

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) BEING OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE



COVID-19 has created a perfect storm for people who struggle with weight and even for those who didn't in the past. It's easy to see how weight gain during the pandemic increased. **Boredom, anxiety, and stress eating have surged. There has been less physical activity for many people.** Comfort food recipes have been trending on Google. There is so much baking going on, supermarkets couldn't keep baking supplies and mixes in stock. You find yourself thinking that a cookie sounds good—or a beer. Now people are becoming concerned about **"Quarantine 15" (referring to new pounds gained).**

Being overweight/obese is turning out to be one of the key indicators that a person will have a particularly bad run-in with COVID-19. One study found people with body mass indexes over 30 are at much greater risk for hospitalization, intensive care, and death. Another showed that people under age 60 are 2-3 times more likely to be admitted to the hospital for COVID-19 if they are overweight or have obesity.

More than one-third of adults in the U.S. are obese. 36.5% of adults have obesity. Another 32.5 % of American adults are overweight. In all, more than two-thirds of adults in the United States are overweight or have obesity. People who are overweight have a BMI of 25 to 29, people who have obesity have a BMI of 30 or greater. We have a weight/obesity epidemic in the midst of a pandemic.



Many factors can influence a patient's outcome: **Fat can physically compress parts of the lungs, impeding respiration.** In the hospital, it can **make calculating medication doses, inserting intravenous tubes and moving patients more difficult. It can stimulate parts of the body's hormonal system, worsening COVID-19,** which often provokes a powerful inflammatory response itself. **Being overweight is associated with a wide range of other chronic conditions from heart disease to diabetes, that increase vulnerability to the worst impacts of the infection.**

People with a high BMI should take extra care to avoid getting sick. Be extra cautious - wear your mask, wash your hands and avoid large gatherings. **There are things you can do to improve your health and reduce potential COVID-19 outcomes. Losing 5-10% of your body weight is enough to have an impact.** It doesn't take much weight loss to make a difference in lowering your health risks. You don't have to become a slim Jim to benefit. **Talk to a doctor about lifestyle and nutritional changes to promote weight loss.** Start off taking small steps which will ultimately result in big change. **Taking these small steps is worth it!**

