



*Architectural Form of Future Ideal Landscape, painting by Enrico Prampolini / WikiArt*

## Consumer Insights into the Far-Reaching Effects of New Obesity Medicines

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June 3, 2025

# Disclosures

- **Professional fees**
  - Boehringer Ingelheim
  - Emerald Lake Safety
  - Novo Nordisk
  - Nutrisystem
  - Roman Health Ventures
- **Personal biases that favor:**
  - Evidence-based interventions, both prevention and treatment
  - Respect for people living with obesity
  - Critical thinking about all evidence

# Presentation Objectives

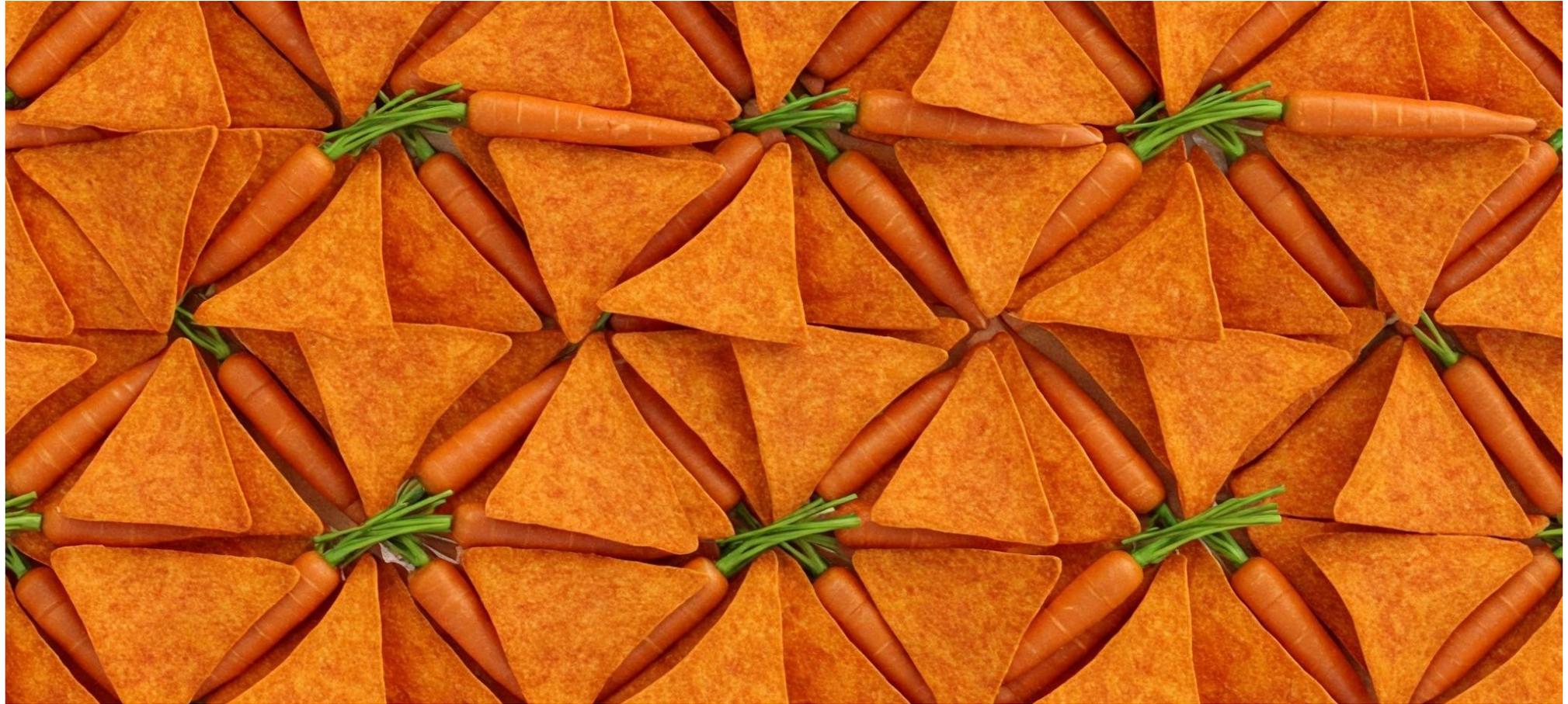
Examine the far-reaching effects of new obesity medicines on:

- The lived experience of obesity
- Social and economic behavior
- Food and consumer marketing
- Health systems
- Public discourse about obesity

