Study Finds Obese Women More Likely to Develop Cancer

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Losing weight isn't just about lowering your heart disease or diabetes risk. A new study in the United Kingdom revealed that obese women are 40 percent more likely to develop certain forms of cancer than women of a healthy weight, Medical News Today reports.

For the study, scientists at Cancer Research UK compared cancer outcomes for a group of 2,000 women. Half of these women were obese (defined as having a body mass index or BMI of 30 or higher) and half were considered to be at a healthy weight.

Among the 1,000 obese women included in the study, researchers considered 274 of them likely to be diagnosed with one of seven weight-related cancers, as compared with 194 in the healthy-weight group.

Specifically, scientists noted that obese women's lifetime risk for breast cancer went up by 25 percent; pancreatic cancer by 31 percent; bowel cancer, 32 percent; kidney cancer, 78 percent; gallbladder cancer, 100 percent; uterine cancer, 131 percent; and esophageal cancer, 133 percent.

Julie Sharp, the head of the health information at Cancer Research UK, said, "We know that our cancer risk depends on a combination of our genes, our environment and other aspects of our lives, many of which we can control—helping people understand how they can reduce their risk of developing cancer in the first place remains crucial in tackling the disease."

Sharp added that although making lifestyle changes is not a guarantee against cancer, it could better your chances of avoiding it.

Today, about one-third of American adults are considered obese. Click here for some weight-loss tips to reduce your obesity-linked risk of cancer and move you toward better health.

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