

## **The Perfect Microcosm: A Study of Cancer and Obesity**

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**Objective:** To study the prevalence of overweight and obesity amongst a sample of cancer patients in Bahrain during their initial phase of assessment.

**Design:** A retrospective randomized study of cancer patients' medical records.

**Setting:** Private outpatient cancer clinic, Bahrain.

**Method:** From March 2012 to August 2012, two hundred patients' records were randomly selected. The subjects' age, gender, nationality, type of cancer, history of smoking and family history of cancer were documented. Height and weight were obtained to calculate Body Mass Index (BMI) and patients were allocated to one of four BMI categories.

**Result:** The total mean BMI was  $28.26 \text{ kg/m}^2 \pm 5.72$ . In males, the mean BMI was  $27.35 \text{ kg/m}^2 \pm 7.15$  and in females it was  $28.60 \text{ kg/m}^2 \pm 5.07$ . Obesity was high in the range of 31 to 60 years; below 30 and above 61 years obesity was relatively low. Seven (3.5%) were underweight, 52 (26%) were normal and 141 (70.5%) were overweight or obese. Hundred (50%) patients had breast cancer, 24 (12%) had colon cancer, 16 (8%) had lymphoma and 14 (7%) had lung cancer. Two (28.6%) underweight patients had lung cancer and one (14.3%) patient in the same category had colon cancer. Thirty-one (43.1%) patients in the overweight category and 43 (62.3%) of obese patients had breast cancer.

**Conclusion:** The distribution of overweight and obesity in this study is consistent with the general population in both Bahrain and the GCC. High body mass index values in this study were mostly noted among breast and colon cancer.