Weight and widowhood

From the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, I'm Ted Pestorius with HHS HealthBeat.

Many people gain weight after they get married, or lose weight after they are divorced or widowed.

At the University of Texas at Austin, Debra Umberson reviewed 15 years of national survey data. Although weight gain has been linked to a higher risk of sickness and death, weight loss has, too. And Umberson found in her study that people who go through the turmoil of losing a spouse had a high risk of long-lasting weight loss.

She says:

"The newly widowed should be aware that they are at risk if they begin to lose weight. And they might want to make an effort to avoid weight loss."

She notes that they might need their health professional's help to do it.

The study in the Journal of Health and Social Behavior was supported by the National Institutes of Health.

Learn more at hhs.gov.

HHS HealthBeat is a production of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. I'm Ted Pestorius.

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