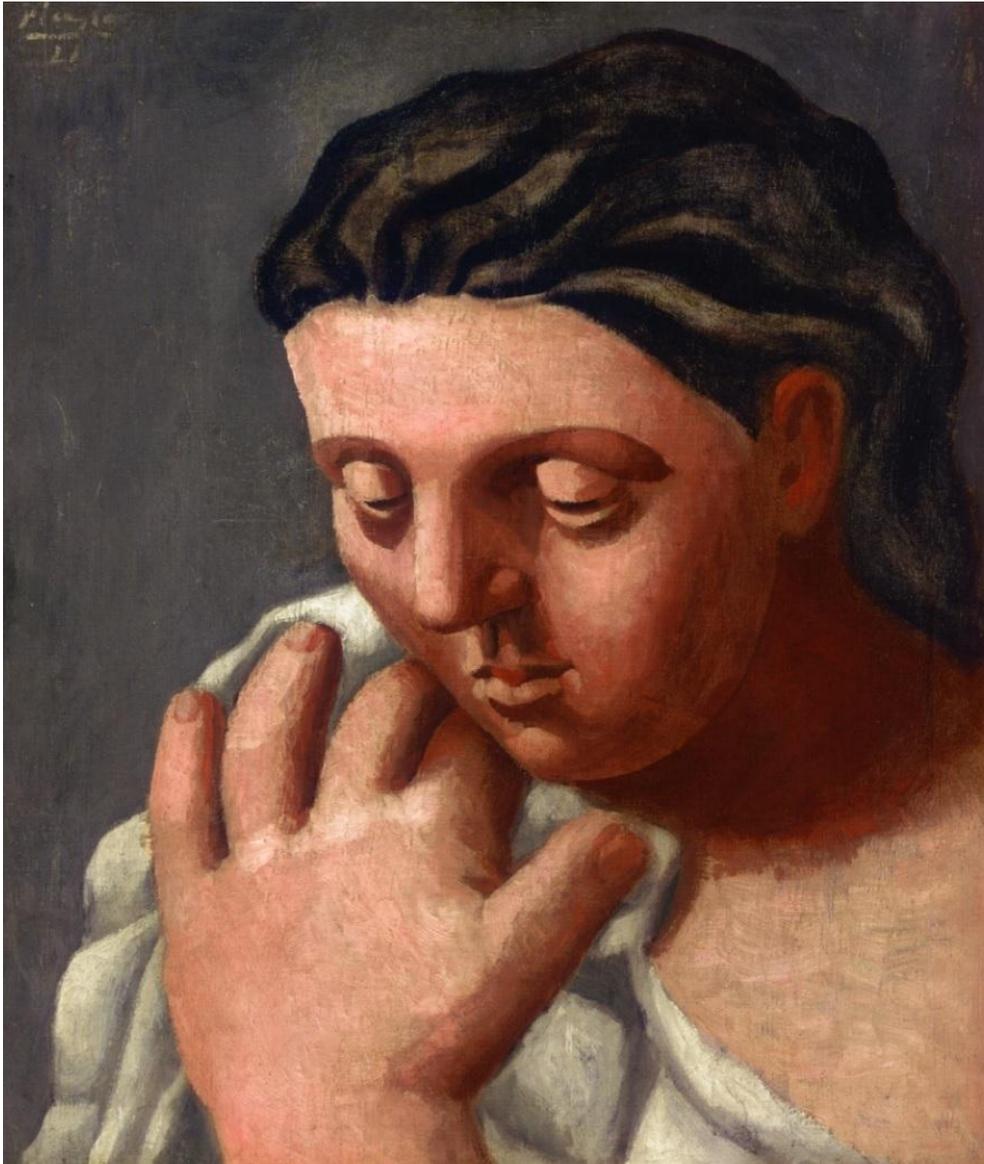


*High Trestle Trail Bridge, photograph by Tony Webster / Wikimedia Commons*

# Scanning for Patterns in Observational Data

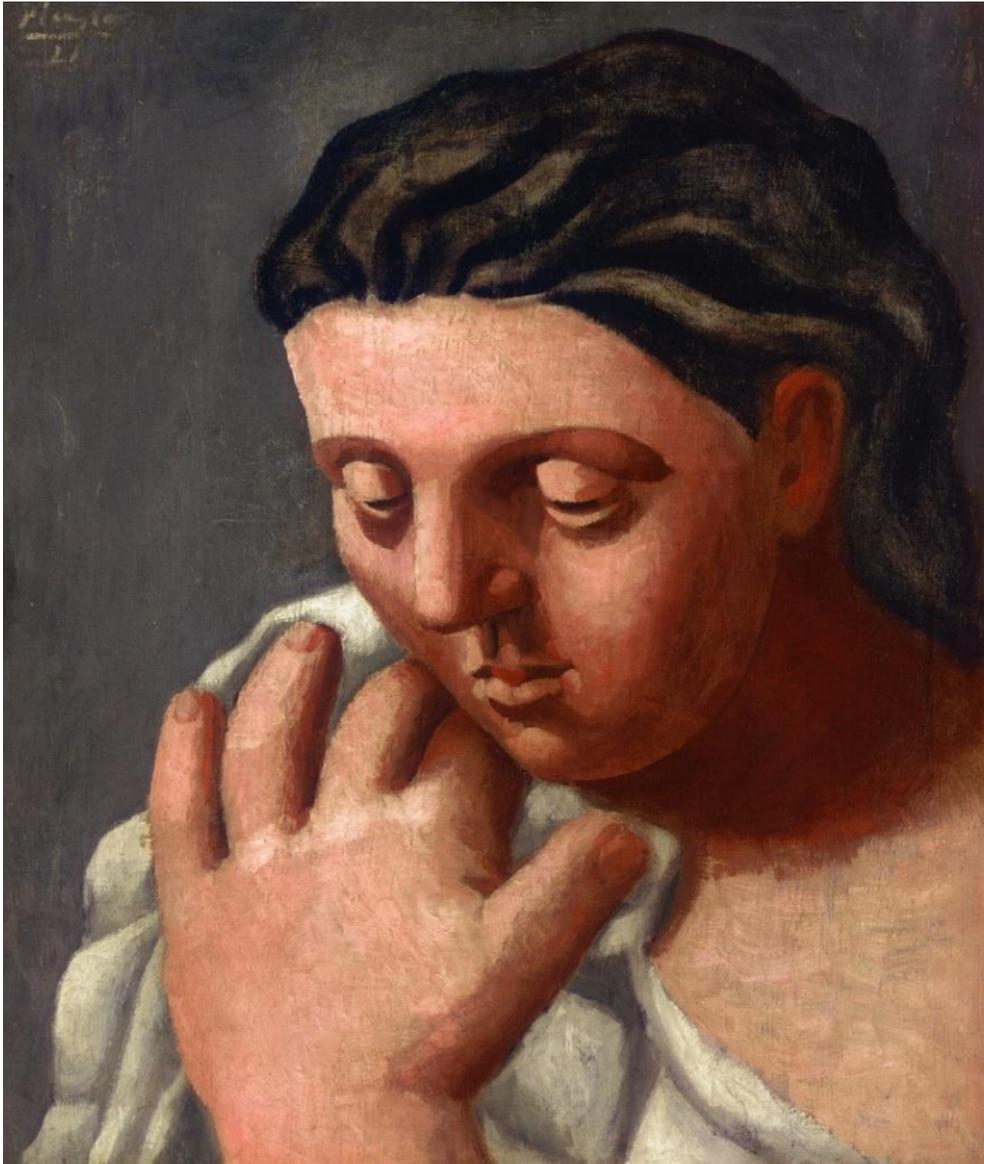


*Tessellation of Carrots and Chips, illustration from Gemini AI image generation*



*Woman's Head and Hand, painting by Pablo Picasso / WikiArt*

## The Far-Reaching Effects of New Obesity Medicines: **The Lived Experience of Obesity**



Woman's Head and Hand, painting by Pablo Picasso / WikiArt

“The lived experience of obesity is clearly much more complex than the typical societal narrative, and just like in other areas of healthcare, the lived experience offers a richness of information that should be better understood and translated. This may also help to regain compassion and empathy in both wider and focused healthcare approaches related to obesity.”

– Flint et al in *Diabetes, Obesity and Metabolism*, 2025

## These Drugs Move Many People to Say They Are Life-Changing

*“ Even though I started taking it for my heart health, I’ve been struck by how much better it has made me feel across the board. It’s made a significant impact on my overall health. Aches, pains and stiffness have vanished. Physically, I feel a decade younger, as well as clearer-headed and more optimistic than I’d been in years. As far as side effects, I’ve also lost around 20 pounds.*

*And it’s not just me; millions of Americans have experienced similar life-changing benefits, regardless of why they started on these medications. ”*

The New York Times

# John Fetterman: This Drug Changed My Life. More Americans Need Access.

April 8, 2025



# Weight-loss drugs draw Americans back to the doctor

By Deena Beasley

December 16, 2024 8:58 PM EST · Updated 5 months ago



