

HOME / LIFESTYLE / HEALTH

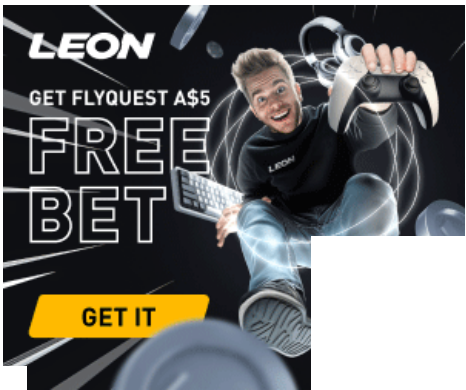
UAE obesity rates to hit 95% by 2050, highest globally: Report

Not just in the Emirates, obesity rates are high in neighbouring Gulf countries such as Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Oman

Published: Mon 3 Mar 2025 at 2:38 PM

By Waheed Abbas

Follow us



Top Stories

The number of people in the UAE suffering from obesity—both males and females—will see a significant increase over the next two-and-a-half decades, says a new study.

As per the Lancet study, overweight and obesity prevalence among adult males in the UAE aged 25-plus will increase from 84 per cent in 2021 to 94 per cent in 2050, the highest



Indian rupee crashes to new all-time low against UAE dirham

globally along with Kuwait and a few other countries.

1:05

watch on

Similarly, overweight and obesity prevalence among UAE females will also increase to 95 per cent in 2050, ranking the country fourth globally after Egypt, Tonga and Kuwait.

Stay up to date with the latest news. Follow KT on WhatsApp Channels.

Recommended



Indian police shut down Ed Sheeran's street gig



UK premier Starmer urges world leaders to test for HIV



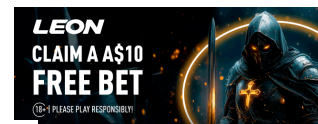
UAE: Do private sector employees work for 2 hours less during...



UAE President visits Bahrain's King at his residence in Abu Dhabi,...



Trump wants US to own Gaza, could let Middle East states help rebuild



Not just in the UAE, overweight and obesity rates are high among residents aged 25-plus in neighbouring Gulf countries such as Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Oman — higher than 90 per cent.

Among UAE's youngsters, aged between 15 and 24, the population of obese and overweight people will increase from 62 per cent in 2021 to 81 per cent by 2050, which is also among the highest globally.

Doctors and healthcare specialists in the UAE blame a sedentary lifestyle, consumption of processed and junk food, excessive time on screen and lack of physical activities by residents for such high levels of obesity.

Co-lead author Dr Jessica Kerr from Murdoch Children's Research Institute in Australia said preventing obesity must be at the forefront of all government policies.

Dr Tasneem Mohamad Nour Abu El Foul, specialist general and laparoscopic surgery, at Aster Hospital, Sharjah, said there are several opportunities to address this issue.

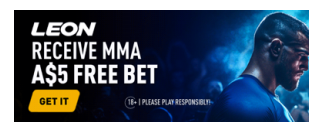
"Factors contributing to this trend include modern lifestyle, with a greater reliance on convenient food options and a shift towards more sedentary activities. However, these challenges also present an opportunity for both individuals and communities to adopt healthier habits, such as balanced diets and active lifestyles, with the support of innovative healthcare initiatives," said Dr Tasneem.

Don't just scroll. Know it all. Sign up for your daily UAE news fix.

Get the top stories of the day right in your inbox.

Subscribe

[Terms & Conditions Apply](#)



Dr Tasneem. Photo: Supplied

Shaista Asif, group CEO of PureHealth, said the UAE is tackling healthcare with a proactive and preventive approach to take care of its population's health.

"We're trying to make the entire population healthier. We are enabling an entire ecosystem to work together to enable longevity and healthier lifespans for people by giving them access to quality health," she said during the Investopia 2025.

Shaista Asif. Photo: Supplied

Ramadan is the time to start weight loss

She suggested that the holy month of Ramadan can be an opportune time for UAE residents to initiate a weight-loss journey.

