

# Obesity Increases Operating Room Times In Patients Undergoing Primary Hip Arthroplasty: A Retrospective Cohort Analysis

Background: Obesity impacts utilization of healthcare resources. The goal of this study was to measure the relationship between increasing body mass index (BMI) in patients undergoing total hip arthroplasty (THA) with different components of operating room (OR) time. Methods: The Stanford Translational Research Integrated Database Environment (STRIDE) was utilized to identify all ASA PS 2 or 3 patients who underwent primary THA at Stanford Medical Center from February 1, 2008 through January 1, 2013. Patients were divided into five groups based on the BMI weight classification. Regression analysis was used to quantify relationships between BMI and the different components of total OR time. Results: 1332 patients were included in the study. There were no statistically significant differences in age, gender, height, and ASA PS classification between the BMI groups. Normal-weight patients had a total OR time of 138.9 mins compared 167.9 mins ( $P < 0.001$ ) for morbidly obese patients. At a BMI  $> 35$  kg/m<sup>2</sup> each incremental BMI unit increase was associated with greater incremental total OR time increases. Conclusion: Morbidly obese patients required significantly more total OR time than normal-weight patients undergoing a THA procedure. This increase in time is relevant when scheduling obese patients for surgery and has an important impact on health resource utilization.

# Obesity Increases Operating Room Times In Patients Undergoing Primary Hip Arthroplasty: A Retrospective Cohort Analysis

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Attribution: Department of Anesthesiology, Perioperative and Pain Medicine, Stanford University Medical Center

Presentations: Abstract Poster Presentation at the Western Anesthesia Regional Conference in Albuquerque, NM on May 10<sup>th</sup> 2013

**Keywords:** Obesity; Body mass index; Healthcare; Arthroplasty, replacement, hip.  
**Introduction:**

Using the World Health Organization's (WHO) weight-class definitions, two-thirds of the adult population in the United States above the age of 60 years are "pre-obese" or

“obese”. [WHO, 2000; Flegal KM, et al. 2010] Furthermore, the prevalence of obesity is projected to increase by > 33% over the next twenty years. [Finkelstein EA, 2012] The current obesity “epidemic” has had a great impact on healthcare resources, and its effects will increase further as the incidence of obesity continues to rise. [Wolf AM & Colditz, GA 1998; Allison DB, Zannolli R & Narayan KM, 1999] In addition to an increased risk of postoperative complications, hospital readmission rates are increased for obese patients. [Farkas DT, et al. 2012; Reinke CE, et al. 2012] There is evidence that the duration of certain surgical procedures and the total amount of time spent in the operating room (OR) are also increased for obese patients. [Batsis JA, et al. 2009; Wang JL, et al. 2013] This is relevant since longer OR times can be extrapolated to an increase in resource expenditures. Previous research has been conducted looking at the increases in direct cost and length of stay in total hip arthroplasty. [Kremers HA, et al. 2014] For example, if not scheduled accurately, an operation running later than planned will increase the potential need for overtime help. [Hirose K, et al. 2011] The increased costs associated with the obese surgical patient are not accompanied by similar increases in third party payments thereby placing financial risk on facilities that care for these patients. [Silber JH, et al. 2012]

The goal of this study was to measure the relationship between increasing obesity in patients undergoing total hip arthroplasty (THA) with the various components of OR time in order to determine how obesity contributes to overall case duration. The expected result is an increase in resource utilization for obese surgical patients as measure by perioperative times.

## **Materials and Methods:**

Following IRB approval, the Stanford Translational Research Integrated Database Environment (STRIDE) was utilized to identify all patients who underwent primary THA at Stanford Medical Center from February 1, 2008 through January 1, 2013. STRIDE is a standards-based informatics platform supporting clinical and translational research and includes a clinical data warehouse based on the HL7 Reference Information Model. [Lowe HJ, et al. 2009] This observational research study utilized the STROBE guidelines for improved reporting of the findings.[von Elm E, et al. 2008]

Only American Society of Anesthesiologists Physical Status (ASA PS) class 2 or 3 patients undergoing primary elective unilateral THA procedures under general anesthesia, with or without spinal for post-operative pain control were included in the study. ASA 1, 4 and 5 patients were removed from the study since they represent a small number of the total hip arthroplasties. Patients were divided into five groups based on WHO BMI classification.[WHO 2000] Group 1- normal-weight (BMI = 18.5-24.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>), Group 2 - pre-obese (BMI = 25-29.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>), Group 3 - obese (BMI – 30-34.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>), and Group 4 - severely obese (BMI = 35-39.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) and Group 5 - morbidly obese (BMI >= 40.0 kg/m<sup>2</sup>).