## More People Are Seeking Care

“This is a population that previously felt stigmatized by health care providers and often didn't return. But now that they're actually seeing themselves get healthier, asking clinicians questions and engaging more, I do think we're seeing new patients.”

– Obesity Medicine Physician Rekha Kumar,  
interviewed by Deena Beasley for Reuters,  
December 17, 2024

# But These Medicines Are Out of Reach for Many People



Apple Out of Reach, illustration from ChatGPT 4o image generation

“The initiation of newer obesity medicines in overweight and obesity remains low, but uptake has increased exponentially since 2022. Our findings reveal significant disparities in obesity care, highlighting the importance of addressing inequities in obesity medicine access to improve obesity outcomes.”

– Radwan et al in *Diabetes, Obesity and Metabolism*, 2025



*Rose and Amélie, painting by Edvard Munch / WikiArt*

## The Far-Reaching Effects of New Obesity Medicines: **Social and Economic Behavior**

# Social Interactions and Economic Priorities Are Shifting



*Table Set and Ready, photograph by El Ronzo, CC BY-ND 2.0*

# Eating Is a Social Behavior and These Medicines Have a Profound Effect



The New York Times

Account ▾

## Group Dining on Ozempic? It's Complicated.

As the use of GLP-1s soars in popularity, diners are wrestling with new restaurant etiquette dilemmas — and adjusting accordingly.



NY Times, May 12, 2025, Alyson Krueger



# Eating Is a Social Behavior and These Medicines Have a Profound Effect

“Diners on GLP-1s are figuring out which types of restaurants they feel comfortable visiting; how to leave food on their plates without insulting the chef or their dining companions; and how to get the most value out of the experience. Those not on the drugs are contending with the pros and cons of going out with people who don’t do much eating.”

