

# ACCESS TO CARE

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Today, more than 93 million adult Americans are living with obesity. Many do not know obesity is disease and that their healthcare provider can help them with weight-loss and maintenance. Others do not have insurance coverage to help them pay for these healthcare options.

Everyone should have access to healthcare. Access should not be limited by a person's size, weight or economic status. Access to care is not a complicated idea. It can mean different things for different people, but in the end, it is about people getting the help they need to treat obesity.

**Access to care begins with seeing obesity as a chronic disease diagnosed by a healthcare provider. Obesity is not someone's fault or their job to manage alone.**

## People with obesity can face barriers when it comes to access to care.

### INSURANCE DENIALS

Very few insurance companies pay for obesity care and weight management options such as:

- Bariatric surgery
- Medical weight management
- Consultations with dietitians



### ACCEPTING CARE

It may be hard for some people to accept obesity care from a healthcare provider. This can be from:

- A negative care experience in the past
- A belief that they need to lose the weight on their own
- Unsuccessful weight-loss in the past



### IMPROPER EQUIPMENT

People with obesity deserve medical equipment that meet their needs. Individual needs can vary, but often include:

- Scales
- Blood pressure cuffs
- Exam gowns



### AVAILABLE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

A team of healthcare providers who understand obesity medicine can give the best care. This team can include:

- Physicians
- Nurse practitioners and Physician Assistants
- Registered dietitians



### These barriers can include:

### REQUIRED STEPS FOR INSURANCE COVERAGE:

Many insurance companies have requirements to qualify for obesity care coverage. Requirements can be:

- Referrals
- Long wait times
- Mandatory weight-loss



### SCIENCE-BASED CARE

There is no miracle cure for obesity. However, effective, science-based treatment options and intensive behavioral therapies do exist. Receiving these options is not possible if your healthcare provider does not know about them.



### AVAILABLE LIFELONG CARE

Obesity is a chronic disease. Patients deserve access to lifelong obesity care even if the weight maintenance period has been reached.



### WHOLE PERSON CARE

Patients need effective and respectful care no matter what health condition(s) they have. Treatment for the flu or back pain should not be dependent on a patient's weight or size.



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