

1    **HEALTH    CONDITIONS    ASSOCIATED    WITH    OVERWEIGHT    IN**  
2    **CLIMACTERIC WOMEN**

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29

30 **Abstract**

31 This study aims to investigate the association between health conditions and  
32 overweight in climacteric women assisted by primary care professionals. It is a cross-  
33 sectional study conducted with 874 women from 40 to 65 years of age, selected by  
34 probabilistic sampling between August 2014 and August 2015. In addition to the outcome  
35 variable, other variables such as overweight/obesity, sociodemographic, reproductive,  
36 clinical, eating and behavioural factors were evaluated. Descriptive analyses of the  
37 variables investigated through their frequency distributions were performed. Then,  
38 bivariate analyses were performed through Poisson regression. For the multiple analyses,  
39 the hierarchical Poisson regression was used to identify factors associated with  
40 overweight/obesity in the climacteric period. The prevalence of overweight/obesity was  
41 74%. Attending public school (PR: 1.30 - 95% CI 1.14 - 1.50), low schooling (PR: 1.11  
42 - 95% CI 1.01 - 1.23), gout (PR: 1.18 - 95% CI 1.16-1.44), kidney disease (PR: 1.18 -  
43 95% CI 1.05 - 1.32), metabolic syndrome - MS (PR: 1.19 - 95% CI 1.05 - 1.34) and fat  
44 intake (PR: 1.12 - 95% CI 1.02 - 1.23) were considered risk factors for overweight.  
45 Having the first birth after 18 years (PR: 0.89 - 95% CI 0.82 to 0.97) was shown to be a  
46 protective factor for overweight and obesity. The presence of overweight and obesity is  
47 associated with socio-demographic, reproductive, clinical and eating habits.

48

49 **Introduction**

50 Brazil has been presenting a rapid process of demographic and epidemiological  
51 transition, leading to the frequent occurrence of chronic-degenerative diseases<sup>1</sup>. The  
52 increase in the prevalence of overweight, represented by overweight and obesity, among  
53 the elderly female population raises great concern in developed and developing countries.

54 Since overweight and obesity are risk factors for adverse health events<sup>2</sup> such as  
55 disturbances in lipid and glycidic metabolism, psychological stress and sleep alterations,  
56 with increasing risk of cardiovascular diseases<sup>3</sup>, musculoskeletal disease, acute  
57 myocardial infarction<sup>4</sup>, cancer<sup>5</sup> and worse quality of life in comparison to those who were  
58 satisfied with their body weight<sup>6</sup>.

59 Overweight and obesity have become a public health problem in the world. The  
60 projection for 2025 is that about 2.3 billion adults are overweight, and more than 700  
61 million are obese. According to a study conducted in 2016, the rate of overweight among  
62 Brazilian women is 50.5%, increasing this frequency with age and up to 64 years<sup>7</sup>.

63 Epidemiological data are still scarce associating excess weight with behavioural  
64 and clinical variables in climacteric women<sup>8</sup>, using probabilistic samples<sup>9</sup>. Considering  
65 that climacteric is an important period of the women life cycle, and that this period is  
66 related to the potential peak of fat mass and obesity in this group, the current study aimed  
67 to investigate the association between health conditions and excess of weight ratio in  
68 climacteric women, assisted by primary care professionals, since this phase may assume  
69 a pathological character or be associated with other chronic diseases.

70

## 71 **Materials and methods**

72 A cross-sectional and analytical study was carried out in the city of Montes Claros,  
73 Minas Gerais, Brazil, from August 2014 to August 2015, whose target population  
74 consisted of 30,801 climacteric women enrolled in 73 health care units, excluding  
75 pregnant, postpartum or bedridden women. This study was carried in the Family Health  
76 Strategy (FHS) that represents the mechanism of primary health care (PHC) on the public  
77 health system in Brazil<sup>10</sup>.

