

“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication” (Leonardo Da Vinci)

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Editorial related to the article: Waist Circumference Above 80 cm Predicts Increased Systolic Blood Pressure in Healthy Young Adult Women

Although scientists are developing many complex tools for the detection and prevention of diseases, simple measures are still proven to be valid. For example, body mass index (BMI) have been criticized for not considering lean body mass. However, recent studies have shown that a high BMI is associated with cardiometabolic risks, even in the presence of high levels of lean body mass.¹ Therefore, with a weight scale and a stadiometer, we can say many important things. Based on the article by Silva et al.,² we can add another tool to the toolbox: a measure tape. The authors show that waist circumference is associated with blood pressure, glucose, and lipid levels. In some cases, waist circumference explained more than 60% of the variability of a risk factor. Important to say that many of these parameters underlie some of the more prevalent diseases and most common causes of death, like hypertension, diabetes, and cancer.

It has been long known that excess fat is associated with health problems; however, it has been found that not all fats are the same. Central fat is more associated with health risks than gluteofemoral fat,³ which is largely explained by the endocrine characteristics of visceral fat, mediated by adipocytokines.⁴

Most health professionals, or even researchers, do not have access to sophisticated methods capable of analyzing body composition or visceral fat. A few have the means to study the mechanism of the association between visceral fat and health parameters. However, a measure tape is easily accessible and used. The study by Silva et al. is particularly interesting and extremely useful because it reinforces that simple and inexpensive measures are valuable tools to track health risks and elaborate strategies to prevent potential problems.

More than five centuries later, Da Vinci was proven to be right once again.

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Keywords

Body Weight and Measures; Abdominal Circumference Anthropometry /instrumentation; Young Adult; Women; Blood Pressure; Risk Factors.

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36660/ijcs.20200104>



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