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Recommended Citation
African American maternal caregiver support for prevention of childhood obesity may be a factor in implementing, monitoring, and sustaining children’s positive health behaviors. However, little is known about how perceptions of childhood obesity risk factors and health complications influence caregivers’ support of childhood obesity prevention strategies. The objective of this study was to determine if childhood obesity risk factors and health complications were associated with maternal caregivers’ support for prevention initiatives.

A convenience sample of maternal caregivers (N = 129, ages 22–65 years) completed the childhood obesity perceptions (COP) survey. A linear regression was conducted to determine whether perceptions about childhood obesity risk factors and subsequent health complications influenced caregivers’ support for prevention strategies. Caregivers’ perceptions of childhood obesity risk factors were moderate (M = 3.4; SD = 0.64), as were their perceptions of obesity-related health complications (M = 3.3; SD = 0.75); however, they perceived a high level of support for prevention strategies (M = 4.2; SD = 0.74). In the regression model, only health complications were significantly associated with caregiver support (β = 0.348; p < 0.004).

In conclusion, childhood obesity prevention efforts should emphasize health complications by providing education and strategies that promote self-efficacy and outcome expectations among maternal caregivers.

"Do Maternal Caregiver Perceptions of Childhood Obesity Risk Factors and Obesity Complications Predict Support for Prevention Initiatives Among African Americans?" was published in the Maternal Child Health Journal.

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