78 Sampling was of the probabilistic type, and the selection of the sample occurred in  
79 two stages. Each health care unit team was taken as a conglomerate, being drawn 20 units,  
80 covering the urban and rural area for data collection. Following this, a proportional  
81 number of women were randomly selected according to the climacteric stratification  
82 criteria of the Brazilian Society of Climacteric (SOBRAC), in 2013<sup>11</sup>. Women between  
83 40 and 65 years of age, enrolled in the selected teams and physically able to respond to  
84 the questionnaires and submitted to anthropometric measurements and laboratory tests  
85 (12-hour fasting) were considered eligible to participate in the study. The researchers  
86 made the previous training of all collectors and interviewers and maintained supervision  
87 during the data collection stage. After this selection, the women were invited to present  
88 themselves for the research in a previously established date. The final sample consisted  
89 of 874 climacteric women who were invited to sign the Informed and Post-Informed  
90 Consent.

91 The nutritional status of women was evaluated by body mass index (BMI), which  
92 was considered as a study outcome. Despite the inclusion of some patients over 60 years,  
93 women were categorised into eutrophic (BMI <25 kg / m<sup>2</sup>) and overweight (IMC ≥ 25  
94 kg/m<sup>2</sup>), following a categorisation model used in other studies with similar population  
95 groups<sup>12, 13, 14</sup>. Initially, women were weighed wearing light clothing and without  
96 footwear, in orthostatic position, with their feet together and arms relaxed throughout the  
97 body, by a mechanical anthropometric medical scale (Balmak 11) with a capacity of 150  
98 kg and divided into 100 g. The stature was measured by anthropometer (SECA 206<sup>®</sup>),  
99 fixed in a flat wall and without skirting. In this measurement, the women were instructed  
100 to keep their feet together, in an upright position, with their head positioned in the  
101 Frankfurt plane. For the calculation of BMI, the body weight in kilograms was divided  
102 by the squared height, expressed in meters (BMI = P/A<sup>2</sup>).

103        The women answered questions related to the independent variables, which were  
104    allocated in three blocks: (1) sociodemographic, (2) reproductive (3) clinical, eating and  
105    behavioural habits.

106        The block of sociodemographic variables included age (40-45, 46-51, 52-65 years);  
107    type of school (public or private); level of schooling (elementary school I, elementary  
108    school II, high school / higher education); marital status (married, separated, divorced,  
109    widowed); labor occupation (yes or no); monthly income ( $\geq$  01 minimum wage,  $<01$   
110    minimum wage), being the minimum wage equivalent to US\$217,42 at the time of data  
111    collection; number of people residing in the same house (up to 2, more than 2) and; skin  
112    color (white, not white).

113        The reproductive variables comprised the age of menarche ( $\leq$  11 years, 12-14 years  
114    and  $\geq$  15 years), first birth weight ( $<4000g$ ;  $\geq 4000g$ ), climacteric symptoms assessed by  
115    the Kupperman Index<sup>15</sup> (absent/mild; moderate/severe) and age of first delivery ( $\leq$  18  
116    years old  $>$  18 years).

117        The clinical, eating and behavioral variables included: liver disease (absent,  
118    present), gout (absent; present), renal disease (absent; present), Metabolic Syndrome  
119    (MS) (absent; present); Urinary incontinence (absent, present), cardiovascular disease  
120    risk (low risk, intermediate risk, high risk), drinking (yes, no), fat intake (yes, no),  
121    smoking (yes or no), symptoms of depression, quality of sleep and physical activity.

122        Metabolic Syndrome (MS) was evaluated using the NCEP-ATPIII criteria of the  
123    Brazilian Society of Diagnosis and Treatment of MS<sup>6</sup>, urinary incontinence was assessed  
124    by the International Consultation on Incontinence Questionnaire-Short Form ICIQ-SF<sup>17</sup>,  
125    the risk for cardiovascular diseases was assessed by Framingham Global Risk Score<sup>18</sup>,  
126    the symptoms of depression were evaluated by the Beck Depression Inventory<sup>19</sup>, sleep  
127    quality was assessed by the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index<sup>20</sup> and physical activity practice

128 was assessed through the International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ short  
129 version)<sup>21</sup>.

