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7 **Title:** Association between lifestyle features and obesity phenotypes in adults from the  
8 Basque Country (Spain)

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16 **Key words:** Obesity phenotypes; Lifestyle; Modifiable risk factors

17

18       **Abstract**

19       Lifestyle is related to the risk of obesity, but whether its association varies with different  
20       obesity phenotypes remains unclear. The aim of this study was to analyse the association  
21       between different lifestyle features (eating habits, activity, sleep patterns, and tobacco  
22       and alcohol consumption), and four obesity phenotypes (overall and abdominal obesity,  
23       distribution and percentage of fat). The sample included 521 adults aged between 18 and  
24       70 years, residents in the Basque Country (Spain). A Multiple Logistic Regression  
25       Model was used, controlling for sex, age and SES. The duration of the main meal was  
26       inversely associated with overall obesity ( $p=0.010$ ) and abdominal one ( $p=0.004$ ), while  
27       the number of meals ( $<3$  times day) was positively associated with both phenotypes  
28       ( $p=0.019$  and  $p=0.031$ , respectively). Regular sport practice and duration ( $>6$  years) were  
29       negatively associated with all obesity phenotypes ( $p$ -value always  $<0.01$ ), while  
30       watching television was positively associated with all of them ( $p$ -values between 0.016  
31       and  $<0.01$ ). Walking was inversely related to overall and abdominal obesity ( $p<0.01$ ).  
32       Sleep quality was positively associated with overall ( $p<0.01$ ) and abdominal obesity ( $p$   
33        $<0.05$ ), but not with fat distribution or its percentage. Former smokers showed a positive  
34       association with both abdominal obesity ( $p=0.021$ ) and fat mass distribution ( $p=0.002$ ),  
35       and the number of cigarettes were positively related with all obesity phenotypes ( $p<0.01$ ),  
36       except with fat distribution. Alcohol consumption was inversely related with excessive  
37       adiposity ( $p=0.030$ ), while occasional drinking was negatively related with overall  
38       obesity and an excess of fat ( $p=0.050$  and  $p=0.022$ , respectively). In conclusion, in the  
39       sample studied, few meals per day, a bad or regular quality of sleep, many hours spent  
40       watching television (a sedentary behaviour), and a heavy cigarette consumption  
41       increased the risk of various obesity phenotypes, while time spent at the main meal,  
42       walking and sport practice, as well as a moderate alcohol consumption were associated  
43       with a decreased in such risk.

44       **Introduction**

45       Obesity is defined as a complex condition characterised by an excessive increase in body  
46       fat – and consequent weight gain – due to a positive energy balance maintained over  
47       time, which increases the risk of morbidity for various chronic diseases (e.g. alterations  
48       of the metabolic profile, cardiovascular disease and some cancers) and mortality (WHO,  
49       2000; Bray, 2004; Hruby & Hu, 2015; Bray *et al.*, 2017). Its impact on health depends  
50       not only on fat accumulation but also on its anatomical distribution (Frank *et al.*, 2019),  
51       so that central obesity increases metabolic risk related to fat storage. The definition of  
52       obesity is apparently simple but its aetiology is multifactorial in nature due to the  
53       contribution of genetic, epigenetic, physiological, behavioural, socio-cultural and

54 environmental factors (Bray *et al.*, 2016). Some of them, such as genetic factors,  
55 condition individual susceptibility to obesity but do not fully explain its prevalence at the  
56 population level; it is therefore important to understand the different factors involved,  
57 especially those that can be modified and their differential contribution to the  
58 development of obesity in each population. Obesity is also a heterogeneous phenotype,  
59 the determination of which varies according to the cut-off points of different  
60 measurement techniques; in the case of anthropometric variables such as body mass  
61 index (BMI, kg/m<sup>2</sup>) or waist (W) circumference, they depend in turn on age, sex and  
62 ethnicity (Deurenberg, 2001; Cole *et al.*, 2010; Materko *et al.*, 2017).

