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Factors related to Overweight and Obesity among Women in Urban areas in Sri Lanka

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Overweight and obesity are physical conditions that contribute to the prevalence of numerous preventable noncommunicable diseases within the population. The objective of the study is to investigate the factors that are related to overweight and obesity. The study comprised of selected 200 females between the age group 35 - 65, who were identified as obese and overweight women at the Healthy Lifestyle Center in Weliveriya Central Dispensary (CD) during early February to late April in 2018. Quantitative descriptive design was used in this study. Selected women's BMI was calculated. A pre-test was carried out using 10% of the sample and the questionnaire was validated using expert opinion. This pre - tested interviewer administered questionnaire was used as the data collection tool. The demographic data, biological characteristics, behavioral characteristics and social characteristics related to overweight and obesity were identified from the study. Descriptive statistical tests and inferential statistical tests were performed. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of the National Hospital of Sri Lanka. From the sample

of 200, 74.5% (n=151) were identified as overweight. Family history was identified in 64.5% and most overweight and obese women (82.63%) were mothers of two or more children. An association was observed between the husband's education, obesity and overweight as $p = 0.024$. An association was observed between food patterns as $p = 0.024$, walking distance per day, $p = 0.036$, shifting duty, $p = 0.017$ and sleeping hours, $p = 0.002$. Overweight and obesity have become important public health burdens worldwide as it is directly associated with morbidity, disability and mortality of people. Women should be concerned about their food patterns, physical fitness, sidestepping from the sedentary life style, avoid night shifts and sleep more hours. Further, women should be concerned of their body weight when they age. Participants should be motivated to achieve their BMI to the normal range.

Keywords: *Overweight, Obesity, Body mass index*