



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT ON

# Obesity

Obesity ranks behind only tobacco use as a leading cause of preventable death in the United States. Associated with a long list of diseases and health issues that impose an enormous burden on patients, their families, and the healthcare system as a whole, obesity can lead to diabetes, heart disease, certain cancers, musculoskeletal conditions, and sleep disorders.

**36.5%** of adults in the United States are obese.

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

## Research Addressing Questions That Matter

PCORI funds **comparative clinical effectiveness research (CER)** to determine which healthcare options work best for which patients, based on their needs and preferences. CER produces evidence that helps people make better-informed healthcare choices.



### PATIENT

After talking to my doctor I've decided to get bariatric surgery to help me lose weight. But

I'm not sure which of the three types of surgery we talked about would work best for me. How can I know which will help me lose the most weight with the least complications?



### PATIENT

I'm pregnant with my first child and have been reading parenting books to learn about what to

expect. Is it true that giving my baby antibiotics in the first two years of her life will increase the chance she becomes obese?

## STUDY SPOTLIGHTS

### Improving Childhood Obesity by Learning from Success Stories

This study is designing and testing a clinical program to improve the health of overweight children in underresourced communities. The program builds on successful strategies learned from children and their families in disadvantaged communities who have succeeded in achieving a healthier weight. The team is testing whether this new program works better than standard care. It is led by Elsie Mireya Taveras, MD, MPH, of Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts.

### Midwestern Collaborative for Treating Obesity in Rural Primary Care

This study in rural Kansas, Nebraska, Wisconsin, and Iowa is testing a lifestyle intervention for obesity provided by primary care physicians against two other approaches in which care is delivered by obesity treatment specialists. In one, the specialists provide care in a patient-centered medical home setting, and in the other they provide the intervention in a disease-management setting. It is led by Christie Befort, PhD, of the University of Kansas Medical Center Research in Fairway, Kansas.

## Building Capacity for Patient-Centered Research

To support high-quality patient-centered research for years to come, PCORI is investing in people and infrastructure to build **PCORnet<sup>®</sup>, the National Patient-Centered Clinical Research Network**. PCORnet enables faster, more efficient research by harnessing data representing 100 million patients and 130 partnerships among patients, clinicians, and healthcare organizations.



Research teams are using PCORnet's secure data network to conduct two large obesity studies, one on weight loss surgery and the other on antibiotics' relationship to childhood obesity. Each will generate findings from reviews of tens of thousands of anonymized medical records.

The **PCORnet Bariatric Study** is comparing the three main methods of weight loss surgery to provide information on the comparative benefits and potential risks of each procedure. **The PCORnet Obesity Observational Study: Short- and Long-term Effects of Antibiotics on Childhood Growth** is looking at the effects of the types, amounts, and timing of antibiotics given to infants and young children on their weight in later childhood.

As of November 2020, PCORI has awarded

**\$87** MILLION TO FUND **19**

comparative clinical effectiveness research studies related to obesity.

### BY THE NUMBER OF PROJECTS

#### Areas of Care Addressed



#### Special Populations Included