63 Diet and physical activity are important “modifiable factors” related to lifestyle (Hill *et al.*,  
64 2003; Philippou & Andreou, 2022); both are influenced by the “obesogenic  
65 environment” (Swinburn *et al.*, 1999) which encourages unhealthy dietary behaviours  
66 and increased sedentary lifestyles, and thus weight gain (Giles-Corti *et al.*, 2003).  
67 Although the energy expenditure associated with daily life has decreased since the  
68 successive industrial revolutions, the relationship between diet, physical activity and  
69 obesity is complex and remains a subject of research. As noted by Giles-Corti *et al.*  
70 (2003), food intake has decreased in some countries, such as the UK, suggesting that the  
71 increase in overweight and obesity may be due to a decrease in energy expenditure  
72 (sedentary lifestyles). While in others countries (e.g. USA), energy intake has increased  
73 in recent decades, and may be the main cause of weight gain in the population. The role  
74 of dietary habits and physical activity, but also of sleep patterns and tobacco and alcohol  
75 consumption, has been addressed with respect to their association with obesity and  
76 increased morbidity and mortality in numerous research studies (e.g. Mayer-Davies &  
77 Costacou, 2001; Bigaard *et al.*, 2003; Valdés-Badilla *et al.*, 2018; Gazdzinska *et al.*,  
78 2022). Clinical and epidemiological studies show that systematic intervention on these  
79 factors reduces weight and cardiovascular and metabolic risk in overweight and obese  
80 individuals (Mozaffarian *et al.*, 2011; Jensen *et al.*, 2014). However, some studies  
81 indicate that tobacco and/or alcohol consumption may act on weight loss (Yeomans,  
82 2010; Kase *et al.*, 2016; Murphy *et al.*, 2018), so their influence on the development of  
83 obesity is still controversial.

#### 84 **Objective**

85 The aim of the present study was to determine the degree of association of various  
86 lifestyle features, such as eating habits, physical activity, sleep quality, and tobacco and  
87 alcohol consumption, with different obesity phenotypes (overall and abdominal obesity,  
88 fat mass distribution and percentage of fat, i.e., adiposity) in a sample of adult population  
89 of both sexes, living in the Basque Country (Spain).

90

91

## 92 **Methods**

### 93 ***Sample***

94 A total of 626 individuals aged between 18 and 70 years, resident in the Basque Country  
95 (Spain), were studied. We obtained demographic data (sex, age, origin and place of  
96 residence), and established socioeconomic status (SES) based on educational and  
97 professional levels, using a standardised questionnaire (Ibáñez Pérez-Zamacona, 2017).  
98 Based on the indicators, the sample can be considered middle class. Persons of non-  
99 European origin, related, pregnant and with previous growth problems were excluded  
100 from the final data processing, so the final sample was 521 individuals (318 females and  
101 203 males). Both, individuals with and without obesity were well represented (case-  
102 control study design). The study was accomplished in accordance with Helsinki  
103 Declaration; a written informed consent was obtained from all participants, and the study  
104 protocols were approved by the Ethics Committee for Human Research of the University  
105 of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU).

### 106 ***Anthropometric variables, obesity phenotypes and lifestyle***

107 Height (cm), weight (kg), waist (W) and hip (H) circumferences, and four skinfolds  
108 (biceps, triceps, subscapular and suprailiac) were measured by trained personnel  
109 (M.E.I.). Four obesity phenotypes were considered: I. Overall obesity ( $BMI=(kg/m^2)$ ), II.  
110 Abdominal obesity (W), III. Fat mass distribution ( $WHR=W/H$ ), and IV. Adiposity  
111 (FM%). FM% was calculated by using Siri's (1961) equation based on body density (D)  
112 obtained from the general equation of Durnin & Womersley (1974), taken into account  
113 sex and age. For the first three, the cut-off points were those established by the WHO  
114 (2000, 2011), and for FM%, the criteria of the Spanish Society for the Study of Obesity  
115 (Campillo *et al.*, 2000), were taken into account. Based on these cut-off points, the  
116 phenotypes were dichotomised for statistical treatment (Box 1). Fourteen lifestyle  
117 variables were collected by means of personal interview (M.E.I.), which were grouped  
118 into four items with different number of variables each. Box 2 details the four items  
119 considered and the specific meaning of the different variables included in each one, as  
120 well as their categories and/or units.

### 121 ***Data analysis***

122 Mean and standard deviation were used to describe continuous variables and percentage  
123 (%) for categorical variables, considering sex and two age groups (<45 years and  $\geq 45$

124 years (descriptive data can be found in Ibáñez Pérez-Zamacona, 2017). Data were tested  
125 for normality and homoscedasticity using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ( $n>50$ ), or the  
126 Shapiro-Wilk test ( $n\leq 50$ ) and the Levene test. A Multiple Logistic Regression model was  
127 used to study the association between the 14 lifestyle variables (independent variables)  
128 and the different obesity phenotypes (dependent variables); sex, decimal age and SES  
129 were introduced as covariates to control for possible confounding effects. The  
130 consideration of SES is justified by its influence on the development of obesity (e.g.  
131 Dinsa *et al.*, 2012; Spinosa *et al.*, 2019; Adams, 2020); regarding sex and age its  
132 relationship with obesity is clearly established (e.g. Garawi *et al.*, 2014; Cooper *et al.*,  
133 2021). The strength of the association between pairs of variables was expressed in terms  
134 of Odds Ratios (OR).

