



Milan Declaration



A STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF OBESITY
MADE AT THE 9TH EUROPEAN CONGRESS ON OBESITY, MILAN, ITALY. JUNE 3-6 1999

CALL FOR ACTION ON OBESITY

PREAMBLE

There is great concern about the serious health, social and economic impact of overweight and obesity on individuals and communities within Europe and the rest of the world.

Current estimates indicate that among European adults the prevalence of obesity is on average 15% and in many countries it is rising. In addition a substantial proportion of Europeans are already overweight when judged against WHO criteria. The effect is uneven across Europe. There are very high rates of obesity of 40-50%

in some areas, with national rates ranging from 5-22%. No country has been able to avoid the impact of this widespread disease.

Despite this health burden, few European countries have a comprehensive national strategy for the prevention of weight-related disease or the management of individuals who suffer an existing weight problem. Of particular concern is the proportion of children within Europe who are classified as overweight. Their future health and well being is being put at risk through inaction on this issue.

The current high prevalence and trends in obesity reflect changing lifestyles in a changing environment throughout Europe. The comprehensive management and prevention of obesity can only be achieved by promoting healthier lifestyles, with improved activity levels, a reduction in sedentary lifestyles and improved dietary habits.

STATEMENT

In view of the urgent need for action to deal with the epidemic of obesity and weight-related health issues, we members of the European Association for the Study of Obesity, with the support of others, call on governments and health agencies in Europe to:

- recognize that overweight and obesity are major causes of ill health which present a huge social and economic burden to communities within Europe
- immediately begin the process of developing comprehensive national and European strategies for action on obesity which take into account the needs of each country, build upon existing initiatives and are based on sound evidence of benefit

- support continued research and analysis of the problem of overweight and obesity that will inform the development of improved obesity prevention and management strategies
- increase the provision of health services with professional staff qualified to treat obesity

We also resolve to:

- provide leadership, support and guidance to governments and agencies towards the development of coherent national and Europe-wide strategies for the prevention and management of overweight and obesity

SIGNATORIES

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