Does obesity increase the risk of hot flashes among midlife women?: a population-based study

Resumo
Objective: To evaluate the association between vasomotor symptoms and obesity in climacteric women. Methods: We conducted a cross-sectional population-based study of 749 women aged 45 to 60 years. The dependent variable was intensity of menopausal symptoms evaluated by the menopause rating scale questionnaire. Independent variables were sociodemographic and clinical characteristics, and obesity evaluated by body mass index. Results: There was no significant difference in the majority of clinical and sociodemographic characteristics between the body mass index groups. Obese women had less physical activity (P=0.019) and a higher prevalence of hypertension (P < 0.001), diabetes (P=0.002), urinary incontinence (P < 0.001), and urge incontinence (P=0.0006). The total mean menopause rating scale score was 9.7. Scores for hot flashes increased progressively and were higher for participants with body mass index greater than 30 kg/m² (P=0.027). Joint and muscle pain scores also increased with increased body mass index (P < 0.001). Regarding urogenital symptoms, there was a significant difference in urinary problems only, which were more intense in obese women (body mass index > 30 kg/m²) (P < 0.0001). There was no significant difference in any psychological symptoms on the menopause rating scale. Factors associated with hot flash scores were higher body mass index, presence of urinary urgency, and vaginal dryness. Conclusions: We found that menopausal symptoms, including vasomotor, joint, and urinary symptoms, were related to obesity. Hot flashes were associated with higher body mass index, urinary urgency, and vaginal dryness. Understanding this relationship may contribute to the development of healthcare strategies aimed at minimizing the impact of obesity on several health issues of climacteric women. (AU)