

OBESITY IN CANCER SURVIVORS

Obesity is a growing phenomenon, especially in the United States. Research carried out at Columbia University has established a relationship between cancer and weight gain that could exacerbate this trend.

People that survived cancer may be more likely to become obese than the general population: this is an American study conducted by a team at Columbia University in New York and published in the Journal of Clinical Oncology. Obesity is considered one of the risk factors for many chronic diseases and some types of cancer, including prostate cancer.



Stock photo. Posed by model.

The researchers examined data from nearly 540,000 adult patients registered in the American National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). The study examined both women and men and considered different types of cancer, among which the most common were breast cancer and prostate cancer.

They evaluated both obesity and the incidence of cancer diagnosis in the period between 1997 and 2014.

There was a general increase in obesity, defined as a body mass index greater than 30, however, in the case of cancer survivors, the obesity rate grew annually by 2.9%, compared with 2.3% of people who had never been diagnosed with cancer.

“These results suggest that obesity is a growing public health burden for cancer survivors, which requires targeted interventions including weight management efforts to stave off the increasing obesity trends we are seeing in cancer survivors,” noted Heather Greenlee, assistant professor of Epidemiology at the Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health.

Possible causes of this increase in obesity among those who have defeated cancer can be attributed to the effects of therapies to

treat cancer and fatigue that contributes to a state of increased physical inactivity. This study once again highlights the extraordinary benefits of physical activity and a balanced diet, which become crucial especially for cancer patients

References

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