Obesity among Veterans

To the Editor:—In her paper published in September,¹ Nelson showed the burden of obesity among veterans, describing the higher percentage of hypertension, dyslipidemia, and other cardiovascular risk factors in this population.

This is reinforced by Adams et al., who brings to public the results of a half million people- and 10-year cohort demonstrating that overweight, and not only obesity itself, is related to an increased risk of death.² There already is a large body of evidence supporting the relationship between weight gain (in any BMI range) and other indicators of excessive weight with the incidence of hypertension, diabetes, dislipidemia and their augmented risk to health.³ The same happens to the benefits of treatment.^{4,5}

All these data support the conclusion that obesity, as hypertension, is a public health problem and a complex, multifactorial, chronic disease, characterized by a continuum of risk, with the highest ones located at the extremes, and a crescendo range between them. So, it is time to face the concept of pre-obesity and treat it like an illness because, as in pre-hypertension, the risk is already elevated, and even higher in the obese and previously ill subjects.

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