The following parameters were retrieved: age, gender, height, weight, surgeon (14 surgeons), anesthesiologist (116 anesthesiologists) and ASA PS. Patients who had placement of central lines or arterial lines were excluded from the study since these interventions could be a confounding variable for increased length of perioperative time.

Time stamps were retrieved from the STRIDE database. The data points collected were time of (a) Admission to pre-op Unit, (b) Entry into operating room, (c) Anesthesia handoff, (d) Surgery start, (e) Surgery end, (f) Out of operating room, (g) Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) admission, (h) PACU discharge, and (i) Hospital discharge day and time.

The primary outcome variable of the study was total OR Time, which is the time interval beginning when a patient entered the OR (b) until the moment the patient physically left the OR (f).

Secondary outcome variables included:

1. Induction Time defined as the time from Entry into OR (b) to Anesthesia Handoff (c). (Anesthesia handoff is the time the anesthesiologist completed his/her work and turned the patient over to the surgical team for positioning, preparation, and draping).
2. Operation time defined as the interval from Surgery Start (d) to Surgery End (e).
3. Emergence Time defined as the interval from Surgery End (e) to Out of Operating Room (f).
4. Recovery Room Time defined as the interval from PACU Admission (g) to PACU Discharge (h).
5. Total Hospital Length of Stay defined as the interval from the Admission to Pre-op Unit (a) to Hospital Discharge (i).

All time data points were collected and recorded into the electronic medical record by pre-operative, operating, and recovery room nurses who were unaware of study, as data was analyzed retrospectively.

### **Statistical Analysis:**

Observations taken from the STRIDE database, which already excluded patients based on ASA, central line and/or arterial line placement, and regional anesthesia, resulted in 1,613 patients. The top 1% and bottom 1% times for each data interval were excluded as a means of removing incorrectly entered data points and ensuring outliers did not drive the results (185 patients removed). Patients with a BMI of greater than 50

105 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or less than 18.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup> were removed from the study due to a paucity of data  
 106 points(96 patients removed). These two procedures would cause a wide variability in  
 107 induction times and could be representative of in ability to get a non-invasive blood  
 108 pressure or peripheral intravenous access or could be due to severity of illness. By  
 109 removing these few occurrences from our dataset, we reduce the possibility of variability  
 110 due to covariates and had a total of 1332 patients remaining. All data points for the time  
 111 intervals were available for these patients, except 1 was missing for induction time (1331  
 112 observations), 4 were missing for operation time (1328 observations), and 568 were  
 113 missing for recovery time (764 observations). The patients were grouped by body  
 114 mass index as defined by the WHO classifications (stated above in this section). For the  
 115 primary and each secondary outcome variable the mean and standard deviations were  
 116 calculated. We estimated regression parameters separately for each time component of  
 117 the case. In the data analysis BMI is an indicator variable. The database accessible  
 118 covariates that can affect case duration were included as regressors (e.g. patient age,  
 119 gender, height, and ASA PS classification) **Table 5**. These were included to remove any  
 120 variability in demographics, size, and severity of illness between our patient's in their  
 121 BMI groupings. Multiple t-test assuming unequal variance were performed to compare  
 122 the Group 1 (normal weight) BMI patients to each successively higher BMI grouping.  
 123 This analysis was repeated for the primary and each secondary outcome variables.

