

it easier for cars than pedestrians, walkers, runners and bikers. Schools have reduced recess time, opting to bus kids to school — rather than walking — and serve processed foods for lunch. Workplaces have become more sedentary due to increases in technology. Even our homes are jam-packed with conveniences that don't require as much manual labor as in the past — garage door openers, remote controls for TV, etc. And if that wasn't enough, there is evidence that if your closest friend is obese, your likelihood of becoming obese increases by 57 percent³.

Experts suggest there are more than 50 diseases linked to obesity including several cancers, diabetes, heart conditions, arthritis, and depression. And, many of these health risks and chronic conditions are avoidable. These persistent conditions lead to lifelong disability, compromised quality of life, premature death that could have been prevented, and burgeoning health care costs.

OBESITY IS LINKED TO HIGH-COST CONDITIONS



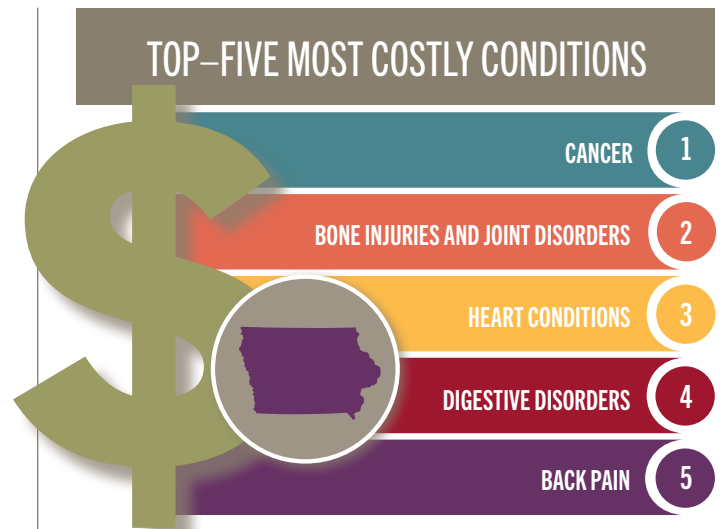
CONDITIONS OF IOWANS

Obesity is a common, underlying factor that contributes to the most costly conditions among Wellmark members in Iowa. Some conditions are more prevalent than others.

The top-five most costly conditions include:

Cancer: Topping the list is one word you hope you never hear: cancer. Last year, 17,140 new cancer cases were diagnosed in Iowa⁴. There is no denying that this is a life-changing diagnosis. And with numbers like this, it is hard not to know someone who has been impacted by this disease. But did you know that

³ <http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMs066082>
⁴ <http://www.cancer.org/research/cancerfactsstatistics/cancerfactsfigures2015/>
⁵ <http://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/obesity/obesity-fact-sheet>
⁶ <https://costprojections.cancer.gov/annual.costs.html>



obesity can contribute to various forms of cancer? Obesity is associated with increased risk of several types of cancers including: esophageal, pancreatic, colon and rectum, breast (after menopause), endometrial, kidney, thyroid, and gallbladder⁵. Although there are some variances in cost by the cancer type and severity, the costs are high and no one wants to face this challenge. The average cost to treat pancreatic cancer, as an example, is \$187,544⁶.

Bone injuries and joint disorders: The second most costly category is bone injuries and joint disorders. The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association reports the average cost for a knee replacement is \$31,124 and hip replacement is \$30,124. It should be no surprise that excess weight places strain on bones, muscles and joints leading to serious injuries, disabilities or diseases that could have been prevented, creating a healthier, pain-free life.

Heart conditions: Heart disease develops quietly over time, and its effects can be costly or even deadly. You may not have high blood pressure or high cholesterol, but that doesn't mean you are not at risk. Because heart disease knows no limits, take the first step by standing on the scale. Even a few extra pounds can be hard on your heart. This means your heart needs to pump harder to supply blood to all your cells. Your heart can suffer from the increased workload leading to other heart conditions such as abnormal heart rhythm, heart attack or heart failure. The national average for bypass surgery hovers around \$50,000.

Digestive disorders: The health of your digestive system has a lot to do with lifestyle — the food you eat, the amount of exercise you get, and the level of daily stress. Paying attention to these factors alone can improve your overall quality life and fend off any digestive disorders.

