

Abstract:

Impact of Obesity on Canada's Aboriginal Peoples

T. Kue Young, MD, FRCPC, D.Phil. Professor and Head, Department of Community Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba

The health of Canada's Aboriginal peoples has undergone substantial changes over the past 50 years, with the increasing prominence of chronic diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, of which obesity is a key risk factor. Changing nutrition patterns and physical activity levels, within a larger process of social and cultural changes, are largely responsible for the emergence of obesity as a new health threat. This presentation will review the literature on Canadian Aboriginal groups, focussing on the following issues:

- Are Aboriginal peoples at higher risk for obesity than other Canadians?
- Is obesity more common among Aboriginal peoples today than it was in the past?
- What risk factors are associated with the occurrence of obesity among Aboriginal peoples?
- What are the health effects and social impact of obesity among Aboriginal peoples?
- How do Aboriginal peoples perceive and understand obesity in the context of their culture?
- Are there effective strategies to prevent and control obesity in the Aboriginal population?