

Episode 7 - Obesity in Children

Definition

Obesity is difficult to define in children as they are in a state of growth and development. Body mass index in isolation is not an accurate tool. It must be compared to a BMI-for-age centile growth chart (Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health).

If these charts are unavailable then conventional height and weight centile growth charts can be used. Obesity is defined as a weight centile that is disproportionately higher than their height centile.

In this context, disproportionate weight to height means that the weight sits on a centile line that is more than two centile spaces greater than their height centile. If the height were on the 50th centile, then the weight would have to be above the 91st centile for the child to be considered overweight.

On a UK chart, the standard centiles lines are: 0.4th, 2nd, 9th, 25th, 50th, 75th, 91st, 98.6th.

Conduct of anaesthesia

- Risk assessment (based on general condition)
 - Postoperative planning (e.g. HDU, monitoring, CPAP, analgesia)
 - Monitoring and equipment (e.g. large size NIBP cuffs, inaccurate sizing of LMAs)
 - Facemask ventilation (head up positioning, two-handed technique)
 - Gastro-oesophageal reflux (intubation)
 - Intravenous access (ultrasound, long-length peripheral cannulas)
 - Drug dosing (adjusted or ideal body weight)
 - Positioning (pressure sores, nerve injuries, venous thromboembolism)
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