



# The Galle Medical Journal

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## Editorial

### Obesity

Obesity has become a global health problem and it is a serious and a costly chronic disease of adults and children. Obesity and its complications have imposed a significant strain on individuals, families, societies, and health systems. Unfortunately, obesity goes beyond mere physical morbidity, as it is associated with poor mental health outcomes and reduced quality of life.

In children, obesity needs a special focus rather than calling them as “sweet chubby kids”. Without adequate intervention, these children tread on a path leading to diabetes, hypertension etc. Moreover, childhood obesity can lead to poor self-esteem and depression.

In the process of diagnosing and classifying nutritional states, a diverse range tools and are parameters being used, of them the body mass index (BMI) is a broadly used parameter. This diversity leads to a **definitional heterogeneity** of different nutritional states and obesity, and it is likely to cause difficulties in comparison of research results, definition of clinical states and treatment outcomes. In this issue of the *GMJ*, Aruna De Silva *et al.*, focus on this definitional heterogeneity from a Sri Lankan perspective.

This calls for the development of uniform research instruments and definitions in all scientific and clinical disciplines that can be meaningfully compared from a global perspective. It will also facilitate more effective research validation and comparison with excellent clinical outcomes.

**Satish K Goonesinghe**

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