**Tens of thousands of Brits diagnosed with cancer because they're too fat**

Scientists say obesity is responsible for 11 different types of cancer

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**Being fat can cause 11 different types of cancer** (Photo: Getty)

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Scientists have confirmed obesity causes 11 types of [**cancer**](http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/cancer)and say 25,000 Brits get the disease every year because they are too fat.

They have found “strong evidence” for the first time of a real link between [**obesity**](http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/obesity)and almost a dozen major types of cancer, according to a largest ever review published by The British Medical Journal.

And the global team of researchers, led by Maria Kyrgiou and Kostas Tsilidis at Imperial College London, say “evidence of the strength of the associations between obesity and cancer may allow finer selection of people at high risk, who could be selected for personalised primary and secondary prevention strategies”.

Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide, and the prevalence of obesity has more than doubled over the past 40 years.

Previously published evidence suggested a link between obesity and cancer, but the research could have been flawed or biased due to weak study design and conduct.

* [One in eight of us don't have ANY close friends and one in six admit they never felt loved](http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/one-eight-dont-any-close-9937652)

**Scientists believe 25,000 people are diagnosed with cancer because they're fat** (Photo: Getty)

Now scientists have confirmed that being obese is strongly linked to 11 different cancers.

The new study published in The BMJ found that being obese increases the risk of cancer of the oesophagus, multiple myeloma, stomach, bowel, rectum, biliary tract system (liver, gall bladder and bile duct), pancreas, postmenopausal breast, womb, ovary and kidney.

Researchers also found evidence of an association with other cancers, but said existing studies did not provide a strong enough link.

The World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF), which funded the study, said that around 25,000 cancer cases could be prevented in the UK every year if everyone was a healthy weight.

Researchers identified 204 studies that looked at the link between body mass index (BMI), weight gain, and waist circumference, and cancer.

**This is the first time the link between obesity and cancer has been found** (Photo: Getty Images)

Risk of developing cancer for every 5kg increase in BMI ranged from 9% for colorectal cancer among men, to 56% for biliary tract system cancer.

Risk of postmenopausal breast cancer among women who never used hormone replacement therapy increased by 11% for each 5kg of weight gain.

In a linked editorial, Yikyung Park and Graham Colditz of Washington University School of Medicine said that “the unavoidable conclusion from these data is that preventing excess adult weight gain can reduce the risk of cancer”.

They added: “Given the critical role of health care providers in obesity screening and prevention, clinicians, particularly primary care clinicians, can be a powerful force to lower the burden of obesity related cancers as along with the many other chronic diseases linked to obesity such as diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.”

The WCRF has previously identified most of the cancers as being linked to obesity, although multiple myeloma is a new one on the list.

**People are being urged to lose weight** (Photo: Getty)

Dr Panagiota Mitrou, director of research funding at WCRF, said: “This research, which we have funded, further emphasises the huge role that obesity plays in increasing cancer risk.

“After not smoking, being a healthy weight is the most important thing people can do to reduce their cancer risk.

“With obesity rates continuing to rise in the UK and worldwide, it is incredibly important that tackling the obesity epidemic be made an urgent priority.”

The Obesity Health Alliance, a coalition of over 35 health charities, campaign groups and Royal Medical Colleges, said: “Obesity is a serious health concern and on top of being linked to major cancers, can also increase the risk of Type 2 diabetes, heart and liver disease and mental health problems.

“With over a quarter of adults obese, and nearly one in three children overweight or obese by the time they leave primary school, we need bold action to help us all make healthier choices.

“This is why it’s so important to introduce measures like the soft drinks industry levy, reduce sugar, saturated fat and salt from everyday foods, and close loopholes to protect children from junk food marketing.”