135 Two quantitative variables (sleep duration and main meal duration) were categorised for  
136 statistical analyses, as a homogeneous response of obesity could not be assumed across  
137 all the range of these variables. Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons was  
138 calculated so that, taking into account the 14 variables analysed and the different obesity  
139 phenotypes, the critical “p” value would be  $\alpha=0.05/68=0.0007$ ; however, the  
140 significance threshold was set at  $p<0.05$  due to the sample size and the conviction that  
141 the Bonferroni correction is too conservative.

## 142 **Results**

143 Table 1 shows the number and percentage of individuals with and without obesity (BMI  
144 based) by sex and age group. The mean percentage of obesity in the whole sample  
145 studied was 42.4% (44.7% in women and 38.9% in men), of which 12.9% of women and  
146 11.3% of men were morbidly obese ( $BMI\geq 40$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>). Tables 2 to 5 show the results of  
147 the logistic regressions adjusted for sex, age and SES. Regarding eating habits (table 2),  
148 the duration of the main meal was inversely associated with both overall obesity (OR:  
149 0.54; p-value=0.010) and abdominal obesity (OR: 0.50; p-value=0.004), but not with the  
150 FM% or fat distribution. Eating in the company canteen was inversely related to a  
151 central fat distribution pattern (OR: 0.45, p-value=0.041). People who eat less than three  
152 meals per day were more likely to have overall and abdominal obesity than those who  
153 eat more meals daily.

154 Concerning physical activity (table 3), regular sports practice and more than 6 years of  
155 such practice were negatively associated with all obesity phenotypes, while walking was  
156 inversely related to overall and abdominal obesity (OR=0.33 in both phenotypes and p-  
157 values  $<0.001$  and 0.010, respectively). These phenotypes also showed negative  
158 associations with walking (as means of exercise) or sports practice since 3-6 years ago

159 (OR: 0.18 and 0.15, respectively, with p-values <0.001). Work intensity and daily  
160 walking were associated with the different obesity phenotypes, except with the central  
161 fat pattern, which showed a weak but significant positive association with daily walking  
162 (OR=1.01, p-value=0.016). Time spent watching TV was positively associated with all  
163 phenotypes considered.

164 Table 4 shows the results of multiple logistic regressions between sleep patterns (sleep  
165 duration and sleep quality) and obesity phenotypes. Only sleep quality showed  
166 associations with some obesity phenotypes, in particular with overall and abdominal  
167 obesity; bad and/or regular sleep quality increased the probability of both types of  
168 obesity between 1.78 and 2.73 times. Regarding table 5, only former smokers were more  
169 likely to develop abdominal obesity than non-smokers (OR: 1.88; p-value=0.021).  
170 Former and current smokers also showed a positive association with central fat  
171 distribution (OR: 2.46; p-value=0.002 and 1.99; p-value=0.047, respectively). The  
172 number of cigarettes was related to the studied obesity phenotypes (OR ranging between  
173 1.04 and 1.06), with the exception of central fat distribution. Alcohol consumption was  
174 inversely associated with excessive adiposity (OR: 0.52, p-value=0.030), while  
175 occasional drinking was negatively associated with overall obesity and an excess of fat  
176 (OR: 0.51, p-value =0.050 and OR: 0.43, p-value=0.022, respectively).

## 177 **Discussion**

178 As might be expected from the study design, the analysed sample showed a high  
179 prevalence of obesity, especially in women, which exceeds the average (20%) of the  
180 general Spanish population (Pérez-Rodrigo *et al.*, 2020), and also that of the Basque  
181 Country where obesity in adults is 13.5% (Ministry of Health 2020). Other studies (e.g.  
182 Martínez-Larrad *et al.*, 2014) show somewhat higher frequencies for Spain (27.5%),  
183 with 30.2% for women and 23.7% for men; this higher frequency of obesity in women  
184 compared to men coincides with the obtained results.

