

## Obesity, Metabolic Syndrome and Related Risk Behaviors Among Thai Medical Students of Thammasat University

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**Abstract :** Background: During the training period of the 6-year medical curriculum, medical students seem to have many risk behaviors of developing obesity. This study aims to demonstrate the prevalence and risk behavior of obesity and related metabolic disorders among the final-year medical students of Thammasat University as well as the change in nutritional status during studying program. Methods: 123 participants were asked to complete the self-report questionnaires. Weight, height, waist circumference and blood pressure were obtained. Blood samples were drawn for total cholesterol, high-density lipoprotein, low-density lipoprotein, triglycerides and plasma glucose. Body weight and height of the medical students in the first year were obtained from the medical report at the entry. Results: The prevalence of overweight and obesity at the entry to medical school was 22.0% and increased to 30.1% in the final year. Two obese students (5.4%) was diagnosed as metabolic syndrome. During 6-year curriculum, the BMI gained in male medical students were more significant as compared to female students ( $1.76 \pm 1.74$  and  $0.43 \pm 1.82$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>, respectively;  $p < .001$ ). The current BMI is significantly correlated with the BMI at entry. Serum LDL-C in the overweight/obese students was significantly higher as compared to the normal weight and underweight group. Sleep deprivation was a significantly frequent behavior in the overweight/obese students. Conclusion: Medical students, as having high-risk behaviors, should be assessed for the nutritional status and metabolic parameters. Medical schools should promote the healthy behaviors to increase the healthy eating and exercise habits and reduced the risk behaviors among them.

**Keywords :** medical students, metabolic syndrome, obesity, risk behaviors

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