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Rex stands small on weight issues

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Written by [contentmen](#) on 05/29/2010 7:18:20 PM

Much of the New York Jets' surprising playoff success during the 2009 season, which ended with a loss in the AFC Championship, was credited to their effervescent head coach, Rex Ryan.

In Ryan's universe, everything is large. The Jets defense gave up the fewest points and yards per game of any team during this past regular season. Ryan's boisterous personality gave the Jets a swagger not demonstrated by the team for years, perhaps decades. His physical presence also loomed large.

According to a recent *New York Post* article, Ryan allegedly clocks in at roughly 350 pounds, a figure which is supplemented by his apparent 7,000-calorie-per-day diet. The story captured Ryan's carefree attitude toward his weight by running a 2007 quote in which he referred to the many leaner NFL head coaches by stating "I don't see how your weight can make you a better coach."

This nonchalant behavior can lead many overweight folks to bypass what's best for their long-term health—losing weight. A study in the January/February issue of the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* highlighted overweight individuals becoming intimidated at tasks that can improve their health.

Researchers at the George Washington University Medical Center found in the study of 1,552 people—989 of whom were ruled as overweight—that overweight individuals felt more embarrassed and intimidated about exercising around young people, fit people and in general than those of a normal weight.

Ryan is setting a poor example by displaying a certain amount of apathy regarding his weight. While I admire his willingness to let down his guard and poke fun at himself, I can't help but think that someone in his position, with his level of fame, should do more to become an inspirational figure to other overweight folks. Ryan has the charisma and leadership ability to set an example for others to lose weight. Unfortunately, he doesn't appear to have the self-discipline to actually become that type of person.

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