**CORRELATION BETWEEN BODY MASS INDEX AND FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY IN PATIENTS WITH IMPAIRED RELAXATION**

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Objective: Determine the effect of the body mass index on functional capacity in patients with early stage of diastolic dysfunction, the stage of impaired relaxation.

Background: In patients with impaired relaxation and obesity it is usually difficult to differentiate whether the limitation of their functional capacity is due to the cardiac condition or their body mass index (BMI).

Methods: We reviewed the data from patients referred to the echo lab for the past two years and included those with impaired relaxation of the myocardium and excluded those with COPD. The impaired relaxation was determined by echo Doppler findings, using E/A and e’/a’. We compared patients with normal BMI and overweight versus those with mild, moderate, and morbid obesity. Their functional capacity levels were determined from a chart review according to the NYHA classification. A total of 685 patients were included in our review and analysis. There were 408 patients with a BMI <30 and 277 patients with a BMI more than or equal to 30. The functional capacity was compared in the two groups using the T-test analysis. The comparison between the two groups showed a p=0.2 and was not statistically different.

Conclusion: Body mass index has no effect on functional capacity in patients with impaired relaxation of the myocardium.