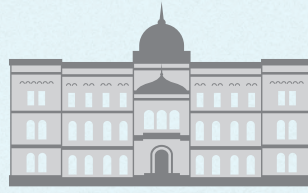


11<sup>th</sup> BALTIC  
**MORPHOLOGY  
MEETING**

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2024



ANATOMICUM, RIGA

# 11<sup>th</sup> Baltic Morphology Meeting

## ABSTRACT BOOK

November 13–15, 2024  
Rīga, Latvia



RĪGA STRADIŅŠ  
UNIVERSITY

Baltic Morphology 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting [November 13–15, 2024]: Abstract Book. – Rīga: Rīga Stradiņš University, 2024. – 98 p., including Author Index.

<https://doi.org/10.25143/rsu-balt-morf-11-meeting>

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(not in the alphabetical order)

Authors are responsible for the content of their abstracts

RSU IPD No. IPD-5115

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16 Dzirciema Street, Rīga, LV 1007

ISBN 978-9934-618-58-1 (printed edition)

ISBN 978-9934-618-59-8 (electronic edition, online)

## Comparison of body mass index, body image and self-esteem among women aged 25–65 before COVID-19, during the first and second quarantine in Lithuania

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**Objectives.** Research on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on physical and psychological health, particularly body mass index (BMI), body image, and self-esteem, remains limited. This study aimed to fill this gap by assessing changes in these factors among women aged 25–65 in Lithuania during three periods: pre-pandemic, the first quarantine (March 16 – June 16, 2020), and the second quarantine (November 7, 2020 – June 30, 2021).

**Materials and methods.** A cross-sectional online survey was conducted in Lithuania with 796 women aged 25–65. Participants self-reported their weight and height for BMI calculation, categorized using WHO cutoffs (BMI  $\geq 30$  for obesity, 25.0–29.9 for overweight,  $\leq 18.5$  for underweight). BMI and body image were assessed across all three periods. Body image was measured using the Stunkard Figure Rating Scale (1965), where participants selected figures representing their current and ideal body size, with the difference indicating dissatisfaction. Self-esteem, measured during the second quarantine, was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965), which includes 10 self-worth statements scored from 0 to 30, with higher scores indicating greater self-esteem.

**Results.** BMI increased by less than 1 unit during both quarantines compared to pre-pandemic, with changes statistically insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Younger women had a mean BMI of  $\sim 24$ , while older women averaged  $\sim 27$ . Body dissatisfaction, according to the Stunkard Scale, rose significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ), particularly among overweight and obese women. Self-esteem, measured during the second quarantine, averaged 20.88. There were no statistically significant correlations between BMI and self-esteem ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**Conclusions.** Despite minor BMI increases over the three periods, body dissatisfaction rose significantly, especially among overweight and obese women. Although self-esteem remained stable for most, the growing dissatisfaction with body image may have long-term psychological effects, suggesting the need for targeted interventions to address body image concerns and mental health during prolonged societal restrictions.