GLOBAL OBESITY: A GROWING PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

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Annotation

Global obesity has become one of the most serious public health challenges of the 21st century. The increasing prevalence of obesity is influenced by various factors, including unhealthy diets, sedentary lifestyles, and urbanization. This article examines the main causes and consequences of obesity on both individual health and society. It also highlights the risks associated with obesity, such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and reduced quality of life. Furthermore, possible prevention strategies and solutions, including lifestyle changes, public awareness, and government interventions, are discussed. Addressing global obesity requires coordinated efforts at both national and international levels.

Keywords: Obesity, Body Mass Index (BMI), visceral fat, subcutaneous fat, adipose tissue, metabolic disorders, genetic predisposition, polygenic inheritance, energy imbalance, sedentary lifestyle, high-calorie diet, public health, global epidemic, GLP-1 receptor agonists, cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, urbanization, psychological factors, lifestyle modification, health risks.

Annotatsiya

Global semizlik XXI asrning eng jiddiy jamoat salomatligi muammolaridan biri bo‘lib qolmoqda. Semizlikning ortib borishi turli omillar,

jumladan noto‘g‘ri ovqatlanish, kamharakat turmush tarzi va urbanizatsiya bilan bog‘liq. Ushbu maqola semizlikning asosiy sabablari va uning shaxsiy salomatlik hamda jamiyatga ta’sirini tahlil qiladi. Shuningdek, semizlik bilan bog‘liq yurak-qon tomir kasalliklari, diabet va hayot sifatining pasayishi kabi xavflar yoritilgan. Bundan tashqari, sog‘lom turmush tarzini o‘zgartirish, jamoatchilik xabardorligini oshirish va davlat aralashuvi kabi oldini olish strategiyalari va yechimlar muhokama qilinadi. Global semizlik muammosini hal qilish milliy va xalqaro darajada muvofiqlashtirilgan harakatlarni talab qiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Semizlik, tana massasi indeksi (BMI), visseral yog‘, subkutan yog‘, yog‘ to‘qimasi, metabolik buzilishlar, genetik moyillik, poligen irsiylanish, energiya nomutanosibligi, kamharakat turmush tarzi, yuqori kaloriyali dieta, jamoat salomatligi, global epidemiya, GLP-1 retseptor agonistlari, yurak-qon tomir kasalliklari, 2-tur diabet, urbanizatsiya, psixologik omillar, turmush tarzini o‘zgartirish, sog‘liq xavflari.

Аннотация

Глобальное ожирение стало одной из самых серьёзных проблем общественного здравоохранения XXI века. Рост распространённости ожирения обусловлен различными факторами, включая нездоровое питание, малоподвижный образ жизни и урбанизацию. В данной статье рассматриваются основные причины ожирения и его влияние на здоровье человека и общество. Также освещаются риски, связанные с ожирением, такие как сердечно-сосудистые заболевания, диабет и снижение качества жизни. Кроме того, обсуждаются возможные стратегии профилактики и решения, включая изменение образа жизни, повышение осведомлённости населения и государственные меры. Решение проблемы глобального ожирения требует скоординированных усилий на национальном и международном уровнях.

Ключевые слова: Ожирение, индекс массы тела (BMI), висцеральный жир, подкожный жир, жировая ткань, метаболические нарушения, генетическая предрасположенность, полигенное наследование, энергетический дисбаланс, малоподвижный образ жизни, высококалорийная диета, общественное здравоохранение, глобальная эпидемия, агонисты рецепторов GLP-1, сердечно-сосудистые заболевания, диабет 2 типа, урбанизация, психологические факторы, изменение образа жизни, риски для здоровья.

Introduction

Obesity is defined by the World Health Organization as an abnormal or excessive accumulation of fat that presents a risk to health. One of the most widely used methods to assess obesity is the Body Mass Index (BMI), which is calculated by dividing an individual's weight in kilograms by the square of their height in meters (kg/m^2). According to WHO standards, a BMI of 25 or higher is classified as overweight, while a BMI of 30 or higher is considered obese. Although BMI is a useful and simple screening tool, it does not directly measure body fat; therefore, additional indicators such as waist circumference may be used to assess fat distribution. From a biological perspective, not all types of fat have the same impact on health. There are two main types of body fat: subcutaneous fat, which is stored beneath the skin, and visceral fat, which accumulates around internal organs. Visceral fat is considered the most dangerous type, as it is strongly associated with serious health conditions, including cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and metabolic disorders. The presence of excessive visceral fat is a key factor in determining the health risks related to obesity.In addition to biological factors, genetics also play a significant role in the development of obesity. The World Health Organization emphasizes that obesity is a multifactorial condition resulting from the interaction between genetic and environmental influences. Certain genes can affect

how the body regulates appetite, stores fat, and uses energy. Most cases of obesity are polygenic, meaning they are influenced by multiple genes, each contributing a small effect. In rare cases, obesity may result from a mutation in a single gene or from specific genetic syndromes. However, genetic predisposition alone does not determine obesity; rather, it increases an individual's susceptibility, particularly in environments characterized by high-calorie diets and low levels of physical activity.

