



Five or More Hours of Smartphone Usage Per Day May Increase Obesity

Recent study found risk of obesity increased by 43 percent

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CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA (Jul 25, 2019) - As smartphones continue to be an inherent part of life and grow as a primary source of entertainment—particularly among young people—it leads to a decrease in physical activity. In a recent study presented at the **ACC Latin America Conference 2019**, university students who used their smartphones five or more hours a day had a 43 percent increased risk of obesity and were more likely to have other lifestyle habits that increase the risk of heart disease.

"It is important that the general population know and be aware that, although mobile technology is undoubtedly attractive for its multiple purposes, portability, comfort, access to countless services, information and entertainment sources, it should also be used to improve habits and healthy behaviors," said Mirary Mantilla-Morrón, a cardiac pulmonary and vascular rehabilitation specialist at the Health Sciences Faculty at the Simón Bolívar University in Barranquilla, Colombia, and the lead author of the study. "Spending too much time in front of the Smartphone facilitates sedentary behaviors, reduces the time of physical activity, which increases the risk of premature death, diabetes, heart disease, different types of cancer, osteoarticular discomfort and musculoskeletal symptoms."

Researchers analyzed 1060 students of the Health Sciences Faculty at the Simón Bolívar University during June to December 2018. The study group consisted of 700 women and 360 men. With an average age of 19 years and 20 years respectively. Participating men were 36.1 percent likely to be overweight and 42.6 percent likely to be obese. Women were 63.9 percent likely to be overweight and 57.4 percent likely to be obese.

Researchers found the risk of obesity increased by 43 percent if a smartphone was used five or more hours a day, as participating students were twice as likely

to drink more sugary drinks, fast food, sweets, snacks and have decreased physical activity. Twenty-six percent of the subjects who were overweight and 4.6 percent who were obese spent more than five hours using their device.

"The results of this study allow us to highlight one of the main causes of physical obesity, a risk factor for cardiovascular disease," Mantilla-Morrón said. "We have also determined that the amount of time in which a person is exposed to the use of technologies—specifically prolonged cell phone use—is associated with the development of obesity."

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