PREVALENCE OF OBESITY AMONG BRAZILIAN ELDERLY: A META-ANALYSIS OF POPULATION-BASED STUDIES

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Background: Population surveys in the United States and Europe show a high prevalence of obesity in the elderly. There are few representative studies of the Brazilian elderly population about this subject, but none nationwide representative survey.

Objective: The study aimed to identify the prevalence of obesity in the elderly population and trends in the last decades through a systematic review.

Methods: A systematic review with meta-analysis of population-based studies, conducted in Brazil, between 1980 and 2012, was carried out. Searches were conducted in the PubMed, Embase, Lilacs and SciELO databases by two independent reviewers. Unpublished studies were identified through the theses bases of CAPES.

Results: 14 studies were identified, including 26,325 elderly participants. As shown in Figure 1, the prevalence of obesity was 18.9% (95% CI 11.3 to 30.0), higher in the 2000’s than in the 90’s. The risk of obesity was higher among women (RR 2.7, 95% CI 1.48 to 4.93, P = 0.001). Furthermore, metaregression for gender showed that in men, there was a trend for increase in obesity over the years (slope = 0.064, P = 0.06), but not for women.

Conclusion: The prevalence of obesity among the elderly has increased in recent decades. Risk was higher among women, but there was considerable increase among men.