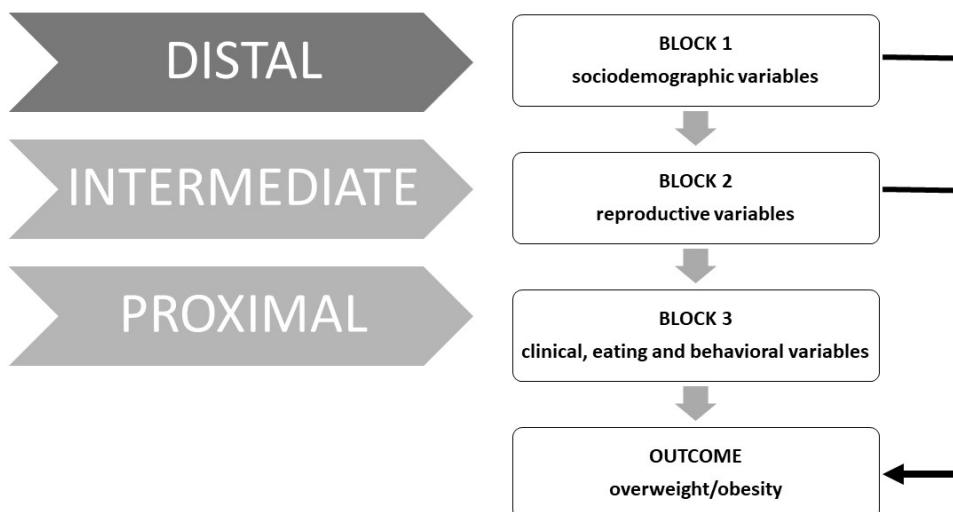
130 The women were submitted to peripheral venous blood collection to analyse the  
131 laboratory parameters. Serum triglyceride levels were determined by the colourimetric  
132 enzymatic method. The level of HDL (High-Density Lipoprotein) cholesterol was  
133 obtained by selective precipitation of LDL (Low-Density Lipoprotein) cholesterol and  
134 VLDL (Very Low-Density Lipoprotein) cholesterol with dextran sulphate in the presence  
135 of magnesium ions, followed by dosing by enzymatic system cholesterol  
136 oxidase/peroxidase with calorimetry and reading, as performed in the total cholesterol  
137 dosage, using Labtest® reagents, in Cobas Mira®<sup>22</sup> apparatus. The lipid profile was  
138 analysed according to parameters proposed by the Brazilian Society of Cardiology<sup>23</sup> and  
139 fasting glycemia according to the standards of the Expert Committee on the Diagnosis  
140 and Classification of Diabetes Mellitus<sup>24</sup>.

141 The data was tabulated in the statistical software Statistical Package for Social  
142 Science (SPSS, version 21, Chicago, Illinois). Initially, descriptive analyses of all  
143 variables through their frequency distributions were carried out, and then, bivariate  
144 analyses of the outcome-variable with each independent variable were performed using  
145 the Chi-Square Test. Gross Prevalence Ratios (PR) were estimated with their respective  
146 95% confidence intervals. Variables with a descriptive level (p-value) of less than 0.25  
147 were selected for multiple analysis using the hierarchical Poisson regression model,  
148 adapted to the model proposed by other authors<sup>9</sup>. The model was composed of blocks of  
149 variables at distal (sociodemographic variables), intermediate (reproductive) and  
150 proximal (clinical, eating and behavioural) variables. Prevalence ratios (PR) adjusted with  
151 their respective 95% confidence intervals were estimated, remaining in the model only  
152 those that presented descriptive level p<0.05. At each hierarchical level, the stepwise

153 forward procedure was adopted: starting the model with the statistically significant  
154 variable selected in the bivariate analysis, and then adding other variables (Fig. 1).

155

156 **Figure 1:** Model with the statistically significant variable selected in the bivariate  
157 analysis, and then adding other variables.



158

159

160 As this study involved humans, it was submitted, appreciated and approved for  
161 execution by an Ethics and Research Committee (No. 817,166), with the ethical precepts  
162 of the Brazilian Resolution CNS 466/2012 being fully observed.

163

## 164 Results

165 The sample consisted of 874 women between 40 and 65 years of age, of whom  
166 74.1% were overweight. When categorised by climacteric phases, it was observed that  
167 postmenopausal women had a higher prevalence of overweight/obesity (54.3%).