185 Along with changes in the content and quantity of dietary intake, some dietary habits  
186 have changed over the last years, such as the time spent eating and the frequency of  
187 eating out (Bertéus-Forslund *et al.*, 2002). In this regard, the present results indicated  
188 that individuals who spent more than 20 minutes at the main meal were less likely to  
189 develop obesity and/or abdominal obesity than those who spent less time ( $\leq 20$  minutes).  
190 It seems reasonable to think that the longer the time spent eating, the greater the amount  
191 of food eaten. However, energy intake is regulated by circulating factors and gut  
192 hormones which play an important role in controlling hunger and satiety (Angelopoulos  
193 *et al.*, 2014). So, according to Andrade *et al.* (2008), when meal duration is prolonged,

194 physiological signals have more time to express themselves, so that, regardless of the  
195 amount of food eaten, people who spend more time eating eat fewer calories, which  
196 could support the present results.

197 Currently, the number of people entering the labour market has increased, and eating  
198 away from home is increasingly common (Lin *et al.*, 1999): in Spain, 3 out of 4 people  
199 eat one of the three regular meals away from home every day (Blesa Jarque *et al.*, 2021).  
200 Some authors have observed a positive association between the number of meals eaten  
201 outside the home (especially in cafeterias and restaurants) and obesity, due to excessive  
202 portions and energy-dense foods that promote weight gain (Guthrie *et al.*, 2002; Bes-  
203 Rastrollo *et al.*, 2010), while others have found no relationship (Marín-Guerrero *et al.*,  
204 2008). One possible explanation for these discrepancies is that some studies did not take  
205 into account the location or type of food consumed outside the home. In the present  
206 research, the location of the main meal did not show significant associations with the  
207 various obesity phenotypes, except when the main meal was eaten in the company  
208 canteen, this being a “protective” variable for fat distribution (less centralised). It is  
209 important to take into account that this study has only considered the place of eating the  
210 main meal on ordinary days, and not during the weekends or special days. The risk of  
211 obesity related to eating away from home was probably due to a change in leisure time  
212 activities, with an increase in large meals.

213 Several studies have indicated that increasing the number of meals decreases weight  
214 (Drummond *et al.*, 1998; Ma *et al.*, 2003; Vik *et al.*, 2010), as smaller but multiple meal  
215 portions can reduce hunger and serum insulin concentrations (Speechly & Buffenstein,  
216 1999), as well as increase thermogenesis and fat utilisation. However, the results of  
217 many epidemiological studies in this regard are inconsistent, and have shown positive,  
218 negative or even no associations (see Murakami & Livingstone, 2015). Although  
219 increased meal frequency may “protect” against weight gain (as long as there is no  
220 increase in calories ingested), it is difficult to increase the number of meals without an  
221 increase in calories (Bertéus-Forslund *et al.*, 2002). Results obtained indicated that  
222 eating few meals per day (<3) increased the likelihood of both, overall and abdominal  
223 obesity, although eating more than 3 meals daily was not associated with any obesity  
224 phenotype, which is consistent with the observations of Kant *et al.* (1995).

225 As it is well known, an imbalance between energy intake and expenditure commonly  
226 leads to overweight and obesity. However, in some populations that have experienced an  
227 increase in the prevalence of obesity, total energy intake has not increased and has even  
228 decreased (Giles-Corti *et al.*, 2003). Thus, factors related to energy expenditure play a  
229 crucial role in the development of obesity. Non-exercise activity thermogenesis (NEAT),

230 i.e. the calories a person burns daily while performing daily activities has significant  
231 inter-individual variability and is crucial in weight gain (Villablanca *et al.*, 2015).  
232 According to Levine *et al.* (2008), walking is the main component of NEAT, although  
233 the intensity of the work performed can also be considered a component of interest. The  
234 present results showed no association between work intensity and obesity and, contrary  
235 to what might be expected, there was a positive (small but significant) association  
236 between daily walking minutes and central fat distribution. Both walking and working  
237 (unless the work involves high energy expenditure) are considered low-intensity daily  
238 activities and, unlike high-intensity aerobic exercise, basal metabolic rate does not  
239 increase with this type of activities (Bernstein *et al.*, 2004). This, together with the  
240 possibility that the extra energy expenditure caused by both activities may be  
241 compensated by a higher intake in more active individuals (Gutiérrez-Fisac *et al.*, 2002),  
242 could explain the results.

