



## What Does Obesity Have To Do With Workers' Comp?

The findings of a study released by Duke University Medical Center last year indicate that “gaining too much weight can be as bad for an employer’s bottom line as it is for a person’s waistline.” Qualifying this, the report continued, “A Duke University Medical Center analysis found that **obese workers filed twice the number of workers’ compensation claims, had seven times higher medical costs from those claims and lost 13 times more days of work** from work injury or work illness than did non-obese workers.”

The study looked at workers who had at least one medical checkup from 1997 – 2004, and found only six worker’s comp claims were filed per 100 workers of normal BMI, compared with more than 11 claims filed per 100 of the heaviest workers.

Medical claims costs per 100 workers were as follows:

Normal BMI:	\$7500
Overweight:	More than \$13,900
Mildly Obese:	More than \$19,000
Moderately Obese:	More than \$23,300
Severely Obese:	More than \$51,000 per 100 very obese workers

The LoneStart Employee Wellness Initiative is a behavioral-based, high-impact strategy that provides honest information, creates realistic expectations and challenges your employees to make better, modest but meaningful lifestyle choices, and incrementally increase their level of physical activity. This proven initiative can effectively reduce employee health costs and absenteeism while fostering teambuilding and boosting employee morale. It is cost-effective and works equally well as a stand-alone initiative or as a “jumpstart” to existing yet underperforming wellness programs.