

What Is Obesity Costing You?

Sometimes celebrities or otherwise physically fit people will put on a fat suit and document their experience with a video camera, usually to be aired on a daytime talk show. The overall impression is universal: Being severely overweight is taxing on almost every level, says Dr. Eleazar Kadile, who specializes in treating patients with obesity and associated chronic disease.

“Physically, emotionally, mentally and even spiritually, being obese is an ever-present condition to the experience my clients face every day,” says Dr. Kadile, director of the Center for Integrative Medicine and author of “Stop Dying Fat.”

“Obesity is a vicious cycle that usually starts with bad eating habits during childhood. Childhood obesity has quadrupled in recent decades. I don’t think enough of us appreciate how established bad habits are before most obese people reach adulthood.”

Overweight or obese people often eat for comfort when they’re depressed or as a reward when things are going well, “much like an alcoholic,” says Dr. Kadile.

Like substance abusers, obese people pay a significant price.

- **Bigger is costlier.** Many are emotional eaters, and when you eat for emotional satisfaction rather than physical satiation, you eat more, which increases the dollars spent. Obese people often have to buy clothes specially tailored for their size, which adds costs. The biggest cost, however, is healthcare due to bad health. Obesity has severely taxed our country’s healthcare costs.
- **What’s your self-esteem worth?** Being a large individual often proves challenging in public, as daytime talk shows sometimes attest. Obesity can keep you from social

engagements and make you feel self-conscious while out and about. This can lead to depression and lack of activity, fueling the vicious cycle of the obese lifestyle.

- **Time—arguably the most important metric.** What do we really have in life? Money, work, love, relationships and material goods—these are all good and necessary things. But they are all for not if your health does not permit you to live long enough to enjoy them.
- **Opportunities, quality of life and happiness are compromised.** You can be the most qualified professional at work, but obesity can cost you a raise. You may be a funny, intelligent and attractive person, but being too big might keep you from finding love. Simply having 100 or 200 pounds of extra fat is a burden obese people cannot escape throughout their waking existence.

“As a society, we should be more compassionate toward obese individuals—they have it hard enough without our critical judgment,” Dr. Kadile says. “If you are obese, you owe it to yourself and your loved ones to save on the associated tangible and intangible costs. If you don’t take action today, it can cost you many days from your future that you’d otherwise have.”

Dr. Eleazar Kadile is a complementary physician who specializes in treating patients with obesity, who may suffer from heart disease, hypertension, type-2 diabetes, arthritis, depression or ADHD. With decades of medical experience throughout the United States, he has been developing a comprehensive and systematic approach to battling obesity. He is the director of the Center for Integrative Medicine in Green Bay, Wis. ().