*Group Dining on Ozempic, NY Times, May 12, 2025, Alyson Krueger*

# Food Preferences and Purchasing Patterns Change



Food Quality and Preference

Volume 129, August 2025, 105507



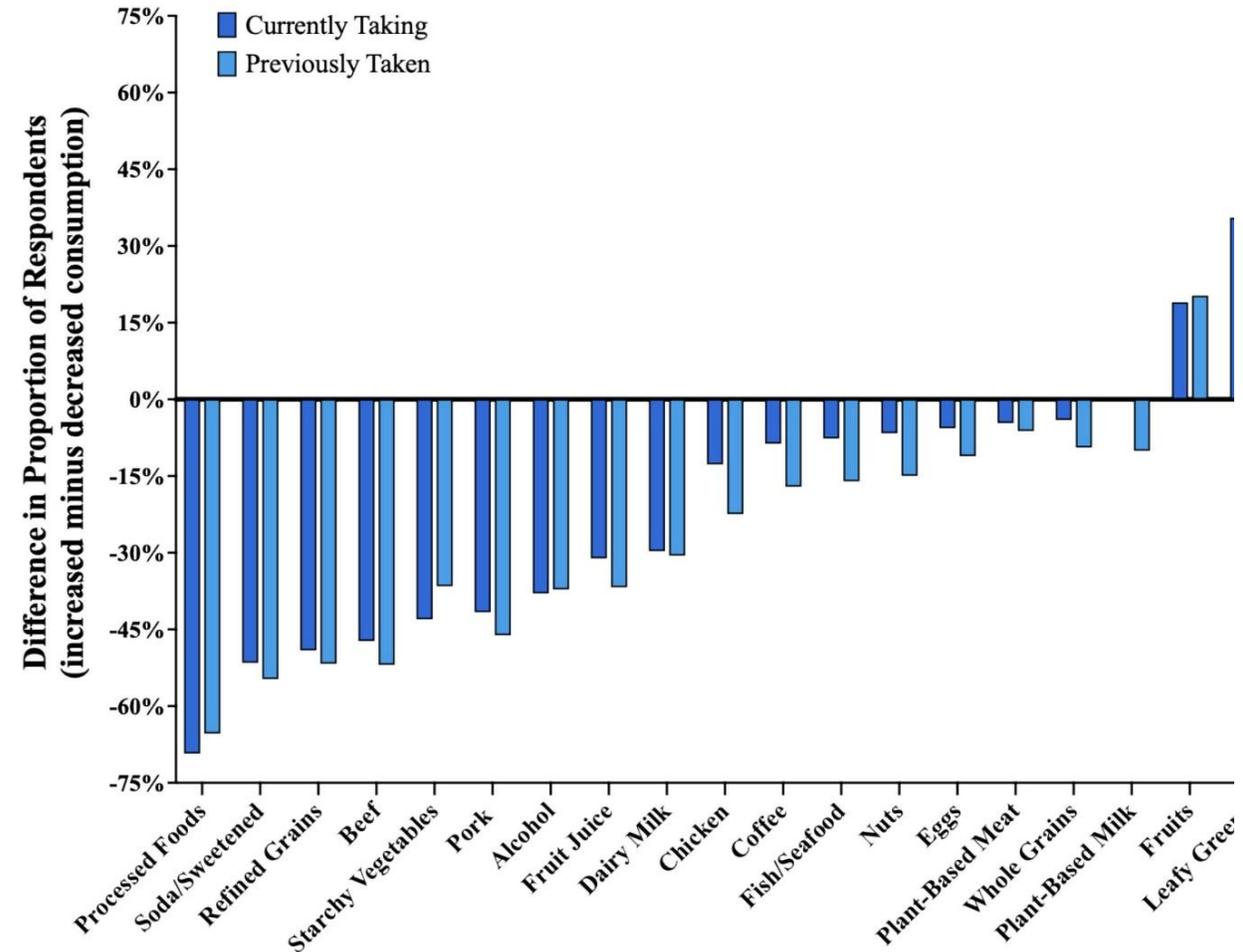
Short Communication

## Characteristics and food consumption for current, previous, and potential consumers of GLP-1 s

Andrew Dilley <sup>a</sup>, Saroj Adhikari <sup>a</sup>, Pratikshya Silwal <sup>a</sup>, Jayson. L. Lusk <sup>b</sup>,  
Brandon R. McFadden <sup>a</sup>  

# Food Preferences and Purchasing Patterns Change

- Individuals taking GLP-1 agonists consume less food
- Reduced consumption of
  - Processed foods
  - Sugar-sweetened beverages
  - Refined grains and beef
- Consumption of water, leafy greens, and fruits rose



Dilley et al, Food Quality & Preference, 13 March, 2025, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0



Food Market, photograph by Angelo Benedetto, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 via flickr

# The Far-Reaching Effects of New Obesity Medicines: Food and Consumer Marketing

# Food Marketing Is All About Adapting to Shifting Consumer Needs



The New York Times

Account ▾

## In the Ozempic Age, Has 'Craveable' Lost Its Selling Power?

The food industry has long touted its products as impossible to resist. But with a spotlight on the perils of compulsive eating, that tactic is getting another look.



NY Times, January 16, 2024, Kim Severson

# Food Marketing Is All About Adapting to Shifting Consumer Needs



NY Times, November 19, 2024, Tomas Weber

# Food Marketing Is All About Adapting to Shifting Consumer Needs

“Right now, the industry’s adaptation to Ozempic is in its infancy. A few companies have tested the waters: Nestlé, for example, has started a line of frozen meals targeted at people taking GLP-1s called Vital Pursuit — frozen pizzas, sandwich melts and chicken bowls with ‘a sharper focus on smaller portions.’”

*NY Times, November 19, 2024, Tomas Weber*

# Food Marketing Is All About Adapting to Shifting Consumer Needs



Photo by Ted Kyle / ConscienHealth

“For food brands, any group with a particular set of unfulfilled desires is a market waiting to be addressed, and in Reddit and Facebook communities for people taking these drugs, those newly prescribed ask the same few questions constantly. Chiefly among them: **‘What do you guys on these meds eat?’**”

– Amanda Mull, *Food Companies Want a Piece of the Ozempic Pie, Too*, Bloomberg, May 28, 2024

# Market Forces May Prompt Food Marketing to Shift from Volume to Quality



*Woman at a Vegetable Stand, painting by Pieter Aertsen / WikiArt*



*Old Bourke Hospital Bed, photograph by Matthew Perkins, CC BY-NC 2.0 via flickr*

## The Far-Reaching Effects of New Obesity Medicines: **Health Systems**

# Since Forever, Health Systems Assumed Preventing Obesity Could Be Simple

1974

“Most Obesity Could, with Care, Be Prevented”

doi: [10.1016/S0140-6736\(74\)93004-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(74)93004-9)

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THE LANCET

Volume 303, Issue 7845, 5 January 1974, Pages 17-18

## Infant and Adult Obesity

OBESITY is the most important nutritional disease in the affluent countries of the world. In the absence of an internationally agreed criterion for diagnosis an exact figure for prevalence cannot be given, but surveys in Britain and the United States show that about a third of the population is overweight to an extent associated with diminished life expectancy.<sup>1</sup>

