

# Obesity ups medical spending for long-term cancer survivors

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(HealthDay)—Among long-term cancer survivors, those with obesity

have an additional \$3,216 medical spending per person per year, translating to \$19.7 billion in 2016 in the United States, according to a study published online Aug. 19 in *Cancer*.

Xuesong Han, Ph.D., from the American Cancer Society in Atlanta, and colleagues estimated the excess health care utilization and [medical spending](#) associated with overweight and obesity among 12,547 long-term cancer survivors (at least two years after diagnosis) who were identified from the 2008 to 2016 Medical Expenditure Panel Survey. Average annual care utilization and spending was calculated by service type.

The researchers found that overweight survivors had comparable care utilization and medical spending relative to normal-weight survivors, while survivors with obesity had additional medical spending of \$3,216, including \$1,243 and \$1,130 on hospital inpatient services and prescriptions, respectively, per person per year. Among long-term cancer survivors, the excess annual medical spending associated with obesity translated to \$19.7 billion in 2016 in the United States. Cancer survivors with severe obesity had magnified excess spending (\$5,317, translating to \$6.7 billion in 2016). Comorbid conditions related to obesity mainly accounted for excess care utilization and medical spending.

"Our findings suggest that policies and practices promoting a healthy weight may reduce the [economic burden](#) for cancer survivors and the health care system," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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