124 A graphical regression analysis was performed to quantify the relationship  
 125 between BMI (kg/m<sup>2</sup>) and total operating room time, induction time, total operation time,  
 126 emergence time, recovery room time, and length of hospital stay. Using Stata  
 127 (StataCorp LP, College Station, Texas) a kernel weighted local polynomial regression to  
 128 examine potential non-linearity in the relationship between BMI, the continuous variable,  
 129 and procedure duration was performed. In the graphical analysis the covariates are not

130 controlled for. This method traces out average total OR time and induction time for each  
131 BMI value without making any parametric assumptions.

## 132 **Results:**

133 A total of 1332 patients were included in this study. There were no statistically  
134 significant differences in age, gender, height, and ASA PS classification between the  
135 different study groups. **Table 1**

136 Group 1 (normal-weight) patients undergoing THA had a mean Total OR Time of  
137 138.9 mins, Group 3 (obese) patients 146.3 mins, and Group 5 (morbidly obese)  
138 patients 167.9 mins. **Table 2, Figure A** The difference in mean times with adjusted and  
139 unadjusted values are presented in **Tables 3 and 4**. Controlled values are presented in  
140 **Table 5**.

141 There was also a direct association between increasing BMI and the length of  
142 many of the individual components of total OR Time based on t-test between higher BMI  
143 groups when compared to Normal BMI group. Incremental BMI group increase was  
144 associated with a greater incremental time increase at higher BMIs.

145 Patients in Group 1 had a mean Induction Time of 21.4 mins, Group 3 patients  
146 23.7 mins, while Group 5 patients required 28.2 mins. **Figure B** Group 5 patients had a  
147 longer mean Operation Time of 103.0 mins versus 86.1 mins for Group1 patients.  
148 **Figure C** For Group 1 patients, the mean Emergence Time equaled 9.1 mins compared  
149 to 10.9 mins for Group 5. There were no statistically significant differences in mean

150 Recovery Time between groups. Group 5 patients had a significant increased mean  
151 Length of Hospital Stay, 3.9 days compared to 3.5 days for Group 1 patients. **Table 2**

## 152 **Discussion:**

153 As the number of obese patients continues to rise so does the demand for joint  
154 arthroplasty procedures. Therefore, elucidating the impact of obesity on perioperative  
155 costs is becoming ever more relevant.[Perka C, et al. 2000; Kurtz S, et al. 2007] Our  
156 study of 1332 patients undergoing primary THA procedures at an academic medical  
157 center found that obesity predictably lengthens both induction and surgical times. The  
158 induction time is greater as expected due to longer times in moving, positioning, and  
159 pre-oxygenating obese patients. The greatest single contributor to the increased  
160 perioperative time requirements was the time needed by the surgeon to actually perform  
161 the operation (Operation Time). Based on this information our facility has begun a pilot  
162 project to schedule surgical time duration for THA cases by utilizing the difference in  
163 mean time between patient's BMI using **Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5**, which provides  
164 the absolute difference in mean time for each time interval when compared to a normal  
165 weight patient and controls.

166 The reasons increasing weight lengthens both anesthesia and surgical times are  
167 multifactorial but could be related to difficulties transferring patients to the OR table, with  
168 airway management, with moving the patient to the lateral decubitus position once  
169 anesthetized, and because excessive fat can interfere with intraoperative surgical  
170 exposure. [Raphael IJ, et al. 2013] Obesity was not associated with longer recovery  
171 time, probably because discharge from the recovery room is often dictated by non-  
172 medical issues such as waiting for personnel to transport the patient to the ward or the  
173 availability of a ward bed.



174 It is estimated that by 2030, the number of primary THA operations will rise by  
175 174%, and a significant number of these patients will be obese.[Kurtz S, et al. 2007]  
176 Health systems will have to absorb the additional financial burden of performing THA  
177 procedures on obese patients. Those private orthopedic practices with a focus on  
178 maintaining a predictable volume and minimizing costly complications may become  
179 reticent in accepting obese patients. Besides the economic impact, the medical co-  
180 morbidities associated with obesity pose management challenges for both surgeons and  
181 anesthesiologists. With recent protocols penalizing health care providers for hospital  
182 readmissions and postoperative complications, private practitioners may be less  
183 incentivized to perform THA procedures on the obese. These factors all underscore that  
184 public payer health systems may be required to absorb much of the financial  
185 repercussions of increased resource utilization for obese surgical patients.