"The structured fasting periods promote discipline and mindful eating, which can lead to weight loss and improved insulin sensitivity. Studies have shown that fasting in Ramadan can result in beneficial effects such as increased weight loss and better glycemic control," she added.

While commenting on the impact of the rising obesity population in the UAE, Dr Tasneem said an increase in obesity can encourage greater focus on preventative care and the promotion of healthier living.

"With the right initiatives, such as community wellness programmes and accessible healthcare services, the impact on the healthcare system can be managed effectively. As the UAE continues to invest in healthcare infrastructure, we have the potential to offer innovative solutions to manage and prevent obesity-related conditions, which will positively benefit both public health and overall productivity," she added.

Overweight weighing globally

Importantly, the Lancet study noted that more recent generations are gaining weight faster than previous ones and obesity is occurring earlier, increasing the risk of complications such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular diseases, and multiple cancers occurring at younger ages.

For example, in high-income countries, approximately 7 per cent of men born in the 1960s were living with obesity at the age of 25, but this increased to around 16 per cent for men born in the 1990s, and is forecast to reach 25 per cent for men born in 2015.

The study predicted that almost half of the global adult population — one billion males and 1.11 billion females aged 25 or older — were estimated to be living with being overweight or obesity in 2021.

Among high-income countries, the US had the highest rates of obesity, with around 42 per cent of males and 46 per cent of females affected by obesity in 2021.

Global rates of overweight and obesity among adults will rise from an estimated 43.4 per cent in 2021 to around 57.4 per cent for men in 2050, and from 46.7 per cent to 60.3 per cent for women, with the largest increases projected in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, driven by growing populations.

"Obesity rates are skyrocketing across sub-Saharan Africa, with 522 million adults and more than 200 million young people expected to be living with overweight or obesity by 2050," said co-author Awoke Temesgen, clinical Associate Professor at IHME.

ALSO READ:

Ramadan in UAE: Fasting boosts mental health, helps manage stress; here's how say doctors

Ramadan in UAE: Use AI to 'hack' how you fast, get personalised health benefits

UAE's weight loss challenge: Why Ramadan is the best time for residents to shed kilos, win prize

UAE: Win up to Dh300 for every kilo you lose as weight loss challenge returns with new category



Waheed Abbas

Waheed Abbas is Assistant Editor, covering real estate, aviation and other business stories that dir...[More >](#)

✉ waheedabbas@khaleejtimes.com

You May Like

Australians Over 50 Are Rushing to Claim This – Here’s Why
QUOTE GENIE

New South Wales Pensioners Are Eligible For Invisible Hearing Aids
BEST HEARING AIDS

New AI System for Making Money Takes Australia by Storm
MONARCHS.AGENCY

Aussies Over 60s Are Now Eligible For Cheaper Health Cover
SENIOR SAVINGS

The Most Realistic Game of 2025
RAID

New South Wales Residents Born 1945-1984 With No Life Insurance
Could Be Eligible
YOURSENIORSAVING

Sydney: DIY Pergola Kits Flying Off the Shelves
PERGOLUX.AU

Do you know the first Signs of Hearing Loss?
CONNECT HEARING

If You Need To Kill Time On Your Computer, This Popular Strategy
Game Is A Must.
FORGE OF EMPIRES

A professional engineer designed this nail clinner for seniors all over

UAE	WORLD	BUSINESS	SPORTS	ENTERTAINMENT	LIFESTYLE	
Crime	Africa	Auto	Cricket	Gaming	Arts	
Education	Asia	Aviation	Football	Movies	Beauty	
Emergencies	Americas	Corporate	F1	OTT	Fashion	
Expo City Dubai	Europe	Economy	Golf	Music	Food	DOWNLOAD OUR MOBILE APP
Environment	Gulf	Energy	Horse Racing	Local Events	Health	iPhone iPad
Government	MENA	Finance	Tennis	Things to do in the	Home	Android
Legal		Markets	Local Sports	UAE	Mental Health	
Transport		Property			Parenting	FOLLOW US
Weather		Tech			Women and Money	
Opinion		Cryptocurrency			Writer's Corner	
		Telecom				

Trump wants US to own Gaza, could let Middle East states help rebuild

KHALEEJTIMES.COM

Read Next Story >