The Appropriate Use of the Asian Guidelines in Determining Obesity Among Filipino Americans

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BACKGROUND

- Multi racial and ethnic studies have shown the Asian population to have lower rates of stroke, HTN and CVD compared to Non-Hispanic Whites (NHW).
- However, studies on Asian subgroups have shown heterogeneity on CVD and CVA patterns. Several studies have shown that Filipinos have a higher prevalence of HTN and hemorrhagic CVA compared to NHW.
- 2003-2010 data on CVD mortality showed Filipinos and Asian Indians have higher CVD mortality rates compared to NHW.
- All Asians have a higher prevalence rate of DM, with Filipinos and Asian Indians having the highest rates.
- Obesity is a major independent risk factor for cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. Despite higher rates of cardiovascular disease and DM, Asians have a low prevalence of overweight/ obesity based on the standard U.S. BMI cut-off points.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended lower BMI cut-off points for Asians.

OBJECTIVES

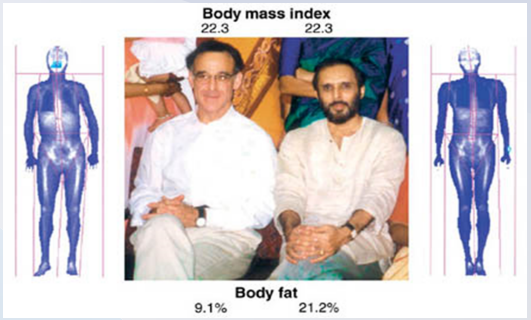
This study aims to determine the prevalence of overweight and obesity among first generation Filipino immigrants using the U.S. standard BMI and W.H.O. Asian BMI guidelines.

METHODOLOGY

A non-experimental, quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional design was used to determine
anthropometric measurements among first generation Filipino American immigrants in New Jersey (n=210).
Actual height and weight measurements were obtained and BMI calculated.
In addition, waist circumference was also measured.
BMI and waist circumference were evaluated using the U.S. and Asian guidelines.

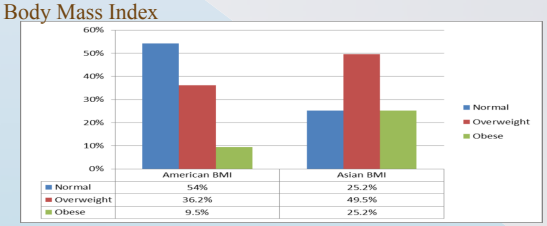
	U.S.	W.H.O.
WEIGHT Normal	18.5 – 24.9 kg/m2	18.5 – 22.9
Overweight	25 —29.9 kg/m2	23—27.4 kg/m2
Obese	≥30 kg/m2	≥27.5 kg/m2
WAIST CIRCUMFERENCE Men	< 40 inches	< 35.5 inches
Women	<35 inches	< 31.5 inches

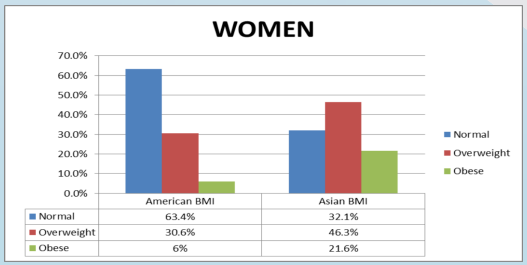
U.S. vs. Asian BMI

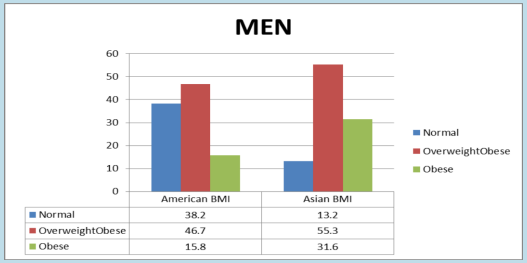


RESULTS

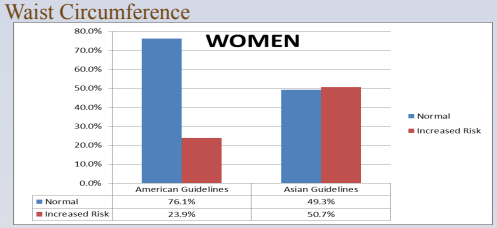
Body Mass Index







Waist Circumference



CONCLUSION

- The results showed that there is a significant discrepancy in the overweight/obesity rate when using standard U.S. guidelines versus the WHO Asian guidelines.
- Using the U.S. guidelines in this population will mask the cardiovascular risk factors and delay primary prevention.
- The use of the WHO Asian guidelines in screening for overweight/obesity has high clinical significance in this population.

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