The exact significance of hyperplastic and hypertrophic obesity is still not clear, but on balance the evidence suggests that we need to be more vigilant in preventing obesity throughout childhood. Probably the obese adult can never be “cured”, but most obesity could, with care, be prevented.

doi: [10.1016/S0140-6736\(74\)93004-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(74)93004-9)

# And Treatment Was Seen as Futile

April 28, 1993

**JAMA**<sup>®</sup>

## **Futility and Avoidance**

### Medical Professionals in the Treatment of Obesity

Arthur Frank, MD

*JAMA*. 1993;269(16):2132-2133. doi:10.1001/jama.1993.03500160102041

#### **Abstract**

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**T**WENTY years ago, I changed course in my internal medicine practice and decided, rather deliberately, to work on the problem of obesity. My friends, my colleagues, and my family thought I was crazy. The warnings were clear. "Don't risk your credibility and your career." "Don't venture into a part of medicine that no one takes seriously." "Don't move into the world of quacks and charlatans."

# So Health Professionals Rarely Even Diagnosed It



JAMA Internal Medicine

Research Letter

FREE

February 9, 2009

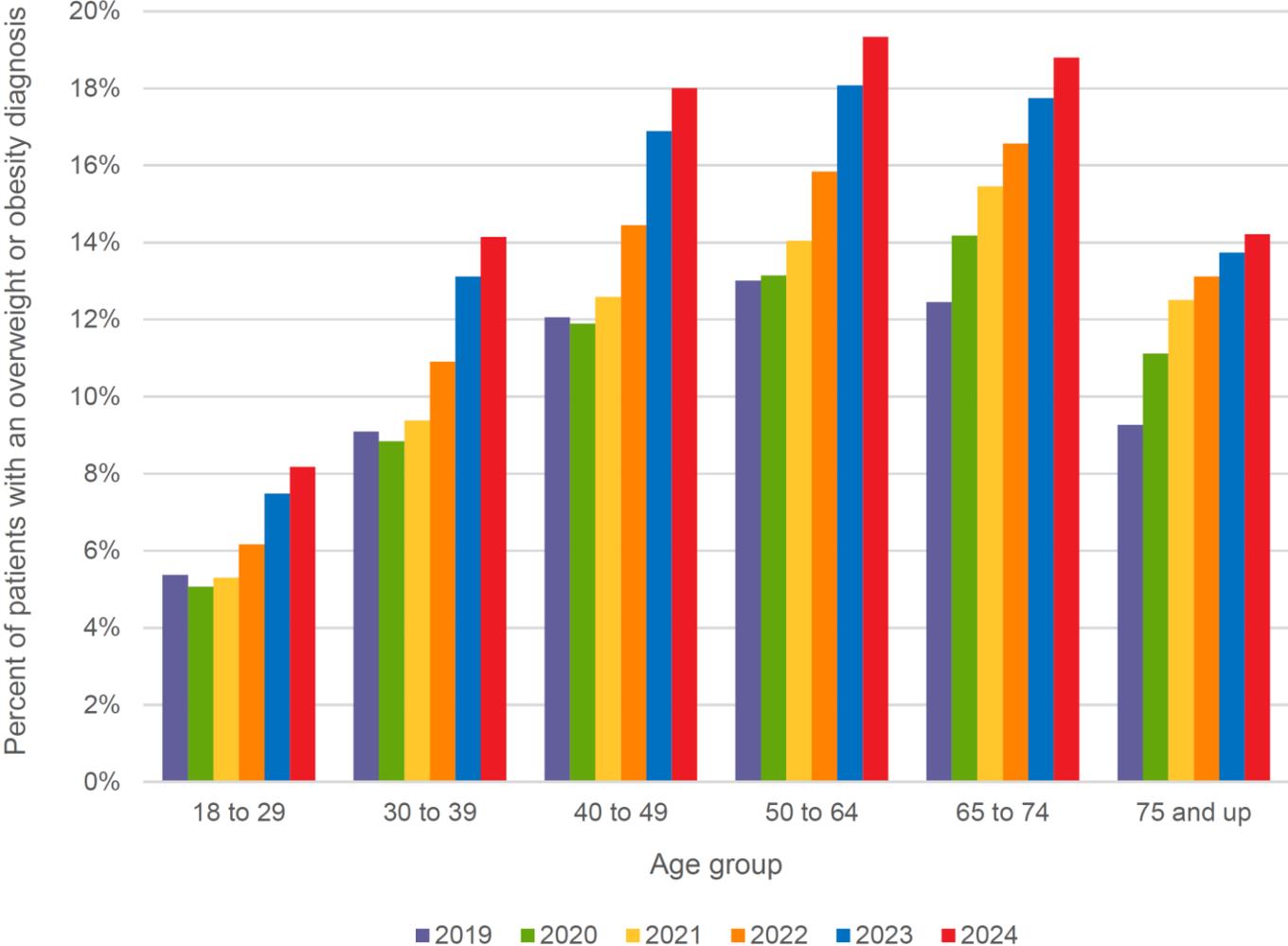
## Underdiagnosis of Obesity in Adults in US Outpatient Settings

