



كلية طب وايل كورنيل في قطر
Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar
Member of Qatar Foundation

Press Release

Survival rates higher for overweight diabetes patients – WCMC-Q researcher

Doha – June 14, 2015: Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q) researcher Dr. Stephen Atkin has conducted a study that discovered overweight type-2 diabetes patients live longer than those of normal weight.

The study, entitled 'The Obesity Paradox in Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus: Relationship of Body Mass Index to Prognosis: A Cohort Study', has been published in the prestigious academic journal *Annals of Internal Medicine*. The research found that although overweight patients had a higher chance of having a cardiovascular event, such as a heart attack or a stroke, they were three times less likely to die of a cardiovascular event than patients of normal weight, while patients with low body weight had the highest mortality risk.

This phenomenon, known to researchers as the "obesity paradox", had been investigated by earlier studies, but none that were based on such comprehensive, long-term data as Dr. Atkin's research, which involved intensive analysis of the medical records of 10,568 type-2 diabetes patients who were tracked for an average of approximately 11 years. Overweight is defined as a body mass index (BMI) of 25 to 29.9, while normal weight is defined as a BMI of between 18.5 and 24.9. Obese people have a BMI of 30 or above.

Dr. Atkin said: "No one really knows why this obesity paradox exists, but now that it has been identified it opens up many potential avenues for new research that could enhance our understanding of diabetes and how to manage the condition more effectively."

Despite the findings, the advice for diabetes patients to maintain a healthy weight has not changed, explained Dr. Atkin.

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"The fact remains that overweight patients are more likely to suffer a heart attack or a stroke, so doctors still recommend that patients should try to maintain a weight that is within the normal range," he said. "Prevention is still better than a cure."

Dr. Atkin, who joined WCMC-Q as Professor of Medicine in 2014, led the research in partnership with Dr. Pierluigi Costanzo, one of his former colleagues at the University of Hull in the United Kingdom. Dr. Atkin has now established a laboratory at WCMC-Q researching insulin resistance and cardiovascular disease risk that characterize polycystic ovary syndrome, pre-diabetes, obesity and type-2 diabetes. WCMC-Q is committed to focusing its research efforts on diseases that are particularly relevant to Qatar and the Gulf region, including diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular disease, among others.

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About Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar

Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar is a partnership between Cornell University and Qatar Foundation. It offers pre-medical and medical courses leading to the Cornell University M.D. degree with teaching by Cornell and Weill Cornell faculty and by physicians at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and Aspetar Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Hospital who hold Weill Cornell appointments.

Through its biomedical research program, WCMC-Q is building a sustainable research community in Qatar while advancing basic science and clinical research. Through its medical college, WCMC-Q seeks to provide the finest education possible for medical students, to improve health care both now and for future generations, and to provide high quality health care to the Qatari population.

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