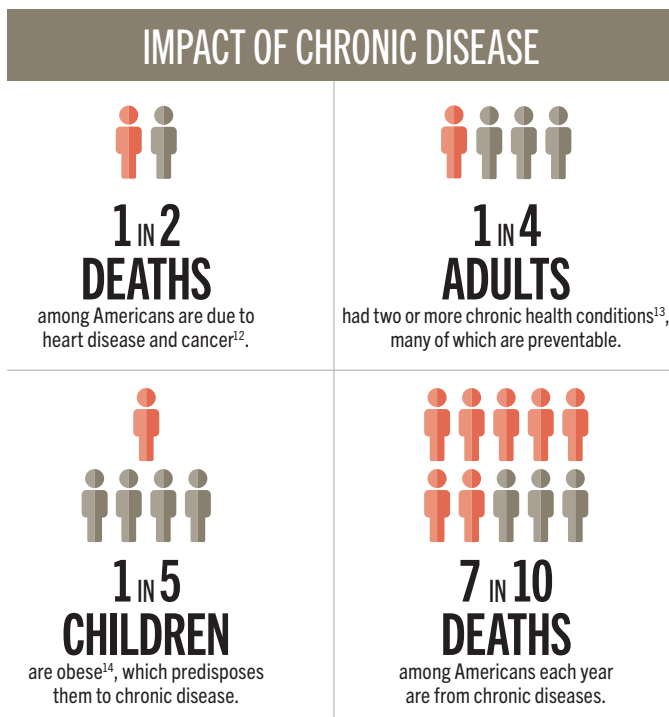
Research also shows that people who are obese may have more digestive problems⁷. Obesity is also a contributing factor for those with acid-related disorders. However, not all digestive disorders are a result of lifestyle. For example, some digestive diseases, like Crohn’s disease, can be hereditary. Your chances of getting it are higher if a close family member has the disease. Drugs used to treat Crohn’s disease and other gastrointestinal conditions can cost upwards of \$20,000 annually⁸.

Back pain: There is a common misperception that back pain is only age-related. And, it is true with age, your body changes based on the physical demands placed on it throughout the years. However, your back and spine become even more susceptible if you carry excess weight. Did you know, the average cost for a herniated disc surgery is approximately \$13,000⁹? Also, recent studies have shown that sitting for long periods of time can be deadly¹⁰. Sitting or sedentary activities such as driving, using the computer or watching TV, shouldn’t comprise more than four to five hours of a person’s day. Adhering to this will not only reduce the strain placed on the back, it can improve your overall lifestyle.

OBESITY CONTRIBUTES TO CHRONIC DISEASES

Several conditions that fall into the most costly categories are also considered chronic diseases. A chronic disease is defined as a condition that lasts three months or more and generally cannot be prevented by vaccines or cured by medication¹¹.

Chronic diseases are impossible to reverse — you don’t want to get one. The good news is there are several things you can do to prevent this from happening.



PREVENTIVE CARE CAN INFLUENCE OUTCOMES

One out of every two Wellmark members in Iowa is taking advantage of preventive care visits that encourage an ongoing relationship with a doctor and, help to identify health problems before they become more serious. It is important to schedule these visits even when you are not sick. The choice is simple — invest the time now to stay in good health or pay for it down the road. A healthy lifestyle not only gives back physically but also financially.

HOW CAN YOU GET STARTED TODAY?

Get up and get moving!

Did you know performing a physical activity at a level equivalent to brisk walking for up to 75 minutes per week can add 1.8 years in life expectancy relative to no leisure time activity¹⁵? And if you are active above 150 minutes of brisk walking per week — it could add 3.4 – 4.5 years to your life? This is because increasing your physical activity helps reduce your risk of obesity and chronic conditions that negatively impact your health.

That doesn’t mean you need to go from doing nothing to running a marathon. It simply means adding a little more movement in a way that fits into your lifestyle.

- Try walking to a destination that is only a few blocks away instead of driving. For example, walk to church, school, work or the grocery store.
- Opt for the stairs instead of the elevator.

In fact, the U.S. Surgeon General is calling on Americans to be more physically active and for the nation to better support walking and walkability for people of all ages and abilities¹⁶. Simply put, walking for better health may seem simplistic, but sometimes the most important things we can do are also the easiest and most obvious¹⁷.

Iowa’s Healthiest State Initiative has a variety of resources and tools designed for individuals, schools, worksites and communities to make it easier for Iowans to get moving and live healthier. Visit www.iowahealthieststateinitiative.com to learn more.

⁷ American Gastroenterological Association (2002, reapproved 2008). AGA technical review on obesity. *Gastroenterology*, 123(3): 882-932. [Erratum in *Gastroenterology*, 123(5): 1752.]
⁸ <http://www.webmd.com/ibd-crohns-disease/cd-help-with-drug-costs>
⁹ <http://www.medpagetoday.com/painmanagement/backpain/10874>
¹⁰ <http://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/news/20150119/too-much-sitting-can-be-deadly-even-if-you-exercise-review-finds#1>
¹¹ National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
¹² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Death and Mortality. NCHS FastStats Web site. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/deaths.htm>.
¹³ Ward BW, Schiller JS, Goodman RA. Multiple chronic conditions among US adults: a 2012 update. *Prev Chronic Dis*. 2014;11:130389. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd11.130389>
¹⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NCHS Obesity Data. http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/factsheets/factsheet_obesity.htm.
¹⁵ <http://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1001335#abstract2>
¹⁶ <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/walking-and-walkable-communities/exec-summary.html>
¹⁷ <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/walking/call-to-action/pdf/slideset.pdf>

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 - Qualified interpreters
 - Information written in other languages

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Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, los servicios de asistencia de idiomas se encuentran disponibles gratuitamente para usted. Comuníquese al 800-524-9242 o al (TTY: 888-781-4262).

