

3 Factors Detrimental To Obesity-Related Heart Disease

Source: Food Product Design

High blood pressure, serum cholesterol and blood glucose explain approximately 50% of the increased risk of heart disease and three-quarters of the increased risk of stroke among overweight or obese individuals, according to a new study published in the journal *The Lancet*.

Researchers at Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH), Imperial College London and the University of Sydney considered blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose in a pooled analysis of 97 prospective studies—which enrolled 1.8 million participants globally—to provide a comprehensive look at heart disease risk factors in overweight or obese persons.

They found high blood pressure, serum cholesterol and blood glucose explain up to half of the increased risk of heart disease and three-quarters of the increased risk of stroke among overweight or obese participants. High blood pressure poses the biggest risk of the three metabolic factors examined, accounting for 31% of the increased risk of heart disease and 65% of the increased risk of stroke among overweight or obese individuals.

"Our results show that the harmful effects of overweight and obesity on heart disease and stroke partly occur by increasing blood pressure, serum cholesterol and blood glucose," said senior author Goodarz Danaei, assistant professor, global health, HSPH. "Therefore, if we control these risk factors, for example through better diagnosis and treatment of hypertension, we can prevent some of the harmful effects of overweight and obesity."

Worldwide, obesity has nearly doubled since 1980, according to a previous study by the research team, and more than 1.4 billion adults ages 20 years and older are overweight or obese. Health consequences of overweight and obesity include heart disease and stroke—the leading causes of death worldwide—diabetes and several types of cancer. The researchers had also previously estimated that 3.4 million annual deaths are due to overweight and obesity.

Sources:

EurekAlert: Lowering 3 risk factors could cut obesity-related risk of heart disease by more than half