Medical Xpress

Obesity causes 100,000 US cancers every year: study

November 6 2009

Obesity causes more than 100,000 incidents of cancer in the US every year, the American Institute for Cancer Research said in estimates published Friday.

The group, which funds research on the link between diet and the disease, said 49 percent of endrometrial cancers, which originate in the [womb](), and 35 percent of esophageal cancers are linked to excess body fat.

"It's clearer than ever that obesity's impact is felt before, during and after cancer, it increases risk, makes treatment more difficult and shortens survival," said Laurence Kolonel of the Cancer Research Center of Hawaii.

Scientists have long seen a link between [obesity]() and certain types of cancer, but the study -- extrapolated from US cancer incidence data -- is among the first to conclude the link exists on such a scale.

Researchers have yet to pin down the exact link between obesity and cancer, but some have suggested that fat tissue may produce heightened levels of [sex hormones]() that spur [cancer]() growth or that fat lowers immune function.

If the link is proven to be true, cancers could be expected to expected to balloon in tandem with US body sizes.

According to the government-backed Centers for Disease Control, 34 percent of American adults aged 20 and over are obese.

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Citation: Obesity causes 100,000 US cancers every year: study (2009, November 6) retrieved 9 April 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-11-obesity-cancers-year.html