

Body Mass Index Profile in Hong Kong Chinese Adults

G T C Ko,*^{MBChB, FRCPI, FHKAM}, M M F Wu,**^{BSc}, J Tang,**^{MBBS, FRACGP, MPH}, H P S Wai,****^{MBChB, FRCR},
C H S Chan,^{MBBS, FRCP, FHKAM}, R Chen,^{MBBS, MPH, FHKAM}

Abstract

Introduction: Obesity has now become an epidemic with increasing prevalence in most parts of the world. However, information on the problem of obesity in Asians is limited. **Subjects and Methods:** From April 1996 to August 1997, 17,121 Chinese adult subjects from the community of Hong Kong presented themselves voluntarily at the United Christian Nethersole Community Health Service Centers for primary health care check-up. Demographic data including height and weight were documented. Their body mass indexes (BMI) were measured. The prevalence rates of overweight and obese subjects were calculated according to the 1995 World Health Organization criteria. **Results:** There were 4781 (27.9%) men and 12340 (72.1%) women. The mean age (\pm SD) was 51.3 ± 16.0 years (range 20 to 96 years, median 49.8 years). Of the 17,121 subjects, 4939 (28.85%) were overweight and 656 (3.83%) were obese. Based on the 1997 Hong Kong Census statistics of the overall Hong Kong population data, the age-standardised prevalence rates of overweight and obese subjects were 30.52% and 3.19% in men and 22.14% and 3.35% in women, respectively. Of the 10,937 subjects of working age (20 to 65 years), the prevalence rates of overweight and obese subjects were 28.98% and 3.55%, respectively. Of the 6648 subjects aged ≥ 60 years, the prevalence rates of overweight and obese subjects were 36.31% and 4.81%, respectively. **Conclusions:** In Hong Kong, the age-standardised prevalence rate of overweight and obese subjects were 30.5% and 3.2% in men and 22.1% and 3.4% in women, respectively. This information provides some useful estimations of the extent of an important public health problem, obesity, in Hong Kong.

Ann Acad Med Singapore 2001; 30:393-6

Key words: Chinese, Obesity, Overweight, Public health

* Senior Medical Officer

+ Consultant

++ Hospital Chief Executive

Department of Medicine

Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital, Hong Kong

** Administrative Officer

*** Medical Director

United Christian Nethersole Community Health Service, Hong Kong

**** Medical Officer

Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital, Hong Kong

Address for Reprints: Dr Gary T C Ko, Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital, 11 Chuen On Road, Tai Po, Hong Kong, SAR China.

E-mail: gtc_ko@hotmail.com