

# Many obese patients are lacking formal diagnosis

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(HealthDay)—Many patients with obesity, as classified according to

body mass index (BMI), have not received a formal diagnosis using *International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9)* documentation, according to a study presented at the annual meeting of The Obesity Society (ObesityWeek), held from Oct. 31 to Nov. 4 in New Orleans.

Bartolome Burguera, M.D., Ph.D., from the Cleveland Clinic, and colleagues used electronic health record data to create a cross-sectional summary of patients. Data were included for 324,199 active patients, stratified according to BMI category.

The researchers found that 37.4 percent of patients were overweight (BMI  $\geq 25$  and  $30 \text{ kg/m}^2$  had a documentation of an ICD-9 code for obesity. Only 75 percent of patients with a BMI  $>40 \text{ kg/m}^2$  had an ICD-9 code for obesity.

"The disease of obesity is very prevalent yet too often underdiagnosed, which could be an important barrier to getting initial care," Burguera said in a statement. "By providing a formal diagnosis, we may be able to help people get the treatment they need to lose weight and get healthy."

The study was funded by Novo Nordisk.

**More information:** [Press Release](#)  
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