243 According to Füzéki *et al.* (2017), the results of the present study indicated that regular  
244 sports practice was a “protective” factor against different obesity phenotypes, possibly  
245 because it involves extra energy expenditure. Walking, not only during daily activities  
246 but also as a sporting activity, has a positive effect on the management of obesity and  
247 associated comorbidities, even in the absence of weight loss (Gaesser & Angadi, 2021);  
248 in the sample studied, such a relationship was observed for obesity and FM%, i.e. excess  
249 of adiposity. Although the amount of energy required to perform these activities is lower  
250 than in sports practice, lower intensity activities can be sustained for longer, so the total  
251 energy expenditure may be sufficient to influence metabolic balance and protect against  
252 weight gain (Füzéki *et al.*, 2017).

253 Sedentary behaviours are one of the main factors responsible for the obesity epidemic,  
254 and have been associated with various health risks. A sedentary behaviour is not only the  
255 absence of exercise (see van der Ploeg & Hillsdon, 2017), but refers to participation in  
256 activities that do not significantly increase energy expenditure (Pate *et al.*, 2008). Here,  
257 we considered TV viewing as an indicator of sedentary lifestyle or inactivity and, in  
258 agreement with other studies (e.g. Inoue *et al.*, 2012; Xie *et al.*, 2014; Rosiek *et al.*,  
259 2015), the results confirmed its association with all obesity phenotypes. The mechanisms  
260 involved may be diverse; thus, it has been pointed out that the physical inactivity that  
261 accompanies TV viewing reduces the amount of time devoted to other physical activities  
262 (Tucker & Bagwell, 1991), although some studies (Rey-López *et al.*, 2012; Xie *et al.*,  
263 2014) indicate that the relationship between this sedentary behaviour and obesity is  
264 independent of physical activity. In addition, snacking and consumption of high-density



265 foods and sugary drinks also increases while watching TV (Blass *et al.*, 2006; Pearson &  
266 Biddle, 2011), which hinders energy balance.

267 Sleep comprises approximately one third of a person's life span (Lauderdale *et al.*, 2006),  
268 but has not received much attention on its influence on obesity until relatively recently.  
269 According to some studies, sleep deprivation may influence obesity through changes in  
270 hunger-regulating hormones (e.g. decreased leptin and increased ghrelin), leading to  
271 increased energy intake (Spiegel *et al.*, 2004 a, b; Schmid *et al.*, 2008); furthermore,  
272 reduced sleep also means increased opportunity to eat (Sivak, 2006) and is associated  
273 with changes in dietary patterns (Gebski *et al.*, 2018). Also, sleep deprivation could lead  
274 to a reduction in daytime energy expenditure, due to feelings of tiredness, and a decrease  
275 in voluntary exercise (Patel, 2009). The results did not show association between hours  
276 of sleep and obesity, which could be due to the fact that most study participants (77.5%)  
277 slept sufficiently, between 6 and 8 hours per day, and very few slept less than 6 or more  
278 than 8 hours. Given that some disparities have been found between time spent in bed and  
279 actual time spent asleep (Lauderdale *et al.*, 2006), we also have assess sleep quality,  
280 which includes problems such as difficulty falling asleep, frequent awakenings at night  
281 or difficulty falling back to sleep. In this case, there was a clear and positive association  
282 with overall and abdominal obesity. In addition, the positive association of sleep quality  
283 with excessive adiposity was relatively significant, but not with a central fat distribution.

284 The relationship between smoking and obesity has been a subject of much research, but  
285 still remains unclear; smoking has shown to be associated with both low and high BMI  
286 (see Dare *et al.*, 2015). In the present study, ex-smokers showed a higher likelihood of  
287 having abdominal obesity and a centralised fat distribution. These results were consistent  
288 with those from other populations, where smoking cessation has been found to routinely  
289 lead to weight gain (Chiolerio *et al.*, 2008; Liao *et al.*, 2016), although the mechanisms  
290 are not fully understood. Wack & Rodin (1982) have linked smoking cessation to  
291 changes in the perceived palatability of food, which could be responsible for increased  
292 energy intake. These authors also point to a change in the metabolism of ex-smokers due  
293 to the loss of the nicotine effect, which could lead to an increase of calorie storage, with  
294 a consequent increase in weight. A simpler explanation would be that many ex-smokers  
295 increase their energy intake, substituting food for cigarettes as a means of oral  
296 gratification (Stamford *et al.*, 1986). There are also studies showing that smokers are less  
297 obese than non-smokers (Molarius *et al.*, 1997; Dare *et al.*, 2015), although the obtained  
298 results did not coincide with these observations. Smoking (current or past) did not  
299 increased likelihood of overall obesity or excess fat in the sample analysed, although in  
300 agreement with the results of Bamia *et al.* (2004), abdominal obesity and central fat

