Is your body shaped like an apple? It's probably 'in the genes' and it could pose health risks

A study from Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) researchers has found that a pattern of gene variants associated with an "apple-shaped" body type.

In this body type, weight is deposited around the abdomen, rather than in the hips and thighs. This body shape increases the risk for type 2 diabetes and coronary heart disease, as well as the incidence of several cardiovascular risk factors.

"[W]e call [this condition] abdominal adiposity," says Sekar Kathiresan, MD, director of the MGH Center for Genomic Medicine. "We tested whether genetic predisposition to abdominal adiposity was associated with the risk for type 2 diabetes and coronary heart disease and found that the answer was a firm 'yes'."

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No association was found between the genetic risk score and lifestyle factors, and testing confirmed that only the abdominal adiposity effects of the identified gene variants were associated with cardiometabolic risk.

"The lack of association between the body type genetic risk score and confounding factors such as diet and smoking provides strong evidence that abdominal adiposity itself contributes to causing type 2 diabetes and heart disease," says lead author Connor Emdin, of the MGH Center for Genomic Medicine and the Cardiology Division.

[The study can be found here.]

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: Gene variants associated with body shape increase risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes