

Length of residence and obesity among immigrants in Spain.

Autores: Marín-Guerrero AC, Gutierrez-Fisac J.L, Guallar-Castillón P, Banegas Banegas, J.R , Regidor E, Rodríguez-Artalejo F

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Abstract

Background and Objective: There are no studies in Spain on the extent of obesity in adult immigrants. The aim of this paper is to present the frequency and distribution of obesity among immigrants living in Madrid.

Patients and Method: We selected subjects between 18 and 64 years of age. Body Mass Index was used as an estimator of obesity. Immigrant status was defined according to country of birth. The results show the unadjusted and adjusted prevalence of obesity for different immigrant groups.

Results: The percentage of obesity was higher in the immigrant population than in the Spanish population, except for the group of immigrants from western countries. According to gender, male immigrants from Eastern Europe and Latin America and women from Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe were the most obese.

Conclusion: The highest prevalence of obesity among immigrants has also been observed in studies conducted in other countries. The prevalence of obesity among immigrants may be due to a more intense exposure to obesogenic factors both before arrival and during their residence in Spain.