

FROM THE SOCIETY

Obesity as a Disease: The Obesity Society Council Resolution

The Council of The Obesity Society recognizes that obesity is a complex condition with numerous causes, many of which are largely beyond an individual's control. It also recognizes that obesity causes much suffering, ill health, and earlier mortality, and that persons with obesity are subject to enormous societal stigma and discrimination.

Whether obesity should be declared a disease is a topic on which thoughtful arguments have been expressed on both sides of the issue. We believe that considering obesity a disease will: (1) benefit our citizenry by soliciting more resources for prevention and treatment of, and research on, obesity, (2) encourage health-care professionals to view treating obesity as a vocation worthy

of effort and respect, and (3) reduce the stigma and discrimination experienced by many persons with obesity. After extensive dialogue and careful consideration, the Council concludes that it is the official position of The Obesity Society that obesity should be declared a disease. The Obesity Society will henceforth refer to obesity as a disease and encourages others to do so.