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Joint scientific statement of the European Association for the Study of Obesity and the European Society of Hypertension: Obesity and early vascular ageing.

Abstract: Current cardiovascular risk scores do not include obesity or fat distribution as independent factors, and may underestimate risk in obese individuals. Assessment of early vascular ageing (EVA) biomarkers including arterial stiffness, central blood pressure, carotid intima-media thickness and flow-mediated vasodilation may help to refine risk assessment in obese individuals in whom traditional cardiovascular risk scores and factors suggest no need for specific medical attention. A number of issues need to be addressed before this approach is ready for translation into routine clinical practice. Methodologies for measurements of vascular markers need to be further standardized and less operator-dependent. The utility of these nontraditional risk factors will also need to be proven in sufficiently large and properly designed interventional studies. Indeed, published studies on vascular markers in obesity and weight loss vary in quality and study design, are sometimes conducted in small populations, use a variety of differing methodologies and study differing vascular beds. Finally, current vascular measurements are still crude and may not be sufficient to cover the different aspects of EVA in obesity.