

Institute of Health Economics and Management/ Economic Evaluation
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Highlight/Publication:

Yates N*, Teuner CM*, Hunger M, Holle R, Stark R, Hauner H, Peters A, Wolfenstetter SB. The Economic Burden of Obesity in Germany: Results from the Population Based KORA Studies. *Obes Facts* 2016;9:397–409.

PSP Element:

G-505300-002

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Keywords:

Obesity, Overweight, Excess costs, Bottom-up approach, Germany

Central statement of the highlight in one sentence:

Based on a large pooled data set and measured BMI, our results show that overweight and obesity are associated with enormous societal direct and indirect costs in Germany and increase significantly according to the degree of obesity.

Text of the highlight:

Background: The high prevalence of obesity is a concern due to various medical consequences, including increased mortality and their associated costs mostly incurred by increased utilisation of medical services, increased sick leave and early disability-linked retirement.

Results: We pooled data of five cross-sectional KORA studies resulting in 9,070 observations for 6,731 individuals (31-96 years). Based on self-reported health care utilisation and work absence we estimated direct and indirect costs for the year 2011 and analysed these costs according to (measured) BMI.

Results showed that total direct medical costs were monotonously increasing with increasing BMI group, with a significant increase compared to the normal-weight group ($18.5 \leq \text{BMI} < 25 \text{ kg/m}^2$) for obese class I to III ($\text{BMI} \geq 30 \text{ kg/m}^2$), but not for the pre-obese group ($25 \leq \text{BMI} < 30 \text{ kg/m}^2$). Looking at the single cost components, this is especially obvious regarding costs for general practitioner visits and medication. Indirect costs associated with being unfit for work, in contrast, were significantly higher already for the pre-obese group of participants and increased further for obese class II and III participants.

Up to now, no data has been available for Germany based on accurate BMI measurements, which also permits costs to be differentiated for the higher BMI groups.

In future research, we will examine these results according to further characteristics such as age, gender, social status etc. in order to identify further clues regarding targeted prevention.

Taking account of the HMGU mission:

Obesity is a major risk factor for various diseases, especially for type II diabetes mellitus and puts substantial economic pressure on the German health care system. Detailed

knowledge about the costs of chronic diseases is needed for resource allocation and decision making in health care.

The internal HMGU co-operation partners with whom the highlight was compiled, if appropriate:
Institute of Epidemiology II

The Economic Burden of Obesity in Germany

Institute of Health Economics and Management (IGM)

Annual direct and indirect costs by BMI class (in €)

