Body composition may affect older women's risk of urinary incontinence

December 6 2016

In a study of older women, the prevalence of stress- and urgency urinary incontinence (SUI and UUI) was at least two-fold higher among women in the highest category of body mass index (BMI) or fat mass compared with women in the lowest category.

Also, women who lost at least 5% of their BMI or fat mass were less likely to experience new or persistent SUI over 3 years than women with less weight loss.

The findings suggest that higher BMI and fat mass are important markers of risk for SUI and UII in older women, and that their risk of SUI may be partially reversible through weight loss.

"Interestingly, changes in body composition and grip strength were associated with changes in SUI, but not in UUI, frequency over time. These findings suggest that optimization of body composition may help to modify the risk of SUI, but not necessarily UUI," said Dr. Anne Suskind, lead author of the *Journal of the American Geriatrics* study.

More information: Anne M. Suskind et al. Urinary Incontinence in Older Women: The Role of Body Composition and Muscle Strength: From the Health, Aging, and Body Composition Study, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2016). DOI: 10.1111/jgs.14545

Provided by Wiley