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PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING AND PERCEIVED QUALITY OF LIFE IN SUBJECTS WITH OBESITY AND IN CONTROLS

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Introduction: Obesity has been associated with low resilience and poor quality of life (QoL). Objectives: Data on psychological well being (PWB), as a measure of resilience, in obesity are lacking.

Aims: Study the level of PWB and QoL among subjects with obesity.

Methods: 28 subjects with obesity were compared with 28 healthy controls. PWB was measured by means of the PWB questionnaire according to the Ryff's construct, the health-related quality of life was assessed via the World Health Organization Quality of Life Assessment. Both scales are self-administered. Statistical analyses focused on between-groups differences. Cases and controls were matched for age and gender.

Results: Cases had a statistically lower level of education and rate of current employment than controls. The two groups did not differ for lifetime diagnosis of psychiatric disorder or lifetime treatment with psychoactive drugs. However, cases had a significantly higher rate of current use of psychoactive drugs than controls. As what concerns PWB, cases had a lower total score than controls. In particular, Positive Relationship with others, Self-Acceptance, Purposes in Life, and Personal Growth were the PWB constructs significantly more impaired in cases. Similarly, cases had a worse perception of their general QoL, their physical and psychological health, their quality of social relationships and of environment.

Conclusions: Subjects with obesity have a lower level of PWB and QoL than healthy controls. Since, PWB therapy may increase the individual level of PWB, thus increasing the individual resilience, subjects with obesity should be considered as possible candidates for PWB interventions.