

# WELLNESS WORKS

## OBESITY AWARENESS

### ADDRESSING THE ISSUE WITH EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMS

Obesity is on the rise, with two in three adults in the United States categorized as either obese or overweight, and one in five U.S. children suffering from the same condition. But the drastic changes to diet and exercise needed to improve this condition aren't easy. It requires behavioral and lifestyle changes that take self-discipline and determination as well as education and resources to understand how to make these changes safely. Taking advantage of the obesity prevention program offered by your employer can have a huge impact on your efforts.

### Get with the Program

Your doctor can be very influential in the process of losing weight or obesity prevention, and an office visit is the first place to start. Your doctor can encourage you, counsel you about strategies and recommend medicinal aids. If you do not have a regular practitioner, your health plan provider can recommend a physician who has a proven track-record of success.

Regular physical activity can help with weight loss when combined with lower calorie intake. By focusing on eating fruits and vegetables and avoiding saturated fats, you can begin to change your dietary habits to reflect a healthier lifestyle. Participating in 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity five days a week along with muscle-strengthening activities twice a week will give you more energy, improve sleep quality and lower health risks. Finding a support system at work, home or in your community can help keep you on the right path.




### Special points of interest

- 66% of adults, 20% of children are obese or overweight
- Start with a doctor's visit
- 30 minutes, 5 days a week

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The cost of obesity in the United States is as high as \$147 billion a year.

Obesity awareness programs are most effective when introduced at an early age. Many experts believe healthy eating habits are established during gestation and should be encouraged throughout the growing years. Teaching children how to prepare healthy food and encouraging them to participate in physical activities exponentially increase their chances of being healthy adults.

## See the Benefits

According to the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the current generation of children will be the first in America to have a shorter lifespan than their parents' generation, thanks largely to obesity-related diseases. Being either obese or overweight increases your risk for contracting many chronic diseases, including high blood pressure, heart disease, type-two diabetes, certain cancers and stroke.


Obesity is a significant driver of increased medical costs, and undermines your health

and financial well-being. The cost of obesity in the United States is as high as \$147 billion per year, or 9.1% of total medical spending in this country.

While no health plan has a 100% success rate, participating in an obesity prevention wellness program through your employer can help you on your journey toward a healthier lifestyle.

Preventable diseases make up about 70% of all illnesses in the United States. This greatly impacts the cost of health care. Chronic and preventable illnesses are often related to lifestyle choices such as poor eating habits. The good news is that employees want to improve their health. Participation in wellness programs is increasing as employees take personal steps to battle rising health care costs.

For more information on obesity awareness, please visit [www.nahueducationfoundation.org](http://www.nahueducationfoundation.org).



*Taking advantage of programs offered by your employer can have a major impact.*



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