Jun Ma, MD, PhD; Lan Xiao, PhD; Randall S. Stafford, MD, PhD

Article Information

*Arch Intern Med.* 2009;169(3):312-316. doi:10.1001/archinternmed.2008.582

# With GLP-1s Approved for Obesity, the Rate of Diagnosis Has Risen 50% in Just Five Years



Source: FAIR Health white paper, Obesity and GLP-1 Drugs, May 27, 2025

# Health Systems Can't Yet Deliver Obesity Care at Scale

## Obesity Care at Scale Will Profoundly Change Health Systems

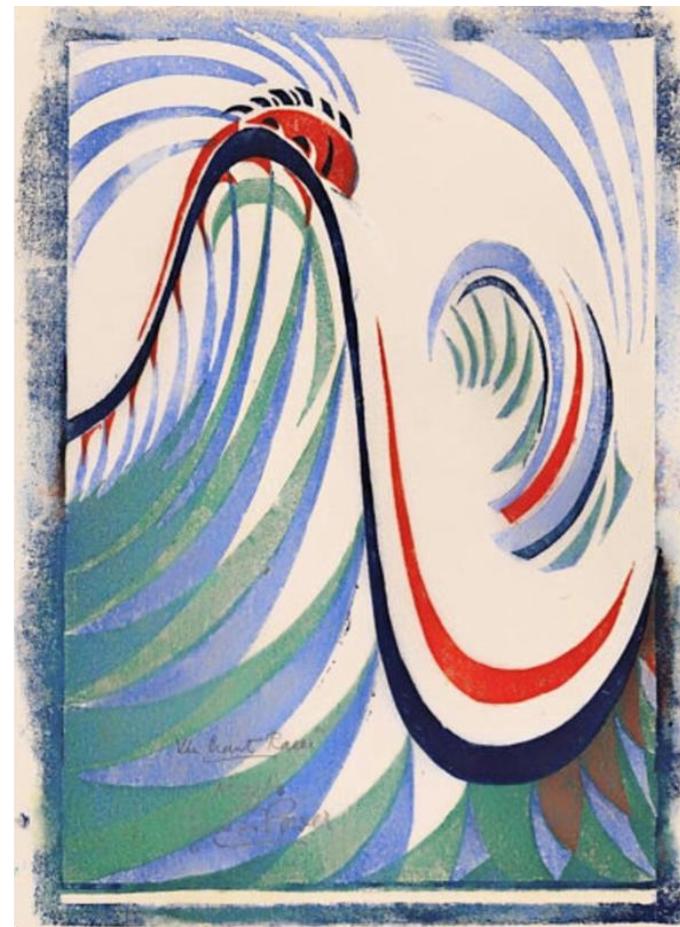
Think about it. Profound change is coming to healthcare and health systems because of the imperative for obesity care at scale. Right now, we are seeing only a faint glimmer of the changes that lie ahead.

That's because the biggest struggles with this change are very basic. Lilly and Novo Nordisk are straining to produce enough of their new obesity medicines to meet long-suppressed demand for obesity treatment. Only after these companies and their competitors begin to meet the demand will the full magnitude of change be apparent as it ripples through health systems.

### The First Wave

The first wave of change to healthcare is most apparent in primary care and metabolic surgery.

Primary care has been so ill-equipped to provide adequate obesity care that many patients are seeking care in other settings. The most obvious of these is [telemedicine](#). Innovators like Ro, Form Health, and many others are investing in providing credible obesity care. If persons with obesity [may feel less stigma](#) in this setting, then this option may be a force for positive change.



# Payers Are Desperate to Limit Access

The New York Times

OPINION  
GUEST ESSAY

## The Miracle Weight-Loss Drug Is Also a Major Budgetary Threat

March 4, 2024



# But Resistance Is Futile

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HEALTH | PHARMA

## Should Everyone Be Taking Ozempic? Doctors Say More People Could Benefit

Anti-obesity drugs are showing promise for ever-expanding list of diseases

By *Peter Loftus* May 25, 2025 10:00 pm ET

# But Resistance Is Futile

BenefitsPRO.

## Survey: 36% of employers now cover GLP-1s for weight loss & diabetes

The average representation of GLP-1 drugs used for weight loss in total annual claims was 10.5% for 2025, an increase over the 2024 average of 8.9%.

By **Alan Goforth** | May 27, 2025 at 11:49 AM



*Talk Talk, photograph by Thomas Hawk, CC BY-NC 2.0 via flickr*

## The Far-Reaching Effects of New Obesity Medicines: **Public Discourse About Obesity**

# The Once-Dominant Bias About Obesity Is Fading

*The best place to start is by simply telling the patient the truth.*

*“Sir or Madam, it’s not OK to be obese. Obesity is bad. You are overweight because you eat too much. You also need to exercise more. Your obesity cannot be blamed on the fast food or carbonated beverage industry or on anyone or anything else.*

***You weigh too much because you eat too much.  
Your health and your weight are your responsibility.”***

Robert Doroghazi, MD

*AJM*, Mar 2015

# More People Are Telling Their Story and Putting a Face on the Lived Experience of Obesity



Nathalie, photograph © Garen Dibartolomeo



Original Article |  Open Access |  

## Blatant Dehumanization of People with Obesity

Inge Kersbergen , Eric Robinson

First published: 02 April 2019 | <https://doi.org/10.1002/oby.22460> | Citations: 45

### Conclusions

This study provides the first evidence that people with obesity are blatantly dehumanized. This tendency to consider people with obesity as less human reveals the level of obesity stigma and may facilitate and/or justify weight discrimination.