168 The results of the bivariate analysis revealed the following variables associated with  
169 the overweight/obesity outcome: age between 52 and 65 years ( $p = 0.184$ ), private school

170 (p = 0.000), low schooling (p = 0.093) (p = 0.0006), liver disease (p = 0.000), gout (p =  
171 0.000), disease (p = 0.106), weight of the 1st child at birth equal to or greater than 4000  
172 g (p = .039), high risk for cardiovascular diseases (p = 0.000), alcohol consumption (p =  
173 0.039) and fat intake (p = 0.065). However, women between 46 and 51 years of age (p =  
174 0.184), who had a late menarche age (p = 0.039) and had children over 18 years old (p =  
175 0.004) had a protective effect against overweight and obesity. It should be emphasized  
176 that there was a high prevalence of overweight and obesity in all the independent variables  
177 presented (Table 1).

178

179 **Table 1:** Sample characteristics and gross prevalence ratio (PR) for overweight/obese  
180 according to sociodemographic factors, reproductive, clinical, behavioural and eating  
181 habits of menopausal women.

| Variables                                   | n                     | %*  | Overweight / obesity (%)* | Gross PR (CI <sub>95%</sub> ) | p-Value            |
|---|-----------------------|-----|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Sociodemographic</b>                     |                       |     |                           |                               |                    |
| Age   | 40 to 45              | 236 | 27.9                      | 73.2                          | 1.00               |
|   | 46 to 51              | 241 | 26.8                      | 70.0                          | 0.95 (0.85 – 1.07) |
|   | 52 to 65              | 397 | 45.4                      | 77.0                          | 1.04 (0.95 – 1.15) |
| Type of school attended                     | Public                | 822 | 97.3                      | 73.2                          | 1.00               |
|   | Private               | 24  | 2.7                       | 93.6                          | 1.26 (1.11 – 1.43) |
| Schooling                                   | High school/ Graduate | 281 | 31.8                      | 70.9                          | 1.00               |
|   | Fundamental II        | 231 | 26.6                      | 73.0                          | 1.03 (0.92 – 1.15) |
|   | Fundamental I         | 358 | 41.6                      | 77.5                          | 1.11 (1.01 – 1.21) |
| Labor occupation                            | Yes                   | 347 | 40.4                      | 71.7                          | 1.00               |
|   | No                    | 520 | 59.6                      | 76.0                          | 1.07 (0.99 – 1.16) |
| <b>Reproductives</b>                        |                       |     |                           |                               |                    |
| Age at menarche                             | 12 to 14 (Normal)     | 513 | 60.6                      | 75.9                          | 1,00               |
|   | ≤ 11 (Early)          | 101 | 11.8                      | 79.8                          | 1.06 (0.95 – 1.18) |
|   | ≥ 15 (Late)           | 260 | 27.6                      | 67.6                          | 0.90 (0.82 – 1.00) |
| Weight of 1st child at birth                | < 4000 g              | 600 | 84.8                      | 73.0                          | 1,00               |
|   | ≥ 4000 g              | 106 | 15.2                      | 80.8                          | 1.11 (1.00 – 1.24) |
| Climacteric Symptoms                        | Absent / Light        | 541 | 62.3                      | 72.6                          | 1,00               |
|   | Moderate / Intense    | 332 | 37.7                      | 76.4                          | 1.05 (0.97 – 1.14) |
| First delivery age                          | ≤ 18 anos             | 218 | 27.3                      | 81.2                          | 1,00               |
|   | > 18 anos             | 605 | 72.7                      | 72.1                          | 0.89 (0.82 – 0.96) |
| <b>Clinical; eating /behavioural habits</b> |                       |     |                           |                               |                    |
| Liver disease                               | Absent                | 792 | 91,6                      | 73.0                          | 1.00               |
|   | Present               | 74  | 8.4                       | 86.3                          | 1.21 (1.10 – 1.33) |
|   |                       |     |                           |                               | 0.000              |

