

Obesity: how much does it matter for female pelvic organ prolapse?

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION AND HYPOTHESIS: The objective was to determine the association between body mass index (BMI) and symptoms and signs of female pelvic organ prolapse (POP).

METHODS: An observational cross-sectional study of 964 archived datasets of women seen for symptoms and signs of lower urinary tract and pelvic organ dysfunction between September 2011 and February 2014 at a tertiary urogynaecology centre in Australia was carried out. An in-house standardised interview, the International Continence Society Pelvic Organ Prolapse Quantification (ICS POP-Q) and 4-D translabial ultrasound, followed by analysis of ultrasound volumes for pelvic organ descent and hiatal area on Valsalva, were performed, blinded against other data.

RESULTS: There is a positive association between BMI and posterior compartment prolapse on clinical examination and ultrasound imaging, but not for the anterior and central compartments. There was no association with prolapse symptom bother and a negative association with symptoms of prolapse.

CONCLUSIONS: In this observational study, we found a strong association between all tested measures of posterior compartment descent and BMI, both clinical and on imaging.