# Most People Now Reject Explicit Weight Bias

Dimension	Explicit Bias Trend 2007-2020	Implicit Bias Trend 2007-2020
Sexuality	↓	↓
Race	↓	↓
Skin Tone	↓	↓
Age	↓	↔
Disability	↓	↔
Weight	↓	↑ ↔

*Explicit bias no longer goes unnoticed, but implicit bias is sneaky and prevalent*

Source: Charlesworth & Banaji, 2022, *Psychological Science*

# Effective GLP-1 Therapies Reveal the Flaws in Thinking Obesity Is Simply a Problem of Bad Behaviors

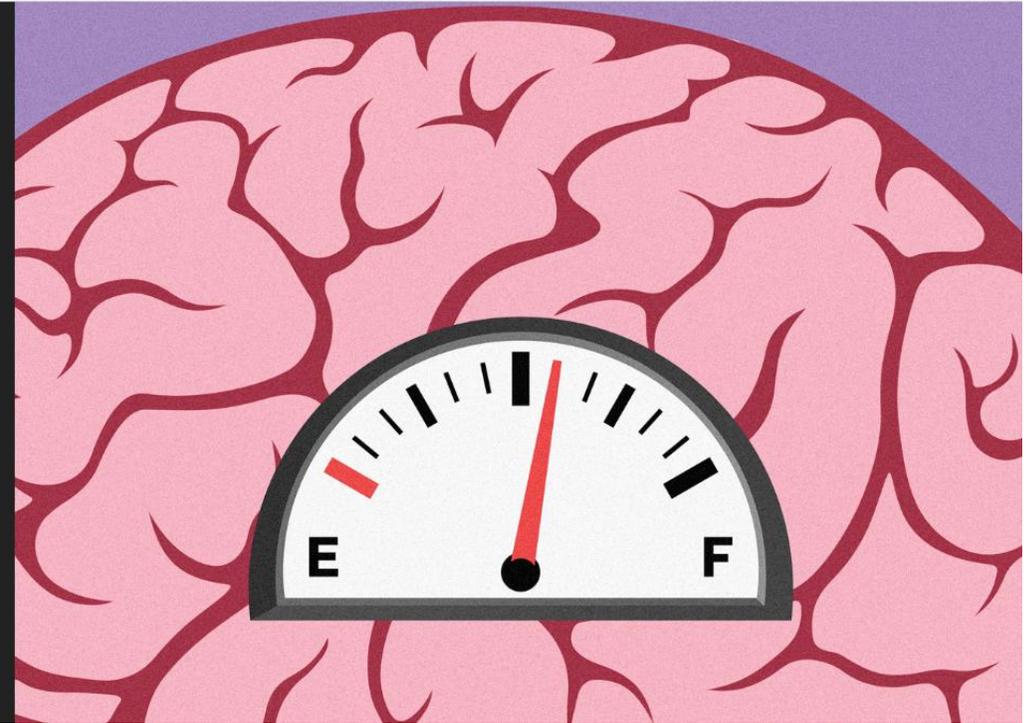
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### Ozempic Settles the Obesity Debate: It's Biology Over Willpower

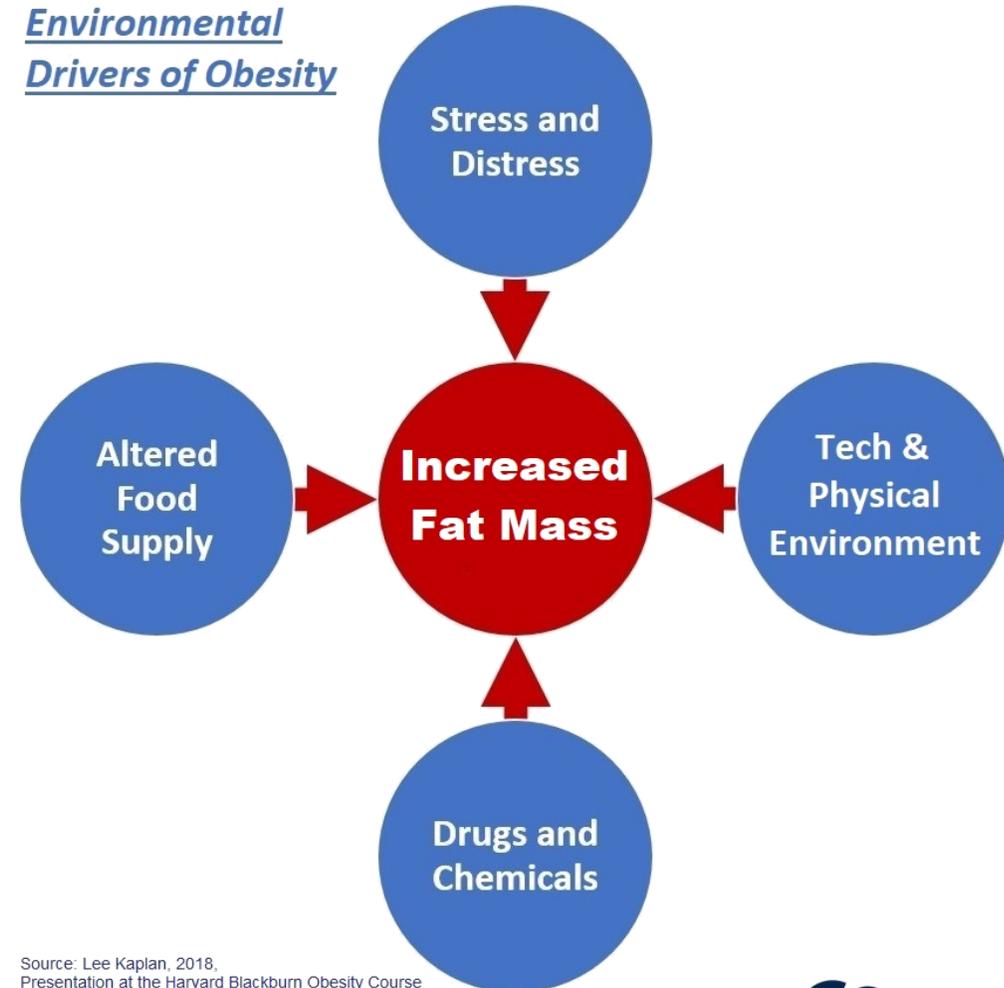
Weight-loss drugs affect the brain in ways that help researchers understand how the body regulates weight



