

Obesity among Mongolian adults from urban and rural areas

ABSTRACT

Shifts in lifestyles and eating patterns have led to an increasing prevalence of chronic non-communicable diseases in the adult population in Mongolia. This article reports the prevalence of obesity, abdominal obesity and body fat among 408 Mongolian adults aged 25 years and above. The subjects included 61.2% from urban areas and 38.8% from rural areas, reflective of the 60: 40 urban rural ratio in the general population. Anthropometric measurements were taken according to standard methods. Classification of overweight/obesity was based on body mass index of WHO while abdominal obesity was based on WPRO for Asians. Men made up 47.8% (200) and women 52.2% (218) of the sample. The mean age of the subjects was 46.7 ± 12.7 years. About one-third (32.8%) of the subjects were overweight and 10.5% obese. A higher proportion of women (13.3%) than men were obese (7.5%). The age groups of 35-54 years in men and 55-64 years in women showed the highest prevalence of overweight. Prevalence of abdominal obesity was found in 46.5% of the men and in 65.1% of the women. Women aged 55-64 years had the highest proportion (78.4%) of abdominal obesity. In terms of body fat, 20.0 % and 51.5% of the men had high and very high levels of body fat respectively, while among the women, 15.1% and 55.5% respectively had high and very high levels of body fat. Mongolian adults face serious risk of cardiovascular diseases and other aspects of ill-health brought about by obesity. Prevention and control of obesity should be targeted as an urgent public health agenda in Mongolia.

Keyword: Mongolian adults; Obesity; Rural areas; Urban areas