301 distribution were associated with smoking. One possible explanation is that cigarette  
302 smoking stimulates the activity of the sympathetic nervous system, which is responsible  
303 for increased cortisol concentrations, and, precisely, visceral adipose tissue is strongly  
304 influenced by concentrations of this hormone (Chiolero *et al.*, 2008). For current  
305 smokers, a positive association between the number of cigarettes smoked and obesity  
306 was also confirmed as has been reported by Bamia *et al.* (2004) and Chiolero *et al.*  
307 (2008). These results may seem unusual due to the metabolic effect of smoking  
308 mentioned above; however, smoking may be associated with other unhealthy behaviours  
309 (see Murphy *et al.*, 2018), which could partly explain the results obtained.

310 Alcohol has a relatively high calorie content and can be considered a risk factor in the  
311 development of obesity through excessive consumption of “passive” energy (see  
312 Yeomans, 2010). However, the results obtained did not show a positive association  
313 between occasional alcohol consumption and obesity. Moreover, alcohol consumption  
314 seemed to be “protective” against an excessive adiposity (FM%). A possible explanation  
315 may lie in the thermogenic effect of alcohol and its involvement in increasing energy  
316 expenditure (Traversy & Chaput, 2015). Raben *et al.* (2003) have shown that diet-  
317 induced thermogenesis was 27% higher after a meal rich in alcohol than after meals rich  
318 in carbohydrates and fats. Epidemiological evidence suggests that moderate alcohol  
319 intake may be protective against obesity risk whereas, in the absence of alcohol  
320 dependence, a high alcohol intake may increase such risk (Yeomans, 2010). In the  
321 present research, the negative association between alcohol consumption, overall obesity  
322 and excessive adiposity was only significant when individuals drank occasionally,  
323 indicating that the protective effect was limited to moderate consumption, as noted  
324 above. Some studies show that the positive association between alcohol consumption  
325 and both obesity and abdominal obesity depends on the amount consumed (Vadstrup *et*  
326 *al.*, 2003), and episodes of overeating due to alcohol consumption are also frequent  
327 (Kase *et al.*, 2016).

328 This exploratory study had some limitations and strengths. Firstly, it should be noted that  
329 the variables used to describe lifestyle features were mostly qualitative, self-reported  
330 and, in many cases, could be interrelated. In addition, they were not always strictly  
331 comparable with those of other studies. Secondly, cases of obesity were over-represented  
332 in relation to the general population in the same geographical area; this fact could have  
333 diluted some of the effects of the variables analysed, but allowed to analyse the whole  
334 range of obesity variation, from normal weight to morbid obesity, which is not common  
335 in other research. Finally, although the results obtained were specific for this sample  
336 (otherwise quite homogeneous in terms of origin and SES), they have been consistent

337 with those of other research with similar objectives and methodology, confirming the  
338 association between lifestyle features and various obesity phenotypes.

339 In conclusion, our results confirmed the association between several modifiable lifestyle  
340 features and obesity, not only with overall obesity, but also with other obesity  
341 phenotypes, such as abdominal obesity, central fat distribution or excessive adiposity.  
342 Few meals per day, many time spent watching TV, bad/regular quality of sleep, and  
343 heavy tobacco use increased the risk of obesity, whereas, in general, more time spent at  
344 the main meal, walking and regular sport practice, and moderate alcohol consumption  
345 decreased such risk.

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349 **Conflicts of Interest.** The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

350 **Ethical Approval.** The authors assert that all procedures contributing to this work  
351 comply with the ethical standards of the relevant national and institutional committees  
352 on human experimentation and with the Helsinki Declaration of 1975, as revised in 2008.

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629

630 **Table 1.** Number and percentage (%) of individuals with and without obesity (BMI based)  
 631 by sex and age group.

<b>With obesity</b>	<b>Age group (years)</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>
	<45	45 (31.7%)	37 (46.8%)
	≥45	97 (68.3%)	42 (53.2%)
<b>Without obesity</b>	<b>Age group (years)</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>
	<45	100 (56.8%)	74 (59.7%)
	≥45	76 (43.2%)	50 (40.3%)

632  
 633 **Table 2.** Multiple logistic regression tests for the association between eating habits and  
 634 obesity phenotypes.