# Increasingly People Understand Multiple Factors Are Driving Obesity

*Multiple factors are driving obesity rates*

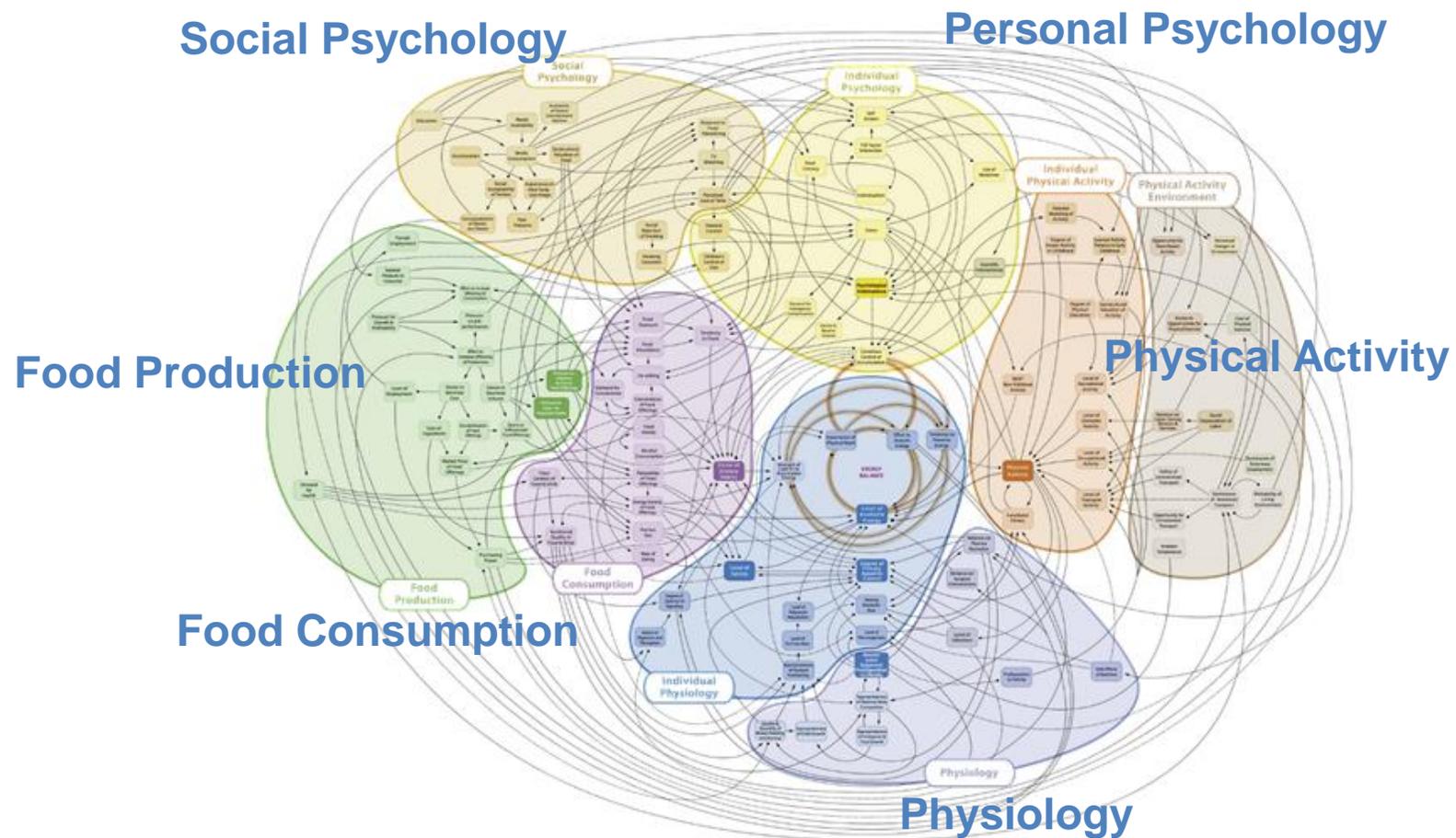
Environmental Drivers of Obesity



Source: Lee Kaplan, 2018,  
Presentation at the Harvard Blackburn Obesity Course

# Increasingly People Understand Multiple Factors Are Driving Obesity

*Those factors interact with complex adaptive systems to drive obesity rates*



# Barriers to Obesity Care Are Fading As Understanding of Obesity Grows



Obesity Research & Clinical Practice

Volume 18, Issue 2, March–April 2024, Pages 94-100



Benefits managers' attitudes toward  
obesity treatment coverage

*“Findings suggest that understanding obesity as a condition caused by biological factors as opposed to personal responsibility and behavior is associated with greater support for coverage of all its treatments..”*

# In Summary

## Some Things Are Changing Greatly

- Lived experience more visible
- More options for obesity care
- Shifting dietary behaviors
- Food market dynamics
- Pressure on health systems
- Fading explicit bias
- Growing understanding of obesity



*Farm Woman, painting by Pablo Picasso / WikiArt*

# Some Sticking Points Remain

- Persistent implicit bias
- Inequitable access to care
- Inadequate systems for delivering obesity care at scale



*Farm Woman, painting by Pablo Picasso / WikiArt*

# More Information

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