Reevaluating Obesity Metrics

Source: HT

The long-standing reliance on **Body Mass Index (BMI)** for diagnosing **obesity** is increasingly being questioned due to its **limitations.**

- BMI can **overestimate** obesity in **muscular individuals** like athletes and **underestimate** obesity in those with excessive fat but **low muscle mass.**
- **The Lancet** recommends using alternative metrics such as **waist circumference**, **waist-hip ratio**, and **waist-height ratio**, which consider **gender, age, and ethnicity** differences.
    - Obesity should be classified as **pre-clinical (no organ dysfunction)** and **clinical** (with **organ dysfunction** and activity impairment).
- **BMI** is a measure used to **assess** whether a person has a **healthy body weight** for a given **height**. It is calculated using a person's weight and height.
- **Obesity in India:** As per **The Lancet, 70%** of India's **urban population** is classified as **obese or overweight.**
    - **India ranks 3rd**, just behind the **US and China,** in the list of top 10 countries with the **highest number** of obese individuals.
    - Obesity is a health condition caused by **excessive body fat,** diagnosed when **BMI is 30 or higher.**

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