Letter to the Editor: Effects of Bariatric Surgery on Cancer Risk

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Published online: 15 February 2020
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Dear Editor

We read with interest the recent meta-analysis by Zhang et al. on the effects of bariatric surgery on cancer risk [1]. Two publications from the prospective, controlled Swedish Obese Subjects (SOS) study were included in the analysis; one on cancer mortality [2] and one on female-specific cancer incidence [3]. However, the main publication on cancer incidence from the SOS study was for some reason excluded [4].

Second, it would have been interesting to see the meta-analysis separately for men and women, as an intriguing sex difference in the effectiveness of bariatric surgery regarding cancer has been observed, with major effect in women and virtually no effect in men [4, 5].

Cancer is a heterogeneous disease group, with differences in risk factors and treatment responses. The effect of bariatric surgery on cancer risk is variable—as demonstrated in the literature—and additional studies analyzing the effects on specific cancer types are needed. To further increase the knowledge in this field, we have recently published one such study, evaluating the effects of bariatric surgery on skin cancer [6].

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of Interest Dr. Carlsson reports personal fees from Johnson&Johnson, outside the submitted work. Dr. Taube has nothing to disclose. Dr. Peltonen has nothing to disclose.

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