

# Three-quarters of obesity costs to the US health care system accounted for by top 20%

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Obesity is known to approximately double health care costs for people in the U.S. compared to those with a healthy weight. A series of five studies presented at this year's European Congress of Obesity

(ECO2022), in Maastricht, Netherlands and online from 4–7 May, now shows that around three-quarters of the total obesity costs to the health care system among people living with obesity in the U.S. are accounted for by the 20% highest-cost cases.

The studies were conducted by Dr. Marc Evans, University Hospital, Llandough, Penarth, Cardiff, U.K., and Dr. Jonathan Pearson-Stuttard, head of health analytics at the data and analytics company Lane Clark & Peacock LLP, London, U.K., and colleagues.

The five studies covered an eight-year period and included 28,583 people living with obesity in the U.S. The authors conclude that: "[health care](#) costs and rates of hospitalization are greater for individuals in higher compared with lower obesity classes. Our results highlight the relationship between [body mass index](#) (BMI) and increasing use of health care resources and suggest that obesity progression may contribute significantly to the economic burden of the disease."

Adults (18 years and over) were identified in the IQVIA Ambulatory Electronic Medical Records database and linked to the IQVIA PharMetrics Plus administrative claims database, both commonly used databases for large scale research purposes. Individuals with a BMI measurement of 30–70 kg/m<sup>2</sup> during a baseline period (1 January 2007–31 March 2012), and with continuous enrolment in the [database](#) for at least one year before their baseline year and 8 years follow-up (up to 2020) were included in the analysis; those who were pregnant or had cancer at the start of the study were excluded. The index date was the date the person had their BMI measured.

Three cohorts were formed based on obesity class: (class I: BMI 30–

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