is a link between smaller stature in men and body mass index (**BMI**) in women leading to reduced chances in life.

The study, published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ), looked at 400 genetic variants associated with **height** and 70 associated with **BMI**.

The findings showed if a man was three inches shorter than the average **height**, it would lead him to have an income £1,500 less per year than his taller colleagues.

But in women, those a stone [6.3kg] heavier than average, would also earn the same amount less per year than a comparable woman of the same **height** who was a stone lighter.

Professor Tim Frayling, from the University of Exeter's medical school, said: "This is the best available evidence to indicate that your **height** or **weight** can directly influence your earnings and other**socioeconomic** factors throughout your life.

"Although we knew there was a strong association, most people assumed that shorter **height** and higher **BMI** were a consequence of poorer nutrition and chances in life.

"Now we have shown that there is an effect in the other direction as well - shorter **height** and higher**BMI** can actually lead to lower income and other lifestyle measures."

Professor Frayling added while the research does not apply in every case, we should question if the finds are down to discrimination or bias.

**LANGUAGE:** ENGLISH