186 Throughout the US there is wide variability reported for actual operating room  
187 costs depending on whether fixed costs or variable costs are included and on the  
188 specific resources consumed by each patient.[Shippert R, 2005; Macario A, 2010]  
189 Besides the increased operating room time costs attributable to obesity, our study also  
190 noted expensive increased postoperative hospital length of stay. In addition, other  
191 studies have also shown that obese patients have a higher rate of prosthesis failure, hip  
192 dislocations, and wound infection.[Perka C, et al. 2000; Sadr AO, et al. 2008] Currently  
193 pay-for-performance policies do not take into account obesity as a cause for increased  
194 costs in the perioperative setting.[Hirose K, et al. 2011; Dowsey MM, Liew D & Choong  
195 PFM, 2011] Some facilities may choose not to operate on the morbidly obese unless  
196 reimbursement is changed, especially if hospitals are penalized for readmissions under  
197 changing health policy regulations. We believe it would be worthwhile to evaluate the  
198 usefulness of a comprehensive protocol approach to the care of the morbidly obese

surgical patient to ensure that appropriate pre-habilitation, proper equipment, experienced nurses, and other resources are allocated to these patients.

In our analysis, the mean operation and induction times plateau and begin to decrease as the extremes of BMI are reached. The confidence interval widens as the BMI increases, which is a result of a limited number of morbidly obese patients undergoing hip arthroplasty as compared to normal BMI, overweight, and obese patients undergoing this operation.

This study has inherent limitations in the fact that it is a single-center retrospective electronic chart-review. The time points collected by preoperative, OR, and recovery room nurses may have some errors, but should affect the BMI groups similarly. In the case of recovery times, a large number of the entered values were not recorded by the STRIDE database properly limiting the power of our recovery time results. The multiple t-test analysis is an inherent limitation in that we can only view each t-test alone, since there is inherent correlation between time intervals. We decided to report the most straightforward and easily understood test in the presentation of the data. Despite this, it is apparent from the data presented that the higher the BMI the longer the OR time will be. This will hold true however the data is reported. An inherent limitation in retrospective non-randomized studies is the fact that causal inferences can be mistakenly made, but we are confident in this study, which is supported by current available literature. As can be seen in figure A and Figure B, the case time and decreases slightly and the confidence interval widens. Outliers were removed as mentioned above in the statistical analysis section. At the higher end of BMI there is a paucity of data which leads to these potentially deceptive graphical representations. The majority of total hip arthroplasties at our institution are performed under general anesthesia, with or without spinal for post-operative pain control. At a majority of

224 institutions across the country spinal anesthesia alone is the anesthetic plan of choice.  
 225 Despite this we believe that operation time and other secondary outcomes could be of  
 226 use.

227 **Conclusion:** We found that for patients undergoing THA, increasing BMI was  
 228 associated with increased total OR time. Also increasing BMI was associated with longer  
 229 hospital stays after THA. Operating room scheduling and plans for resource utilization  
 230 should recognize that the same THA procedure will require more time in a morbidly  
 231 obese patient than in a normal-weight or pre-obese patient. These considerations can  
 232 potentially reduce the increased healthcare costs associated with performing surgery on  
 233 obese patients.

234 **Acknowledgments:**

235 We wish to acknowledge the contributiions of Annie Katz, MD, Resident, Internal  
 236 Medicine, Stanford University Medical Center, Stanford, CA, USA for critical analysis of  
 237 the proposal and manuscript, Pietro Tebaldi, PhD, Stanford University, Stanford, CA,  
 238 USA for aiding in data analysis, and John Brock-Utne, MD, Professor of Anesthesiology,  
 239 Department of Anesthesiology, Perioperative and Pain Medicine, Stanford University  
 240 Medical Center, Stanford, CA, USA for critical analysis of the abstract.

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# **Table 1** (on next page)

Demographic variables

Table 1: Demographic variables – associated standard deviation (when appropriate) and p-value Comparing Normal BMI to other BMI Groupings.

