Weight trajectories and health in late life: a life course approach

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• Obesity is a world-wide health problem
Figure 1
Regional variation in prevalence of obesity (BMI ≥ 30 kg/m²) in men in Europe. Data in % from Table 1. If more than one study contribute data of different strata, the latest survey was chosen for the map.
THE NEGATIVE EFFECT OF BEING OBESE IN MIDLIFE IS WELL-KNOWN

- DIABETES
- CARDIO-VASCULAR DISEASE
- CANCER
- DEMENTIA
- MORTALITY
“Obesity in older persons has unique implications that have not yet been adequately explored”

Ferrucci et. al., 2010

The usefulness of the current WHO BMI recommendations in old age are questioned
**Obesity Paradox**

- Being obese in midlife is associated with decreased survival.

- Being overweight or obese have been associated with lower mortality risk in late life.
  

- Low weight in late life has been associated with an increased risk of dementia.
  

- Overweight persons with heart failure have a better prognosis than their thinner counterparts.
Based on findings from the Swedish Adoption/Twins Study of Aging (SATSA)
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The Need for a Life Course Perspective

- Patterns
- Weight change/Change points
  - Weight changes might be a prodromodal sign of dementia, other diseases, or mortality
- Delayed effects
- Time windows
An European Perspective

- Europe has a strong tradition of longitudinal ageing research. Combined with national registries on health

- Unharnessed potential which has not, yet, been taken advantage of

- Different health care systems, diets, etc.
The importance of FLARE

- Contacts with other European researcher from various disciplines
  - Two projects
  - Two research applications

- Methodological and statistical skills

- TIME!
  - It is unique to get a 3-year postdoctoral position!
Thank You for Your Attention!

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