

# Statement From American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) President Monica M. Bertagnolli, MD, FACS, FASCO, on New Findings on Obesity and Cancer

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"Rates of obesity-related cancers are rising most sharply among young adults, but this study should serve as a wake-up call to all Americans – young and old alike – that obesity is linked to an increased risk of common cancers. If current trends continue, it is estimated that obesity will lead to more than 500,000 additional cases of cancer each year in the United States by 2030.

"Obesity is set to overtake tobacco as the leading cause of preventable cancer-related death, and there is an alarming lack of awareness among the American public of the link between obesity and cancer. ASCO's 2018 [National Cancer Opinion Survey](#) found that while 80% of Americans know that smoking cigarettes is a risk factor for cancer, only 35% realize that obesity is a major risk factor too.

"We need to educate people of all ages that obesity is a risk factor for cancer and inform them of the steps they can take to decrease the likelihood of developing the disease. ASCO provides resources to help physicians educate and care for their patients on the importance of maintaining a healthy weight. The Society also shares information on obesity and cancer through its medical meetings, patient website, [Cancer.Net](#), journals and other avenues.

"In addition, more research is needed to address the obesity epidemic in our country and understand its relationship to various cancers. Just this past week ASCO issued its first-ever set of [Research Priorities to Accelerate Progress Against Cancer](#). Among the priorities, ASCO identified the reduction of obesity and its impact on cancer incidence and outcomes as a critical area on which to focus future research efforts.

“We must also recognize that the obesity epidemic and cancer is not just a crisis in the U.S., but a global one. On World Cancer Day, ASCO joins the global oncology community as we reaffirm our commitment to reducing the global burden of cancer through research and high-quality patient care.”

## **About ASCO:**

Founded in 1964, the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc. (ASCO®) is committed to making a world of difference in cancer care. As the world’s leading organization of its kind, ASCO represents nearly 45,000 oncology professionals who care for people living with cancer. Through research, education, and promotion of the highest-quality patient care, ASCO works to conquer cancer and create a world where cancer is prevented or cured, and every survivor is healthy. ASCO is supported by its affiliate organization, the Conquer Cancer Foundation. Learn more at [www.ASCO.org](http://www.ASCO.org), explore patient education resources at [www.Cancer.Net](http://www.Cancer.Net), and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

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