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Patterns of gynaecological check-up and their association with body mass index within the CONSTANCES cohort

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ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVES - To investigate the relationship between patterns of gynaecological check-up and body mass index while accounting for various determinants of health care use. **METHODS** - Sequence analysis and clustering were used to highlight patterns of gynaecological check-up, which included the regularity of breast and cervical cancer screening and visits to the gynaecologist over four years, among 6182 women aged 54–65 included in the CONSTANCES cohort between 2013 and 2015 in France. Multinomial logistic regressions were used to study the association between these patterns and women's body mass index. **RESULTS** - We identified four patterns of gynaecological check-up, from (A) no or inappropriate check-up (20%) to (D) almost one visit to the gynaecologist every year, overscreening for cervical cancer and frequent use of opportunistic breast cancer screening (12%). From patterns A to D, the proportion of obese women decreased and that of women with normal body mass index increased. Obese and overweight women underwent more breast than cervical cancer screening and were less often overscreened than normal weight women. These differences were only partly explained by the lower socioeconomic situation of overweight and obese women. Beyond the financial barrier, the screening modality and the type of exam may play a role. Among women who were screened for cervical cancer, obese and overweight women were less often screened by a gynaecologist. **CONCLUSION** - Further efforts should be made to enhance the take-up of screening among obese women who are deterred by the healthcare system.

KEYWORDS: Cervical cancer screening; Breast cancer screening; Visit to the gynaecologist; Gynaecological check-up; Screening regularity; Barriers to screening; Body mass index

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