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Georgia Southern Examines the Association between Arthritis and Depression

December 2, 2015



Obesity and arthritis are leading chronic conditions, but comorbidity of these conditions and their interaction leading to depression have not been fully investigated. The purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which excess body weight effect-modifies the relationship between arthritis and depressive symptoms.

“Addressing obesity is challenging in itself as it requires substantial behavior change. Adding barriers, like arthritis, to physical activity can compound the problem and cycle of inactivity, weight gain, and depression.”

The association between depression and arthritis was not significant among healthy weight women, but significant among overweight and obese women. The intensifying effect from excessive body weight on the association between arthritis and depression was less salient among men than women. The study concluded that the association between arthritis and depression is intensified significantly by increased body weight, in particular, among women.

[“The association between arthritis and depression is intensified by excessive body weight: Findings from a US national survey, 2005-2012”](#) is published in Obesity Research & Clinical Practice.

Maria Politis, alumni of the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health at Georgia Southern University (JPHCOPH) was the lead author. Krys Johnson, alumni, Dr. Andrew Hansen, Assistant Professor of Community Health Behavior and Education, Dr. Kelly Sullivan and Dr. Jian Zhang, Assistant Professors of Epidemiology, all at the JPHCOPH were co-authors.

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