|                        |                   |     |      |      |                    |       |
|------------------------|-------------------|-----|------|------|--------------------|-------|
| Gout                   | Absent            | 822 | 95.4 | 73.0 | 1.00               | 0.000 |
|                        | Present           | 38  | 4.6  | 91.9 | 1.27 (1.15 – 1.40) |       |
| Kidney disease         | Absent            | 700 | 85.4 | 72.1 | 1.00               | 0.000 |
|                        | Present           | 119 | 14.6 | 88.2 | 1.20 (1.10 – 1.31) |       |
| Metabolic syndrome     | Present           | 317 | 35.2 | 59.6 | 1.00               | 0.000 |
|                        | Absent            | 557 | 64.8 | 81.9 | 1.39 (1.25 – 1.53) |       |
| Urinary incontinence   | Absent            | 676 | 77.5 | 71.9 | 1.00               | 0.026 |
|                        | Present           | 195 | 22.5 | 81.2 | 1.10 (1.01 – 1.20) |       |
| Cardiovascular disease | Low risk          | 388 | 43.7 | 66.6 | 1.00               |       |
|                        | Intermediate Risk | 423 | 48.4 | 78.7 | 1.15 (1.06 – 1.26) | 0.000 |
|                        | High risk         | 66  | 7.9  | 87.0 | 1.31 (1.16 – 1.46) |       |
| Alcoholism             | No                | 646 | 78.8 | 73.0 | 1.00               | 0.239 |
|                        | Yes               | 163 | 21.2 | 79.8 | 1.06 (0.96 – 1.16) |       |
| Fat intake             | No                | 655 | 80.2 | 73.0 | 1.00               | 0.065 |
|                        | Yes               | 163 | 19.8 | 79.8 | 1.09 (1.00 – 1.19) |       |

\* values corrected by the drawing effect (deff); RP: Gross prevalence ratio; 95% CI: Confidence interval.

The socio-demographic (marital status, monthly income, number of individuals residing in the same house and color of skin), clinical and behavioral (smoking, physical activity, depression symptoms, sleep quality) factors did not present significant associations ( $p < 0.250$ ) with overweight/obesity, and are not included in the hierarchical model.

The health conditions that were associated with overweight/obesity in the hierarchical model at the distal level were private school (PR = 1.30,  $p = 0.000$ ) and low level of education (PR = 1.11,  $p = 0.033$ ). After adjusting for sociodemographic factors, an association at intermediate level between the first childbirth above 18 years (PR = 0.90,  $p = 0.010$ ) was observed, and this variable had a protective effect against the occurrence of overweight/obesity (Table 2). At the proximal level, after adjusting for the potential confounding factors analyzed, the presence of gout (RP = 1.18,  $p = 0.004$ ), MS (RP = 1.29,  $p = 0.000$ ), kidney disease (P = 1.19,  $p = 0.006$ ) and fat intake (PR = 1.12,  $p = 0.014$ ) were found to be positively associated with overweight/obesity (Table 2).

199

200 **Table 2:** Prevalence ratio adjusted for overweight/obesity according to  
201 sociodemographic, reproductive, clinical, eating and behavioural factors of climacteric  
202 women.

| Variables   |                      | PR (CI <sub>95%</sub> )<br>adjusted | p Value |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| <b>Sociodemographic (distal level)</b>                          |                      |                                     |         |
| Type of school attended   | Public               | 1.00                                |         |
|   | Private              | 1.30 (1.14 -1.50)                   | 0.000   |
|   | High School/Graduate | 1.00                                |         |
| Schooling   | Fundamental II       | 1.05 (0.94 – 1.17)                  | 0.420   |
|   | Fundamental I        | 1.11 (1.01 -1.23)                   | 0.033   |
| <b>Reproductive (Intermediate level)</b>                        |                      |                                     |         |
| First delivery age  | ≤18 anos             | 1.00                                |         |
|   | > 18 anos            | 0.90 (0.82 -0.97)                   | 0.010   |
| <b>Clinical; eating/behavioural and habits (proximal level)</b> |                      |                                     |         |
| Gout  | Absent               | 1.00                                |         |
|   | Present              | 1.18 (1.05 -1.32)                   | 0.004   |
| Metabolic Syndrome  | Absent               | 1.00                                |         |
|   | Present              | 1.29 (1.16 -1.44)                   | 0.000   |
| Kidney disease  | Absent               | 1.00                                |         |
|   | Present              | 1.18 (1.08 -1.29)                   | 0.000   |
| Cardiovasculares disease  | Low risk             | 1.00                                |         |
|   | Intermediate risk    | 1.05 (0.95–1.15)                    | 0.332   |
|   | High risk            | 1.19 (1.05–1.34)                    | 0.006   |
| Fat intake  | No                   | 1.00                                |         |
|   | Yes                  | 1.12 (1.02 -1.23)                   | 0.014   |

