BMI Levels and Pain Indices in Hispanics with Chronic Pain

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Background
- Obesity and chronic pain have been associated with lower quality of life and are risk factors for other debilitating health conditions.1,2
- However, research is limited on the relationship between weight and pain in the Hispanic population.

Objective
- To describe the relationship between body mass index (BMI) and pain indices (severity, pain troublesomeness, PT scores >0 for 14 sites) among ambulatory, low-income, overweight/obese Hispanic persons with chronic pain.

Methods
- This participatory action study involved promotores from the community who interviewed subjects in Spanish about varying health issues.
- Height and weight were measured using calibrated tools, allowing calculation of BMI.
- All interview questions were translated into Spanish using translation/back translation methods.
- Pain indices were measured using calibrated tools.

Results
- In this sample of 101 persons, predominately female (80%) and Mexican American (97%) participants had an average BMI of 34.3 (World Health Organization categories: overweight, 27%; obese, 55%; extremely obese, 19%), a pain interference of 6.84, a PT score of 28.0, and 8.4 pain sites.

Conclusions
- Obesity has long been associated with an increased risk of developing multiple chronic medical conditions and chronic pain among the general population.
- This is the first known study to report the relationship between obesity and pain indices in a low-income, Mexican-American, Spanish-speaking population.
- This study provides valuable information for public health professionals and healthcare providers in determining appropriate treatment, service provision, and prevention programs for Mexican Americans.
- Clinicians should consider an integrative approach and incorporate strategies to include medications and complementary modalities that address the comorbidity of excessive weight and chronic pain, and the potential underlying issues leading to these conditions.
- In addition, a chronic pain self-management program in Spanish with an emphasis on weight management should be developed.

Disclosure
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References