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Association between cardiovascular disease and obesity among adults in Puerto Rico according to the PR-BRFSS 2009-2010

Paula Lorán Butrón, Manuel Bayona, Carolina Álvarez Garriga and Ruby A. Serrano-Rodríguez
University of Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico

Background: According to the World Health Organization (2011), an elevated body mass index is an important risk factor for cardiovascular disease and stroke. Puerto Rico has one of the higher obesity rates in the Caribbean.

Methods: Data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS-PR), 2009 and 2010 were used for this study (n = 7,522). In order to estimate the prevalence ratio of overweight and obesity adjusted for multiple variables, Cox regression was used.

Results: Overall, 63.2% of participants were overweight or obese. Individuals with hypertension had a higher prevalence of overweight and obesity than those without hypertension PR = 1.44; (IC95%: 1.30, 1.60) (p < 0.01). Those with a diagnosis of stroke had a higher prevalence of overweight and obesity PR = 1.19; (IC95%: 1.07, 1.34) compared with those who had no such diagnosis (p < 0.01). In patients with angina, the prevalence of overweight and obesity was higher PR = 1.32; (IC95%: 1.19, 1.47) compared with those without (p < 0.01).

Conclusion: In Puerto Rico obesity and overweight rates are higher than other developed countries. Our study reveals that there is a relationship between overweight and obesity and diseases such as hypertension, heart attack and angina.

paulaloran@gmail.com

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