203 PR: Gross and adjusted prevalence ratio; 95% CI: confidence interval  
204

## 205 Discussion

206 The prevalence of overweight and obesity in the population of the present study  
207 was higher than 2/3 of the sample, with a BMI mean of  $28.67 \pm 6.35 \text{ kg/m}^2$ , with a  
208 predominance of overweight in postmenopausal women. These findings are in  
209 accordance with a study conducted in São Paulo/Brazil, where the BMI mean in  
210 postmenopausal women was  $29.0 \pm 5.6 \text{ kg/m}^2$ <sup>25</sup>.

211 Weight gain in climacteric is due to the ageing process and estrogenic depletion,  
212 with the centralised distribution of fat mass related to ovarian failure<sup>26</sup>, which leads to a  
213 change in the hormonal environment previously dominated by estrogen to an environment  
214 where there is a predominance of testosterone, favouring androgenicity<sup>27</sup>. Also,

215 inadequate lifestyle habits, such as sedentary lifestyle, consumption of fats and sugars,  
216 can lead to physiological and metabolic alterations<sup>28</sup>. The limited perception of body  
217 weight and the importance of the control<sup>29</sup>, and the use of medications such as  
218 antidepressants, analgesics, and anxiolytics <sup>30</sup> also compete for the appearance of this  
219 condition.

220 Obesity is associated with insulin resistance and chronic inflammation predisposing  
221 to various diseases, including breast cancer, whose pathogenesis has been linked to  
222 increased estrogen levels<sup>31</sup>.

223 In addition, excessive body weight also contributes to the occurrence of systemic  
224 arterial hypertension (SAH), depression and worsening of climacteric symptoms<sup>32</sup>.  
225 Together with other comorbidities, they impair the quality of life of women and impact  
226 their functionality<sup>33</sup>.

227 According to the findings of the study, having attended private school seems to be  
228 associated with overweight in the climacteric. This may be due to the more accessible  
229 food with high caloric rates in childhood and adolescence, leading to weight excess,  
230 which could be perpetuating in adult life. However, the literature cannot explain these  
231 findings consistently, presenting evidence of a higher prevalence of weight excess among  
232 students of private schools in other age groups <sup>34;35</sup>.

233 Still, some studies evidence the association between low schooling and high BMI<sup>36</sup>,  
234 in consonance with the present findings, suggesting that a higher level of education may  
235 favour healthier living habits, such as the intake of vegetables and fruits<sup>37</sup> and the regular  
236 practice of physical activity<sup>38</sup>.

237 Regarding the gynaecological aspects, having a delivery occurred after the age of  
238 18 was shown to be a protective factor for overweight/obesity. Other studies have also  
239 shown an association between overweight/obesity, early parturition and parity<sup>39,40</sup>.

240 Findings suggest that younger maternal age at first delivery is independently associated  
241 with a higher risk of central obesity and MS in climacteric<sup>41</sup>. One explanation would be  
242 the possibility of a higher number of pregnancies among women with early parturition  
243 and lifestyle changes, although the pathophysiology of this association is still unclear and  
244 deserves additional studies<sup>42</sup>. Multiparity is associated with an increase in the prevalence  
245 of MS since it favours abdominal obesity<sup>43</sup> and insulin resistance in climacteric women<sup>44</sup>.

246 The diagnosis of gout and overweight/obesity in climacteric are also associated.  
247 This finding becomes relevant since hyperuricemia correlated with insulin resistance,  
248 hypertension, obstructive sleep apnea, chronic renal disease (CKD), MS and elevated  
249 cardiovascular risk<sup>45,46</sup>. According to this context, hyperuricemia may be related to an  
250 increase in the prevalence of coronary artery disease (CAD) and to the incidence of major  
251 cardiovascular events in climacteric women, being an independent risk factor<sup>47</sup>.  
252 Chromosomal abnormalities are associated with elevated serum levels of uric acid and  
253 gout in postmenopausal women, demonstrating a possible role of sex hormones in the  
254 regulation of the urate transporter in gout<sup>48</sup>.

