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Somatotype and Disease – A Review

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ABSTRACT The clustering of the risk factors in the families for many organic diseases indicates that there exists some common link between physiology, constitution, genetics, somatotype and pathology, however, the physiological path indicating the clear cut relationship between the two remains obscure. Many organic diseases seem to have a complex multifactorial etiology where neither the genetic nor environmental inputs of an organism act independently to cause disease. There is a need to understand the complexity of the etiologies of disease and to adopt holistic models to unravel the mystery of disease by focusing on every single factor including the morphological structure and physique. This viewpoint has perhaps been adopted by numerous researchers who have tried to explore the missing link between disease and physique or somatotype. The present paper attempts to review the available literature on somatotype and disease alongwith the issue of its plasticity with age. An overwhelming number of studies have established the links of somatotype with disease and have explained the amounts of associations of different diseases with somatotype components.