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Can You Be Fit and Fat?

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We've all heard the messages about the health risks of being overweight or obese, however recent research from large population studies suggests that being overweight may actually be associated with a lower risk for premature death.

The contradictory findings and subsequent confusion is likely partly a result of using the ratio of weight to height, or body mass index (BMI) to indicate level of obesity.

In addition, there is strong evidence that a person's level of cardiorespiratory fitness is a much stronger predictor of premature death than BMI.

Experts from the University's School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences worked with the BBC team producing a programme called '**Trust Me I'm A Doctor (http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01dgd9c)** ', to examine the controversy around the usefulness of BMI versus cardiorespiratory fitness to indicate one's risk for chronic diseases.

Eleven individuals across the range of BMI volunteered to be measured for height, body weight, waist circumference, percentage body fat, and maximal aerobic fitness (or VO_2max). The researchers then looked to see if, and how, BMI was related to fitness, waist circumference, and percentage of body fat.

You can find out more by watching '**Trust Me I'm A Doctor (http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01dgd9c)** ' on BBC Two, Thursday 10 October 2013, 20:00

Staff and post-graduate students who contributed to the programme segment include Professor Janice Thompson, Dr Gareth Wallis, Scott Robinson, Michael McLeod, and Matthew Soden.

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