	<b>Eating habits</b>							
	<b>Overall obesity</b>		<b>Abdominal obesity</b>		<b>Fat mass distribution</b>		<b>Fat mass percentage</b>	
	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P
<b>Main meal duration</b>								
≤ 20 min	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
>20 min	0.54 (0.3-0.9)	<b>0.010</b>	0.50 (0.3-0.8)	<b>0.004</b>	0.79 (0.5-1.3)	0.372	0.66 (0.4-1.1)	0.100
<b>Main meal location</b>								
Home	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Tupperware	0.85 (0.4-1.9)	0.703	0.98 (0.4-2.2)	0.955	1.04 (0.5-2.4)	0.928	1.11 (0.5-2.4)	0.795
Restaurant	1.15 (0.5-2.6)	0.726	1.11 (0.5-2.5)	0.802	1.17 (0.5-2.9)	0.739	0.84 (0.4-2.0)	0.696
Company canteen	0.53 (0.2-1.2)	0.114	0.53 (0.3-1.1)	0.098	0.45 (0.2-1.0)	<b>0.041</b>	0.71 (0.4-1.4)	0.313
<b>Number of meals</b>								
3 times	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
4 times	0.76 (0.4-1.4)	0.372	0.69 (0.4-1.3)	0.221	1.69 (0.9-3.2)	0.107	0.86 (0.5-1.6)	0.616
5 times	1.03 (0.6-1.8)	0.910	1.18 (0.7-2.1)	0.590	1.17 (0.6-2.3)	0.634	1.08 (0.6-2.0)	0.806
≥ 6 times	1.32 (0.4-4.0)	0.620	0.88 (0.3-2.8)	0.832	0.79 (0.2-2.7)	0.714	0.58 (0.2-2.2)	0.415
< 3 times	6.16 (1.4-28.1)	<b>0.019</b>	5.38 (1.2-24.7)	<b>0.031</b>	1.67 (0.4-8.0)	0.525	1.27 (0.2-8.3)	0.804

635 Adjusted for age, sex, educational level and professional level (multivariable-adjusted). OR:  
 636 odd ratio; CI: confidence interval; P: p-value.

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650 **Table 3.** Multiple logistic regression tests for association between activity and obesity phenotypes.

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	Activity							
	Overall obesity		Abdominal obesity		Fat mass distribution		Fat mass percentage	
	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P
<b>Physical activity</b>								
Nothing	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Walking	0.29 (0.2-0.6)	<b>5.1E-04</b>	0.40 (0.2-0.8)	<b>0.010</b>	0.95 (0.4-2.1)	0.909	1.03 (0.4-2.6)	0.947
Regular sport	0.33 (0.2-0.6)	<b>4.1E-05</b>	0.33 (0.2-0.6)	<b>3.9E-05</b>	0.42 (0.2-0.7)	<b>0.002</b>	0.45 (0.3-0.8)	<b>0.003</b>
<b>Since how long ago</b>								
Nothing	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
<1 year	0.91 (0.3-2.5)	0.852	0.63 (0.2-1.8)	0.382	0.61 (0.2-1.9)	0.398	0.75 (0.2-2.3)	0.615
1-2 years	0.53 (0.2-1.3)	0.152	0.45 (0.2-1.1)	0.076	1.94 (0.7-5.2)	0.187	1.02 (0.4-2.5)	0.967
3-6 years	0.18 (0.1-0.5)	<b>4.2E-04</b>	0.15 (0.1-0.4)	<b>1.5E-04</b>	0.67 (0.3-1.6)	0.368	0.52 (0.2-1.3)	0.154
> 6 years	0.23 (0.1-0.4)	<b>3.3E-06</b>	0.34 (0.2-0.6)	<b>3.3E-04</b>	0.30 (0.2-0.6)	<b>2.8E-04</b>	0.39 (0.2-0.7)	<b>0.002</b>
<b>Daily walking</b>								
Minutes/day	1.00 (1.0-1.0)	0.502	1.00 (1.0-1.0)	0.154	1.01 (1.0-1.0)	<b>0.016</b>	1.00 (1.0-1.0)	0.999
<b>Work intensity</b>								
Light	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Moderate/busy	0.89 (0.6-1.4)	0.618	0.99 (0.6-1.6)	0.954	1.22 (0.7-2.0)	0.445	0.75 (0.5-1.2)	0.258
<b>Watching television</b>								
Hours/week	1.04 (1.0-1.1)	<b>2.9E-04</b>	1.05 (1.0-1.1)	<b>4.7E-05</b>	1.04 (1.0-1.1)	<b>0.002</b>	1.03 (1.0-1.1)	<b>0.016</b>

652 Adjusted for age, sex, educational level and professional level (multivariable-adjusted). OR: odd  
653 ratio; CI: confidence interval; P: p-value.

