

Aging in Mexico: *Obesity*

MHAS Fact Sheet: 19-1, July 2019



- Obesity has a high prevalence in older Mexicans
- Unlike in other countries, the rate of obesity is not diminishing in older Mexicans
- Obesity affects quality of life and contributes to increased disability in older Mexicans
- Obesity places older Mexicans at risk for cardiovascular diseases by predisposing to diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure

AROUND THE WORLD



Obesity affects approximately 1/3 of the global population



Obesity can double the risk for chronic diseases¹, Alzheimer's disease and other dementias²



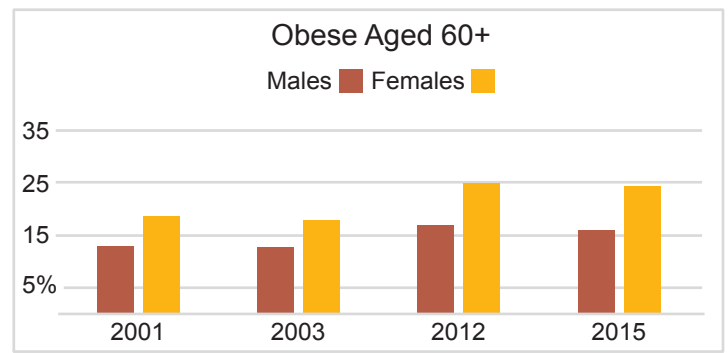
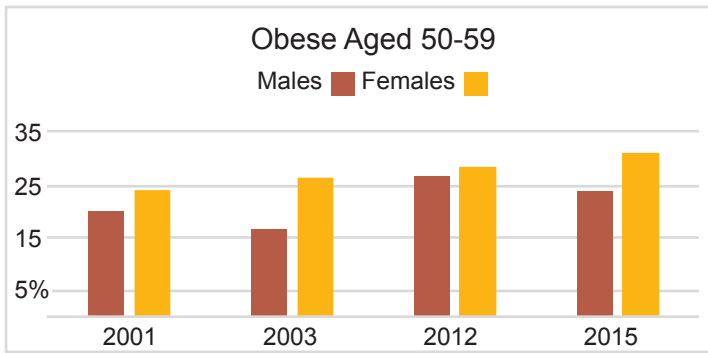
Lower socioeconomic status is another risk factor, with women in the lowest income group 3x more likely to be obese³



Overweight status and obesity shorten life expectancy by 4-7 years⁴

IN MEXICO

Obesity and its related health problems affect older adults in Mexico. Overall 45% of those >50 years are overweight; 23% are obese.⁵ Women are more likely than men to be obese⁶ and in general have higher Body Mass Index.⁷ Obesity raises the risk in older Mexicans of mortality⁸⁻¹⁰ and falls.¹¹ Obesity is associated with low vitamin D levels in older Mexicans⁵, a known risk factor for cardiovascular disease, autoimmune disease, osteoarthritis and hypertension. Obese older Mexicans are 3x more likely to develop diabetes.^{12,13}



Over time, more middle-aged adults are obese, and this has serious health implications in later life.

ABOUT FIGURE METRICS

BMI was calculated by dividing self-reported total body weight (kilograms) by the squared self-reported height. Using this index, individuals were grouped, according to the World Health Organization classification, into obesity (BMI \geq 30). MHAS imputed and weighted data were used to compute the prevalence of obesity.

REFERENCES

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Education campaigns for healthy nutrition should begin in childhood
2. A healthy lifestyle combining adequate nutrition and exercise must be promoted through social media
3. Persons that are overweight or obese after age 50 should start an early detection program for other medical conditions



The Mexican Health and Aging Study (MHAS) is a national study of adults 50 years and older (n=15,000) in Mexico.¹⁴ It is the first longitudinal study of older Mexicans with a broad socioeconomic perspective and has produced over 250 publications. Five waves of data have been collected since the baseline in 2001, through 2018. One more wave is planned to be fielded in 2021. **The MHAS is partly supported by the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Aging (R01AG018016, R Wong, PI) and the INEGI in Mexico, and it is a collaboration among several institutions in both countries.**

ISSUE 19.1 CONTRIBUTORS

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WEBSITES

- www.MHASweb.org (English)
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