BMI Range	18.5 - 24			25 - 29			30 - 34			35 - 39			40 - 50		
VARIABLES	SD	p		SD	p		SD	p		SD	p		SD	p	
Age (mean)	62.92	14.50	-	63.77	11.93	0.53	62.20	12.13	0.48	61.29	9.80	0.45	59.02	9.54	0.39
ASA 2 total (percent)	175 (49%)	-	-	241 (48%)	-	0.53	122 (45%)	-	0.55	48 (43%)	-	0.56	29 (44%)	-	0.56
Male total (percent)	115 (32%)	-	-	281 (56%)	-	0.69	147 (54%)	-	0.68	49 (44%)	-	0.60	23 (35%)	-	0.52
Height in meters (mean)	1.69	0.11	-	1.72	0.11	0.62	1.72	0.10	0.62	1.70	0.10	0.57	1.68	0.10	0.50
Number of Patients	357	-	-	502	-	-	270	-	-	111	-	-	66	-	-

## Table 2<sub>(on next page)</sub>

### Outcomes Table

Table 2: Outcomes Table (Mean-listed in minutes except Total Hospital Time, standard deviation (SD), p-value: heteroscedastic T-Test Results Comparing Interval Times of Normal BMI to other BMI Groupings)

BMI Range	18.5 - 24.9			25 - 29.9			30 - 34.9			35 - 39.9			40 - 50			Total Number
VARIABLES	Mean	SD	p	Mean	SD	p	Mean	SD	p	Mean	SD	p	Mean	SD	p	
Total Time in OR	138.9	1.4	-	141.7	1.2	0.152	146.3	1.8	<0.001	156.3	2.9	<0.0005	167.9	3.8	<0.0005	1332
Induction Time	21.4	0.4	-	21.8	0.4	0.475	23.7	0.5	<0.001	26.3	0.8	<0.0005	28.2	1.1	<0.0005	1331
Operation Time	86.1	1.2	-	87.4	0.9	0.425	90.3	1.4	0.022	97.6	2.4	<0.0005	103.0	2.9	<0.0005	1328
Emergence Time	9.1	0.3	-	9.1	0.2	0.921	9.2	0.3	0.784	9.5	0.4	0.452	10.9	0.7	0.006	1332
Recovery Time	184.8	3.9	-	174.8	3.2	0.136	167.7	4.5	0.031	184.9	7.9	0.994	174.6	8.0	0.474	764
Total Hospital Stay (Days)	3.5	0.1	-	3.5	0.1	0.801	3.5	0.1	0.949	3.6	0.1	0.233	3.9	0.1	0.001	1332
Number of Patients	362	-	-	512	-	-	275	-	-	113	-	-	70	-	-	1332

# **Table 3**(on next page)

Adjusted Difference

Table 3: Difference in mean times when compared to normal BMI patients (BMI 18.5-24.9), adjusted.

BMI Range	25-29.9			30-34.9			35-39.9			40-50			Total Number
	Difference	95% CI	p	Difference	SD	p	Difference	SD	p	Difference	SD	p	
Total Time in OR	3.48	+0.170	0.077	7.49	+0.268	0.001	16.89	+0.558	<0.001	27.25	+0.859	<0.001	1332
Induction Time	0.38	+0.051	0.518	2.27	+0.080	<0.001	4.87	+0.167	<0.001	6.80	+0.258	<0.001	1331
Operation Time	2.03	+0.136	0.196	4.40	+0.215	0.016	11.15	+0.448	<0.001	15.53	+0.686	<0.001	1328
Emergence Time	-0.08	+0.031	0.823	0.04	+0.046	0.914	0.33	+0.099	0.534	1.65	+0.151	0.011	1332
Recovery Time	-9.28	+0.587	0.171	-16.23	+0.950	0.044	-0.17	+1.567	0.987	-12.59	+3.351	0.382	764
Total Hospital Stay (Days)	0.00	+0.00	0.998	-0.03	+0.011	0.780	0.18	+0.023	0.148	0.76	+0.036	<0.001	1332
Total Number	512			275			113			70			1332

# **Table 4**(on next page)

Unadjusted Difference

Table 4. Difference in mean times when compared to normal BMI patients (BMI 18.5-24.9), unadjusted.