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655 **Table 4.** Multiple logistic regression tests for association between sleep patterns and obesity  
656 phenotypes.

	Sleep patterns							
	Overall obesity		Abdominal obesity		Fat mass distribution		Fat mass percentage	
	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P
<b>Sleep duration</b>								
6-8 h	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
<6 h	0.90 (0.5-1.8)	0.765	0.82 (0.4-1.7)	0.590	1.24 (0.6-2.6)	0.576	0.91 (0.4-2.1)	0.817
>8 h	1.51 (0.7-3.3)	0.290	1.46 (0.7-3.3)	0.364	1.51 (0.6-3.9)	0.397	1.15 (0.4-3.0)	0.773
<b>Sleep quality</b>								
Good	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Regular	2.02 (1.2-3.4)	<b>0.008</b>	1.78 (1.1-3.0)	<b>0.032</b>	1.26 (0.7-2.3)	0.431	1.68 (0.9-3.0)	0.079
Bad	2.73 (1.4-5.2)	<b>0.002</b>	2.09 (1.1-4.1)	<b>0.030</b>	0.96 (0.5-2.0)	0.913	2.08 (0.9-4.7)	0.076

657 Adjusted for age, sex, educational level and professional level (multivariable-adjusted). OR:  
658 odd ratio; CI: confidence interval; P: p-value.

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663 **Table 5.** Multiple logistic regression tests for association between tobacco and alcohol  
 664 consumption and obesity phenotypes.

	<b>Tobacco and alcohol consumption</b>							
	<b>Overall obesity</b>		<b>Abdominal obesity</b>		<b>Fat mass distribution</b>		<b>Fat mass percentage</b>	
	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P	OR (95% CI)	P
	<b>Smoking</b>							
Non smoker	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Former smoker	1.56 (0.9-2.6)	0.093	1.88 (1.1-3.2)	<b>0.021</b>	2.46 (1.4-4.4)	<b>0.002</b>	1.05 (0.6-1.9)	0.862
Smoker	1.29 (0.7-2.4)	0.415	1.77 (1.0-3.3)	0.073	1.99 (1.0-3.9)	<b>0.047</b>	0.87 (0.5-1.6)	0.670
	<b>Number of cigarettes</b>							
Cigarettes/week	1.06 (1.0-1.1)	<b>5.2E-05</b>	1.05 (1.0-1.1)	<b>3.7E-04</b>	1.03 (1.0-1.1)	0.120	1.04 (1.01-1.07)	<b>0.010</b>
	<b>Alcohol</b>							
No/infrequently	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Yes	0.62 (0.4-1.0)	0.058	0.69 (0.4-1.2)	0.160	0.80 (0.5-1.4)	0.452	0.52 (0.3-0.9)	<b>0.030</b>
	<b>Alcohol frequency</b>							
Never/infrequently	1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00	
Occasionally	0.51 (0.3-1.0)	<b>0.050</b>	0.66 (0.3-1.3)	0.230	0.71 (0.3-1.5)	0.361	0.43 (0.2-0.9)	<b>0.022</b>
Weekends	0.54 (0.3-1.0)	0.061	0.58 (0.3-1.1)	0.101	0.56 (0.3-1.1)	0.100	0.51 (0.3-1.0)	0.052
Some days/week	0.78 (0.3-1.9)	0.578	0.83 (0.3-2.0)	0.685	2.65 (1.0-7.2)	0.055	1.30 (0.5-3.7)	0.629
Every days	0.87 (0.4-1.8)	0.711	0.89 (0.4-1.9)	0.761	0.97 (0.4-2.3)	0.948	0.51 (0.2-1.2)	0.125

665 Adjusted for age, sex, educational level and professional level (multivariable-adjusted). OR:  
 666 odd ratio; CI: confidence interval; P: p-value.  
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668 **Box legends:**

669 **Box 1.** Dichotomization of the four obesity phenotypes.

670 **Box 2.** Description of the lifestyle variables grouped into four items (I to IV), as well as  
671 their categories and/or units.

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