255 An association between kidney disease and overweight was found in the present  
256 study. These data are consistent with the Brazilian Society of Nephrology's Dialysis  
257 Survey in 2014, which showed that 37% of dialysis patients were overweight or obese as  
258 a risk factor for CKD<sup>49</sup>. In addition, obesity is associated with MS, that is also a risk factor  
259 for the development of CKD<sup>50</sup>.

260 Overweight is related to compensatory hyperfiltration, which occurs to meet the  
261 metabolic demands increased by body weight, with possible damage to the kidneys and  
262 increased risk of long-term glomerulopathy, besides being also a risk factor for  
263 nephrolithiasis and kidney cancer. The obese patient also has a higher relative risk for

264 developing albuminuria and a decrease in the glomerular filtration rate, even without  
265 CKD<sup>51</sup>.

266 In climacteric, with increased risk for obesity, MS becomes more prevalent,  
267 increasing the incidence of cardiovascular disease and the risk of acute myocardial  
268 infarction (AMI)<sup>52</sup>, a vulnerability attributed to the decrease of estrogen and insulin  
269 resistance<sup>53</sup>. The association between overweight/obesity and MS was observed in the  
270 present study with the consequent risk elevation for cardiovascular diseases. Another  
271 study corroborated these findings and demonstrated that the prevalence of MS was also  
272 higher in postmenopausal women<sup>54</sup>. Obesity presents as a possible primary factor for the  
273 occurrence of MS and the risk of cardiovascular diseases, since an overweight patient  
274 may also have visceral adiposity, which is one of the diagnostic criteria of MS.

275 Among the overweight/obese women in this study, the diet characterised by fat  
276 intake was associated with overweight. A document published by the Health Surveillance  
277 Agency points out that excessive consumption of saturated fat, as well as sugars, is related  
278 to the development of chronic noncommunicable diseases, including obesity<sup>55</sup>. The  
279 balance in fat consumption is a viable strategy for a possible reduction of cardiovascular  
280 risk in this population<sup>56</sup>, since inadequate diet is the leading cause of cardiovascular  
281 mortality<sup>23</sup>.

282 The present study presents as limiting factors the use of BMI as the sole diagnostic  
283 criterion for overweight/obesity, in detriment to the use of other gold standard techniques,  
284 such as dual X-ray densitometry (DEXA). The variables liver diseases, kidney disease  
285 and gout, were addressed by self-report, and it was not possible to establish with precision  
286 the different etiologies of these diseases, but being able to establish their association in a  
287 generic way, provoking the need for further studies using more accurate diagnostic tools,  
288 such as imaging or laboratory tests. Moreover, it is a cross-sectional study and, therefore,

289 unable to establish causality among the studied variables. Despite the presented  
290 limitations, the obtained results bring relevant information on the subject, besides listing  
291 variables to be studied in future researches. It should be emphasised that the sample used  
292 in the study was representative of the population and was obtained in a probabilistic way,  
293 strengthening the results and associations obtained.

294 In addition, from a socioeconomic point of view, the population studied resides in  
295 a region that represents the Brazilian reality with confidence, located in a transition zone  
296 between considered rich Brazil (represented by the South and Southeast states) and Brazil  
297 with characteristics of poverty (represented by the Northern and Northeastern states).  
298 Therefore, the present study brings relevant associations on the health of climacteric  
299 women in an emblematic and representative area of the Brazilian population.

300

## 301 Conclusion

302 The presence of overweight/obesity was associated with climacteric women who  
303 had attended private schools, with low schooling, gout, metabolic syndrome, kidney  
304 disease, with high cardiovascular risk and who ingest fats in the diet. In turn, having first  
305 delivery after 18 years of age was presented as a protective factor for women not to  
306 become overweight/obese. It is suggested to monitor the modifiable factors since they  
307 were associated with overweight in climacteric women assisted by primary health care  
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Figure 1: Model with the statistically significant variable selected in the bivariate analysis, and then adding other variables.