BMI Range	25-29.9			30-34.9			35-39.9			40-50			Total Number
	Difference	95% CI	p	Difference	SD	p	Difference	SD	p	Difference	SD	p	
Total Time in OR	2.794	+0.169	0.153	7.435	+0.269	0.001	17.460	+0.565	<0.001	28.980	+0.869	<0.001	1332
Induction Time	0.412	+0.050	0.475	2.286	+0.079	<0.001	4.886	+0.167	<0.001	6.825	+0.247	<0.001	1331
Operation Time	1.247	+0.135	0.425	4.163	+0.215	0.022	11.530	+0.455	<0.001	16.940	+0.695	<0.001	1328
Emergence Time	0.339	+0.133	0.921	0.108	+0.047	0.784	0.400	+0.098	0.534	1.761	+0.151	0.010	1332
Recovery Time	9.984	+0.580	0.136	-17.100	+0.936	0.031	0.077	+1.416	0.994	-10.270	+3.341	0.474	764
Total Hospital Stay (Days)	0.023	+0.007	0.773	-0.057	+0.011	0.550	0.167	+0.024	0.189	0.753	+0.036	<0.001	1332
Number of Patients	512			275			113			70			1332



## Table 5<sub>(on next page)</sub>

### Controls

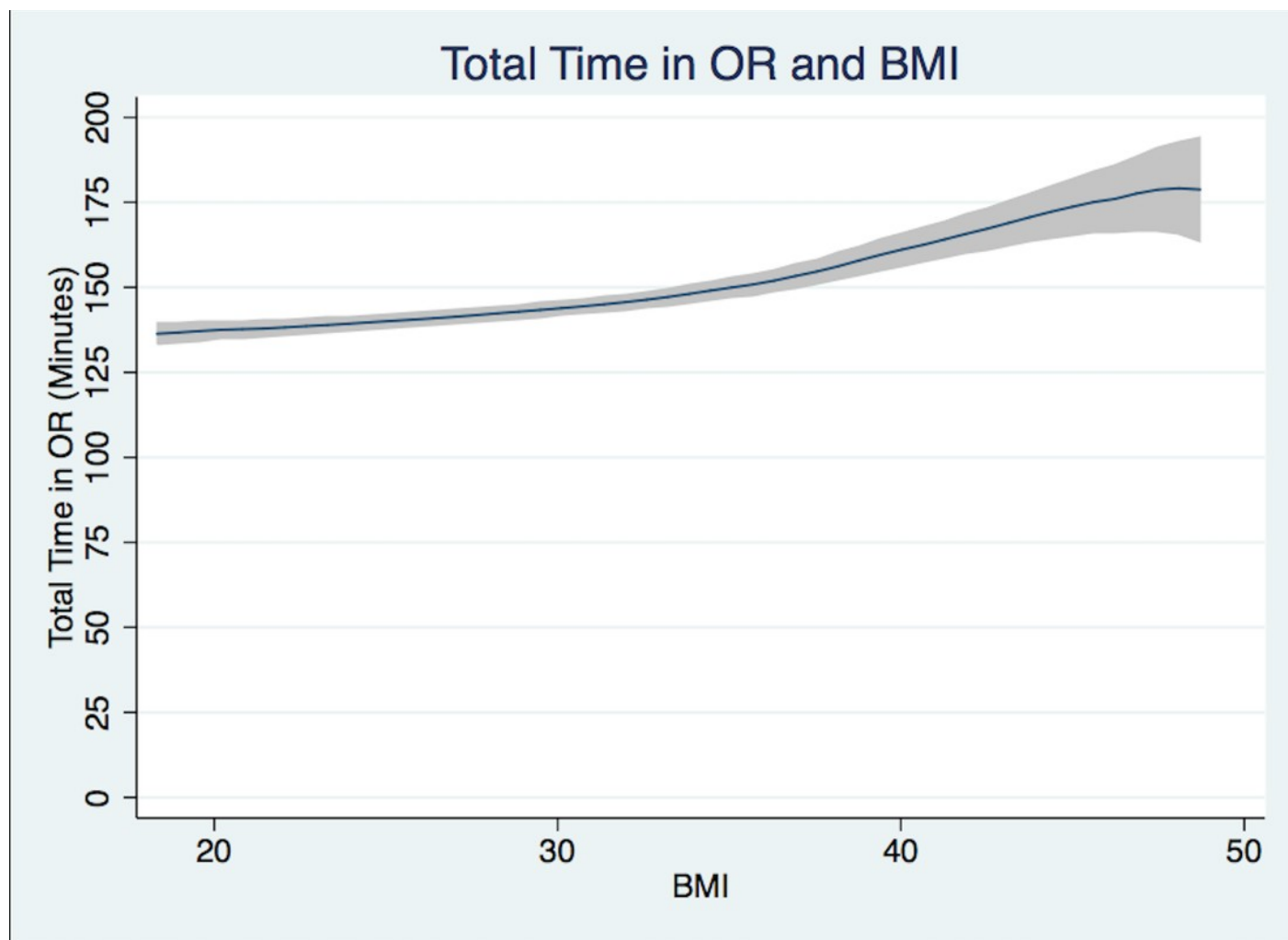
Table 5 - Controls: difference in time points holding all other control variables constant. The Sex column is the difference in mean time between males and females with all other variables held constant. The Age column is the difference in mean time between an individual and another 1 year younger with all other variables held constant. The Height column is the difference in mean time between for an individual and another 1 inch shorter with all other variables held constant. The ASA column is the difference in mean time between ASA 3 and ASA 2 with all other variable held constant.

