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Breast cancer risk higher in obese women

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Breast cancer risk higher in obese women

[Posted: Tue 18/10/2011 by Deborah Condon www.irishhealth.com]

Women who are morbidly obese have a much higher risk of developing breast cancer and are more likely to develop it at a younger age, a new study has found.

Spanish researchers looked at over 500 women with breast cancer. The age of the women at the time of their diagnosis was assessed, as was their weight. Those with a family history of the disease were separated from those without such a history.

The researchers from the University of Granada found that overall, women who are morbidly obese are significantly more likely to develop breast cancer than women of a healthy weight.

Furthermore, obese women in general develop the disease at a younger age compared to their peers, but especially if they are morbidly obese.

The study also noted that women who started menstruating at a very young age - younger than 10 - also tended to develop the disease at a younger age in adulthood.

According to the researchers, while genetics and a family history of the disease play an important role, this study shows that obesity, particularly morbid obesity, also plays a key role in the early development of breast cancer.

Details of these findings are published in the Spanish medical journal, *Nutrición Hospitalaria*.

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