Reviewer’s report

Title: Trends in overweight and obesity in Lebanon: Evidence from two national cross-sectional surveys (1997 and 2009)

Version: 1 Date: 14 July 2012

Reviewer: VICENTE MARTINEZ-VIZCAINO

Reviewer’s report:

General comments:
This study shows the trend in overweight/obesity in a random sample of Lebanon population aged 6 yrs and older. Studies of prevalence and trend of obesity in the southern of the Mediterranean area are scarce, thus the study adds insight about the knowledge of the obesity epidemic in the world.

Mayor criticisms

Methods:
Why the sample size is so different between the two samples. A better description of the sample selection and sample size estimates should be included.
In odds ratio estimates, in my opinion, physical activity should not be included as covariable, because the aim of the model is to estimate how many times was more or less likely to be obese in 2009 vs 1997 in Lebanon population, regardless if figures evolution are due to changes in physical activity or dietary patterns.

Results: Even though table 2 data could be useful for comparison studies and revisions, in my opinion, graphics displaying the BMI distribution in the two samples, by age group, could offer to readers a more comprehensive point of view about the BMI trend in Lebanon population.
In the same way, and given that there is not a review study, table 5 data should be, in my opinion, display in graphics.

Discussion:
1st paragraph: too long, with a lot of sparse and repetitive information. The paragraph should only answer the research question, starting with the sentences: Studies investigating secular changes in the prevalence of overweight and obesity in countries of the Eastern Mediterranean region are scarce. The present paper is the first to report on overweight and obesity trends in the Lebanese population and constitutes an eye opener for other countries of the region. It documents a rapid increase in BMI...
In limitations paragraph, commentaries regarding that even though BMI is internationally acknowledged as appropriate indicator of obesity in population based studies, really obesity is defined as an excess of fat, not of weight; so measuring body fat should offer a better indicator of fatting in populations.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests