

Obese and Overweight Women and Public Health Issues in Hillah City, Iraq

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Abstract : In both developed and developing countries, obesity among women is increasing, but in different patterns and at very different speeds. It may have a negative effect on health, leading to reduced life expectancy and/or increased health problems. This research studied the age distribution among obese women, the types of overweight and obesity, and the extent of the problem of overweight/obesity and the obesity etiological factors among women in Hillah city in central Iraq. A total of 322 overweight and obese women were included in the study, those women were randomly selected. The Body Mass Index was used as indicator for overweight/ obesity. The incidence of overweight/obesity among age groups were estimated, the etiology factors included genetic, environmental, genetic/environmental and endocrine disease. The overweight and obese women were screened for incidence of infection and/or diseases. The study found that the prevalence of 322 overweight and obese women in Hillah city in central Iraq was 19.25% and 80.78%, respectively. The obese women types were recorded based on BMI and WHO classification as class-1 obesity (29.81%), class-2 obesity (24.22%) and class-3 obesity (26.70%), the result was discrepancy non-significant, P value \leq 0.05. The incidence of overweight in women was high among those aged 20-29 years (90.32%), 6.45% aged 30-39 years old and 3.22% among \geq 60 years old, while the incidence of obesity was 20.38% for those in the age group 20-29 years, 17.30% were 30-39 years, 23.84% were 40-49 years, 16.92% were 50-59 years group and 21.53% were \geq 60 years age group. These results confirm that the age can be considered as a significant factor for obesity types (P value \leq 0.0001). The result also showed that the both genetic factors and environmental factors were responsible for incidents of overweight or obesity (84.78%) p value \leq 0.0001. The results also recorded cases of different repeated infections (skin infection, recurrent UTI and influenza), cancer, gallstones, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and infertility. Weight stigma and bias generally refers to negative attitudes; Obesity can affect quality of life, and the results of this study recorded depression among overweight or obese women. This can lead to sexual problems, shame and guilt, social isolation and reduced work performance. Overweight and Obesity are real problems among women of all age groups and is associated with the risk of diseases and infection and negatively affects quality of life. This result warrants further studies into the prevalence of obesity among women in Hillah City in central Iraq and the immune response of obese women.

Keywords : obesity, overweight, Iraq, body mass index

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