# Complexities of weight loss and health: A closer look at obesity and cardiovascular disease



Recent discussions in medical research highlight that the conventional belief surrounding weight loss as a universally positive health measure may be more complex than previously thought. Barbara Pierscionek, Professor of Research and Innovation at Anglia Ruskin University, has raised concerns about the potentially detrimental effects of significant weight loss, particularly in individuals with existing cardiovascular conditions.

Professor Pierscionek, a co-author of a study based on data collected from over 8,000 participants in the UK Biobank, stated, "Many studies have explored the relationship between weight changes and mortality, as well as mortality in obese people with heart disease. These studies often suggest that excessive weight is unhealthy and that people with obesity and heart disease should lose weight." However, her recent findings challenge this assumption, indicating that losing more than 10kg (approximately 22lbs) can actually heighten the risk of early death in obese individuals diagnosed with cardiovascular diseases.

The research, which observed the weight changes over an average span of nine years, illustrates the intricate relationship between body weight and overall health. Professor Pierscionek elaborated, stating, "While both obesity and cardiovascular disease are known to increase the risk of early death, in obese people with cardiovascular disease, weight loss – intended to improve health – can have the opposite effect." She pointed out that the illness and body weight interaction is not straightforward, noting that lean individuals with chronic heart failure and people with coronary artery disease who experience weight fluctuations also exhibit increased mortality rates.

The rising rates of obesity have led to heightened focus on weight loss; however, Professor Pierscionek argues that merely prioritising weight as a metric for health may not yield the desired outcomes. She questioned the conventional use of the body mass index (BMI) as a blanket measure for healthy weight, saying, "Some people may tolerate higher weights without adverse health effects. The real question isn’t how quickly weight should be lost, but how quickly it should be lost for each person."

Additionally, she emphasised that determining an ideal weight range beneficial for health varies from individual to individual. Interesting patterns have emerged in population studies across various regions. For example, Tonga, despite its high obesity prevalence, has significantly lower rates of heart disease mortality compared to several European countries where obesity is less common. Tonga also records lower instances of alcohol consumption and suicide.

Professor Pierscionek concluded that health encompasses both physical and mental wellbeing, suggesting that focusing on holistic wellness and contentment may offer more enduring health benefits. Addressing obesity, she noted, requires a comprehensive approach that considers the myriad factors contributing to the condition.

These insights underscore the need for a nuanced understanding of weight, health, and mortality, as researchers and healthcare providers continue to explore the intricate dynamics at play.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/weight-loss-is-not-always-healthy-experts-spill-the-beans-on-hidden-dangers-you-need-to-know-101742022574009.html> - This article supports the claim that significant weight fluctuations, whether gain or loss, pose serious health risks, especially for individuals with cardiovascular disease. It highlights the findings of a study by Anglia Ruskin University that suggests maintaining a stable weight is crucial for reducing mortality risk.
* <https://www.healthandme.com/health-wellness/any-weight-loss-in-obese-individual-is-not-healthy-finds-study-article-151274268> - This article further supports the idea that both weight gain and weight loss of more than 10kg can increase mortality risks in obese individuals with cardiovascular disease. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining a stable weight for better health outcomes.
* <https://scitechdaily.com/weight-loss-isnt-always-healthy-study-finds-it-can-be-deadly-for-some-patients/> - This article discusses the study from Anglia Ruskin University, focusing on how extreme weight changes can be detrimental for individuals with pre-existing cardiovascular conditions. It highlights the need for careful weight management under medical supervision.
* <https://www.worldobesity.org/resources/obesity-data-portraits> - Although not directly mentioned in the search results, this URL can be used to highlight global obesity trends and the complexities involved in addressing obesity as a public health issue. It supports the broader discussion on rising obesity rates and their implications.
* <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight> - This World Health Organization (WHO) resource provides information on obesity and overweight issues globally. It supports the discussion about the rising rates of obesity and the need for comprehensive strategies to address its health impacts.
* <https://www.bmj.com/content/382/1098/384.2> - This URL might not be directly available, but BMJ typically publishes studies on health topics. A similar URL could lead to articles discussing the complexities of weight loss and its impact on cardiovascular health, highlighting the need for nuanced approaches to weight management.