注意: 如果您说普通话, 我们可免费为您提供语言协助服务。请拨打 800-524-9242 或 (听障专线: 888-781-4262)。

CHÚ Ý: Nếu quý vị nói tiếng Việt, các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí có sẵn cho quý vị. Xin hãy liên hệ 800-524-9242 hoặc (TTY: 888-781-4262).

NAPOMENA: Ako govorite hrvatski, dostupna Vam je besplatna podrška na Vašem jeziku. Kontaktirajte 800-524-9242 ili (tekstualni telefon za osobe oštećena sluha: 888-781-4262).

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlose sprachliche Assistenzdienste zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 800-524-9242 oder (TTY: 888-781-4262).

تنبيه: إذا كنت تتحدث اللغة العربية, فإننا نوفر لك خدمات المساعدة اللغوية, المجانية. اتصل بالرقم 800-524-9242 أو (خدمة الهاتف النصي: 888-781-4262).

ສິ່ງຄວນເອົາໃຈໃສ່, ພາສາລາວ ຖ້າທ່ານເວົ້າ: ພວກເຮົາມີບໍລິການຄວາມຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາໃຫ້ທ່ານໂດຍບໍ່ເສຍຄ່າ ຫຼື 800-524-9242 ຕິດຕໍ່ທີ່. (TTY: 888-781-4262.)

주의: 한국어 를 사용하지는 경우, 무료 언어 지원 서비스를 이용하실 수 있습니다. 800-524-9242번 또는 (TTY: 888-781-4262)번으로 연락해 주십시오.

ध्यान रखें : अगर आपकी भाषा हिन्दी है, तो आपके लिए भाषा सहायता सेवाएँ, नि:शुल्क उपलब्ध हैं। 800-524-9242 पर संपर्क करें या (TTY: 888-781-4262)।

ATTENTION : si vous parlez français, des services d'assistance dans votre langue sont à votre disposition gratuitement. Appelez le 800 524 9242 (ou la ligne ATS au 888 781 4262).

Geb Acht: Wann du Deitsch schwetze duscht, kannscht du Hilf in dei eegni Schprooch koschdfrei griege. Ruf 800-524-9242 odder (TTY: 888-781-4262) uff.

โปรดทราบ: หากคุณพูด ไทย เรามีบริการช่วยเหลือด้านภาษาสำหรับคุณโดยไม่มีคิดค่าใช้จ่าย ติดต่อ 800-524-9242 หรือ (TTY: 888-781-4262)

PAG-UKULAN NG PANSIN: Kung Tagalog ang wikang ginagamit mo, may makukuha kang mga serbisyong tulong sa wika na walang bayad. Makipag-ugnayan sa 800-524-9242 o (TTY: 888-781-4262).

တစ်ခုခုရှိပါက-နမူနာကတိကဝတ်ကိုင်ကိုင်, ကိုကိုတစ်ခုတစ်ခုတစ်ခုတစ်ခု, လာလာတတ်လတ်တတ်, ဆိုလိုလားကိုလိလိ, ဆေးကျိုးဆူ ၈၀၀-၅၂၄-၉၂၄ ဖုန်းနံပါတ် (TTY: ၈၈၈-၇၈၁-၄၂၆) တက်ပါ။

ВНИМАНИЕ! Если ваш родной язык русский, вам могут быть предоставлены бесплатные переводческие услуги. Обращайтесь 800-524-9242 (телетайп: 888-781-4262).

सावधान: यदि तपाईं नेपाली बोल्नुहुन्छ भने, तपाईंका लागि नि:शुल्क रूपमा भाषा सहायता सेवाहरू उपलब्ध गराइन्छ। 800-524-9242 वा (TTY: 888-781-4262) मा सम्पर्क गर्नुहोस्।

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HEETINA To a wolwa Fulfulde laabi walliinde dow wolde, naa e njobdi, ene ngoodi ngam maada. Heb'ir 800-524-9242 malla (TTY: 888-781-4262).

FUULEFFANNA: Yo isin Oromiffaa, kan dubbattan taatan, tajaajiloonni gargaarsa afaanii, kaffaltii malee, isiniif ni jiru. 800-524-9242 yookin (TTY: 888-781-4262) quunnamaa.

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