

## PREVALENCE OF OBESITY IN A GROUP OF MEDICAL STUDENTS AT THE CMUL LAGOS IN 2013

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### Background

Obesity is assuming epidemic proportions worldwide, with westernized nations having the highest rates. Unfortunately, developing countries which were burdened with malnutrition are also catching up on the increased prevalence of overweight/obesity seen in the western world.

### Aims and Objectives

This study examined anthropometric indices and the prevalence of overweight and obesity amongst medical students, with an attempt to compare with a group of students in the same institution 7 years earlier by one of our authors.

### Methods

Medical students rotating through the department of medicine were recruited after informed consent. Biodata and anthropometric indices were recorded and the data analysed.

### Results

101 students consented to participate in the study. They were aged 19 – 32 years, 37 were females. Mean age  $22.11 \pm 2.44$  years, weight  $65.98 \pm 9.89$  kg, height  $1.71 \pm 0.09$  m and BMI  $22.49 \pm 2.70$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>. The mean waist circumference was  $75.64 \pm 8.77$  cm. Of the students 2 were obese and 13 overweight. Thus 85% had normal weights.

### Discussion

Obesity and overweight though not common in developing countries like Nigeria is increasing steadily and this is what is fueling the increased DM prevalence seen in this region. The study conducted by Lawal T et al (unpublished) in a similar group of students in the same institution of similar age had majority of the subjects within the normal range of BMI (75.8%), 9.6% were overweight and 2.5% were obese. This represents a possibly rising pattern. All obese patients in that study were in the mild category similar to this.

### Conclusion

The rising tide of overweight/obesity needs to be tackled early in life and studies to identify causes of youth overweight/obesity and measures taken to stem these changes.

