

# Healthy weight loss could lower your odds for cancer

June 25 2024, by Dennis Thompson

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Losing weight can protect you against cancers related to obesity, a new study finds. The findings are [published](#) in the journal *Diabetes*.

Obesity has been linked to a higher risk of at least 13 types of cancer, researchers said. This is largely due to excess levels of hormones like estrogen and insulin.

But study results show that dropping pounds can improve a person's odds against developing these cancers, including breast, kidney, ovary, liver and [pancreatic cancers](#).

"This study reinforces how crucial it is to treat [obesity](#) as a chronic disease," said researcher Dr. Kenda Alkwatli, a clinical fellow at Cleveland Clinic. "We are hopeful that these results can help us better understand how we can use [weight loss](#) to address co-morbidities, including cancer in patients with obesity."

For the study, researchers evaluated the [electronic health records](#) of more than 100,000 obese patients at the Cleveland Clinic, of whom more than 5,300 developed cancer. Researchers tracked changes in BMI at three-, five- and 10-year intervals prior to a person's cancer diagnosis and compared them against controls.

They found that losing weight could reduce a person's risk of developing most obesity-related cancers within a five-year span. For example, the risk of kidney cancer dropped within three years and [endometrial cancer](#) at three and five years. Multiple myeloma risk fell within 10 years.

What's more, losing weight also appeared to protect people against a range of 16 other cancers that haven't been linked to obesity, researchers found. These included melanoma and cancers of the skin, lungs, genitalia, eye, brain and digestive organs.

Researchers next intend to see if anti-obesity drugs like Wegovy and Zepbound can cut [cancer risk](#).

The researchers presented their results on Friday at the [American Diabetes Association's annual meeting](#) in Orlando, FL. Findings presented at medical meetings should be considered preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed journal.

**More information:** Kenda Alkwatli et al, 2071-LB: Reduced Risk of Obesity-Related Cancers with Real-World Weight Loss, *Diabetes* (2024). DOI: [10.2337/db24-2071-LB](https://doi.org/10.2337/db24-2071-LB)

The National Cancer Institute has more on [obesity and cancer](#).

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