The causes of obesity are multifaceted and extend far beyond individual lifestyle choices. Economically, the increased availability and affordability of inexpensive, energy-dense foods have significantly contributed to the global rise in obesity rates, as such foods are often high in sugar, fat, and calories but low in nutritional value. From a medical standpoint, certain hormonal disorders, such as hypothyroidism and Cushing's syndrome, as well as the long-term use of specific medications, may lead to weight gain and altered metabolism. Physical inactivity is another major contributing factor, particularly in modern societies where sedentary lifestyles have become increasingly common due to desk-based jobs, urban transportation, and increased screen time. Psychological aspects, including chronic stress, anxiety, depression, and emotional eating behaviors, further exacerbate the issue by influencing eating patterns and reducing self-control over food intake. Moreover, social and environmental influences such as rapid urbanization, technological advancement, and significant changes in dietary habits have created conditions that promote excessive calorie consumption and reduced physical activity levels. Easy access to fast food, aggressive food marketing, and changes in family eating patterns also play an important role in shaping unhealthy behaviors.

These interconnected biological, psychological, and socio-environmental influences highlight that obesity is not merely a personal lifestyle issue, but a complex and broader public health concern shaped by structural and societal changes at the global level.

Recent global statistics demonstrate the alarming scale and rapid growth of this public health issue. According to international health organizations, more than one billion people worldwide are currently living with obesity, and the prevalence has increased significantly over the past few decades across both developed and developing regions. This steady rise reflects long-term changes in global dietary patterns, increased consumption of energy-dense foods, and reduced levels of physical activity in many populations. In particular, some of the highest obesity rates are observed in countries such as the United States, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, and Australia. In these countries, lifestyle patterns, including high-calorie diets, sedentary behavior, and urban living conditions, are strongly associated with increased obesity levels. Socioeconomic development and easy access to processed food products also contribute to the growing prevalence. Nearly one in eight individuals globally is affected by obesity, indicating that the condition has reached epidemic proportions on a global scale. This continuous increase places a significant burden on healthcare systems worldwide, leading to higher medical costs and increased demand for long-term treatment and management services. It also reflects a growing challenge for public health systems in addressing non-communicable diseases associated with obesity, including diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and metabolic disorders.

In response to this global health crisis, both preventive and medical approaches have been proposed and are being implemented at different levels. One of the most notable recent developments in obesity management is the introduction of GLP-1 receptor agonists, a new class of medications designed to regulate appetite, enhance satiety, and improve metabolic control. These drugs work by influencing hormonal pathways related to hunger and glucose regulation, thereby supporting weight reduction in individuals with obesity. Clinical studies have shown that GLP-1 receptor agonists can produce significant and sustained weight loss outcomes, and as a result, they are increasingly being incorporated into modern clinical guidelines

for obesity treatment. However, medical experts and health organizations emphasize that pharmacological interventions alone are not sufficient for long-term success. Such treatments are most effective when combined with comprehensive lifestyle modifications, rather than being used as standalone solutions. Long-term strategies include the adoption of balanced and nutrient-rich diets, regular physical activity, and behavioral interventions aimed at changing eating habits and lifestyle patterns. In addition, public health policies, education programs, and environmental changes are essential in addressing the underlying causes of obesity at a population level.

In conclusion, obesity is a complex and rapidly growing global health issue caused by a combination of biological, genetic, and socio-environmental factors. Its rise is strongly linked not only to individual lifestyle choices but also to modern societal changes such as urbanization, sedentary behavior, and increased access to high-calorie foods. Obesity is associated with serious health risks, including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and metabolic disorders. Although new medical treatments such as GLP-1 receptor agonists offer promising results, they are not enough on their own. Effective management of obesity requires a combination of healthy lifestyle changes, including balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, and long-term behavioral support. Therefore, a coordinated approach at both individual and global levels is essential to reduce the growing burden of obesity worldwide.

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