BMI Range	Sex			Age			Height			ASA			Total Number
	Difference	SD	p	Difference	SD	p	Difference	SD	p	Difference	SD	p	
Total Time in OR	1.072	+0.186	0.620	-0.372	+0.008	<0.001	-22.730	+1.862	0.024	3.430	+0.362	0.026	1332
Induction Time	0.374	+0.056	0.564	0.009	+0.002	0.631	-2.483	+0.558	0.412	0.490	+0.108	0.289	1331
Operation Time	0.383	+0.151	0.824	-0.328	+0.006	<0.001	-20.520	+1.484	0.011	1.794	+0.288	0.146	1328
Emergence Time	0.443	+0.033	0.245	-0.013	+0.001	0.247	-2.067	+0.329	0.245	0.498	+0.064	0.067	1332
Recovery Time	2.490	+0.674	0.748	0.255	+0.026	0.748	-68.030	+6.780	0.065	8.572	+1.287	0.118	764
Total Hospital Stay (Days)	0.012	+0.008	0.895	0.005	+0.000	0.039	-0.925	+0.0779	0.029	0.183	+0.015	0.005	1332
Total Number	512			275			113			70			1332

# Figure 1

Total case time

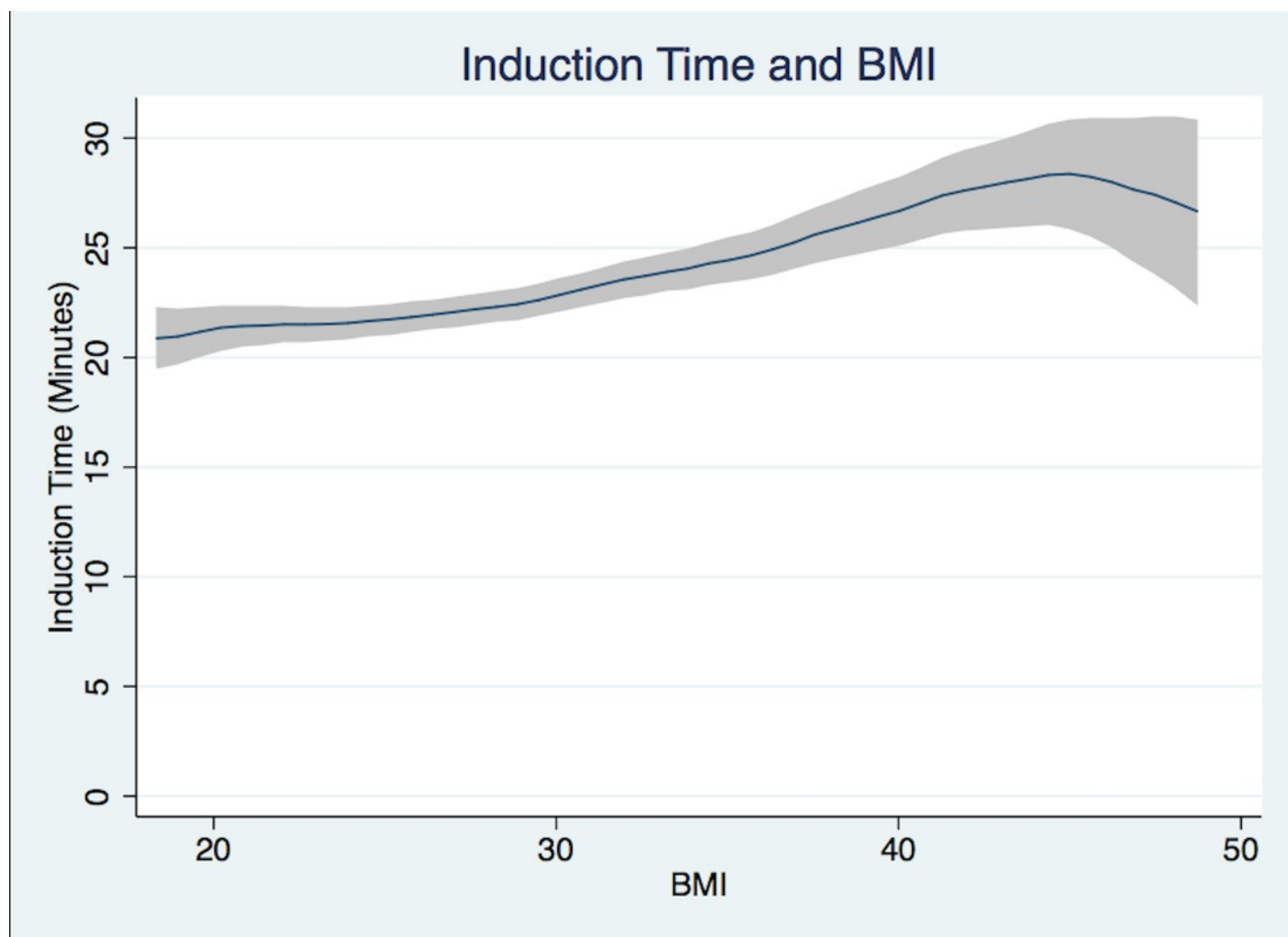
Figure 1: Legend: Total Case time (patient in room to patient out of room in minutes) and BMI Polynomial Regression Line (blue line) with 95% CI (gray); (Epanechnikov kernel of degree 0, Bandwidth of 3.24, pwidth of 4.86) ¥ <!--[if !supportFootnotes]-->[b] <!--[endif]--> ¥ The differences in the bandwidth are due to differences in the variance of outcome variables.



## Figure 2

Induction time

Figure 2: Legend: Induction Time (from patient in room to handoff from anesthesiologist to surgeon in minutes) and BMI Polynomial Regression Line (blue line) with 95% CI (gray); (Epanechnikov kernel of degree 0, Bandwidth of 2.2, pwidth of 3.3) ¥ <!--[if ! supportFootnotes]-->[b] <!--[endif]--> ¥ The differences in the bandwidth are due to differences in the variance of outcome variables.



# Figure 3

Operation time

Figure 3: Legend: Operation Time (from surgery start time to surgery end time in minutes) and BMI Polynomial Regression Line (blue line) with 95% CI (gray); (Epanechnikov kernel of degree 0, Bandwidth of 3.02, pwidth of 4.53) ¥ <!--[if !supportFootnotes]-->[b] <!--[endif]--> ¥ The differences in the bandwidth are due to differences in the variance of outcome variables.

