

# obesity is the next women's health issue in the workplace

Leading health experts recognize that obesity is a chronic, treatable disease that impacts women's health. Employers have an important role to play in addressing obesity—**covering comprehensive obesity care, including obesity medications, is only fair.**

## obesity has a particular impact on women, especially women of color, across their lifespan

Obesity is associated with **over 200 other health complications**,<sup>1</sup> including:

- Anxiety, depression and other mental health issues<sup>2</sup>
- Breast, ovarian and endometrial cancers<sup>3</sup>
- Cardiovascular disease<sup>4</sup>
- Diabetes<sup>5</sup>
- Fertility and maternal health challenges
- Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)<sup>6</sup>

Obesity complications **disproportionately affect communities of color**, impacting:



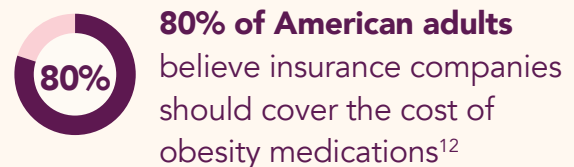
Recognizing and treating obesity as a chronic, treatable disease is **critical to advancing health equity**

## coverage of obesity care may improve employee retention and satisfaction


Coverage of obesity care **plays a role in job change decisions** for many employees:



Workers **want and expect** obesity care coverage:



Recruitment and retention are important goals for employers—and **benefits are a key factor:**

 Employers best able to attract and retain talent are those that **offer benefits addressing the evolving needs of their employees**<sup>13</sup>

## obesity can negatively impact women's experience in the workplace

At work, women living with obesity:

-  Are often **stigmatized** by coworkers<sup>8</sup>
-  Earn as much as **12% less money** than their colleagues<sup>9</sup>
-  Are **less likely** to be promoted<sup>10</sup>

## employers have a financial interest in covering obesity care

- ✓ People with obesity experience reduced productivity due to their disease, **costing employers an estimated \$101.06 billion**<sup>14</sup>
- ✓ Providing obesity care options may **increase worker productivity and save costs** for employers<sup>15</sup>
- ✓ Treating obesity may also help **prevent a range of other serious, costly illnesses**<sup>16</sup>



Diseases caused by overweight and obesity cost the U.S. health care system **\$1.72 trillion every year**<sup>17</sup>

## many employers are recognizing the value and importance of covering obesity care

**About half of employers** currently cover or are considering covering the latest generation of obesity medications<sup>18</sup>



The Federal Employee Benefit Plan (FEHB) covers obesity medications, preventative services and other treatments<sup>19</sup>

Employers and benefits managers **recognize the impact** of obesity medications

Major employer groups recognize obesity as a disease and have **issued recommendations supporting holistic obesity care coverage offerings**<sup>20,21</sup>

## employers can improve employee health through comprehensive obesity care coverage

To learn how you can support your employees with obesity, visit **[www.everybodycovered.org/employers](http://www.everybodycovered.org/employers)**



*The EveryBODY Covered campaign is a program of the Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention. Support for the campaign has been provided by Eli Lilly & Co.*

1 <https://www.ama-assn.org/topics/obesity>

2 <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41398-023-02447-w>

3 <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/obesity/obesity-fact-sheet>

4 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/obr.13127>

5 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3066828/>

6 <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/overweight-and-obesity/women>

7 <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/health-statistics/overweight-obesity>

8 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5358077/>

9 <https://www.obesityaction.org/wp-content/uploads/Understanding-Obesity-Stigma-Brochure20200313.pdf>

10 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6452122/>

11 <https://21917313.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/21917313/White%20Papers/9amHealth-2024%20Trend%20Report.pdf>

12 <https://milkeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/ModernizingCareObesityChronicDiseaseAHowToGuideEmployers240419.pdf>

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14 <https://data.worldobesity.org/economic-impact-new/countries/#US>

15 [https://journals.lww.com/joem/abstract/2010/01001/a\\_multi\\_worksite\\_analysis\\_of\\_the\\_relationships.9.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/joem/abstract/2010/01001/a_multi_worksite_analysis_of_the_relationships.9.aspx)

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17 [https://milkeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/reports-pdf/Mi-Americas-Obesity-Crisis-WEB\\_2.pdf](https://milkeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/reports-pdf/Mi-Americas-Obesity-Crisis-WEB_2.pdf)

18 <https://www.ifebp.org/docs/default-source/pdf/resources--news/pulse-surveys/survey-glp-drugs-2024.pdf>

19 <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/carriers/fehb/2023/2023-01.pdf>

20 <https://www.nationalalliancehealth.org/news/national-alliance-of-healthcare-purchaser-coalitions-releases-employer-recommendations-to-address-obesity-coverage/>

21 <https://www.businessgrouphealth.org/resources/practical-playbook-managing-overweight-and-obesity>

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