

Chronic Obesity Prevention and Education Alliance (cHOPE)

Weigh Beyond the Scale Campaign

Obesity in California has been a long-standing chronic health concern for 30 percent of our state's population. Adults impacted by obesity have an increased risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and most recently COVID-19 complications, just to name a few. Due to social stigmas and the assumption that obesity is a lifestyle choice, people suffering from obesity are often ignored and given less-than ideal treatment for their chronic disease. Factors leading to having obesity include:

- genetics
- medication side effects (corticosteroids, antidepressants, seizure meds, etc.)
- stress
- thyroid issues
- hormone changes and imbalances (menopause, eating trigger hormones, etc.)
- living conditions (food deserts, outdoor exercise safety issues, etc.)
- poor sleep
- food addiction
- early life conditioning

Decreasing weight in individuals who have obesity can immediately improve diabetes, heart disease, fertility, liver health, mental health, ability to participate in physical activity, work, productivity, & overall quality of life & longevity.

Action Items

- Discuss weight issues with your health care provider and ask for the support you need.
- Providers should diagnose your condition through testing and a thorough medical history as they would for any chronic disease.
- Health plans should ensure that providers have access to the full array of tools available to help treat this chronic condition.
- Review and consider supporting the Obesity Treatment Parity Act SB 1008 (Bradford).

Alliance Goal

Obesity should be recognized as a chronic disease by patients, providers, and the health insurance community. Patients and their health care providers should have access to the full array of tools available to help them improve this illness including:

- an analysis of all the issues contributing to the disease
- testing for issues contributing to the illness
- lifestyle factors
- medications (for all conditions including anti-obesity medications or AOMs)
- surgical options

