EAS O
European Association for the Study of Obesity

PEOPLE-FIRST LANGUAGE

Because of the importance of reducing bias associated with obesity, EASO and our partner organizations urge *everyone* to use people-first language

Person-first language is the standard for respectfully addressing individuals with chronic conditions. Rather than labeling people by their disease, physicians, clinicians and scientists recognise the need to understand and address the unique barriers to dialogue associated with obesity. The public and popular media reporting on obesity also benefit from tools to help avoid weight bias and stigma.

We expect person-first language to be the standard in our publications, public presentations, events and activities.

Hurtful and offensive words should be avoided, and terms preferred by patients should be used – for example, descriptive terms such as weight, BMI and waist circumference are more appropriate than fat, fatness and heaviness. To reduce negative feelings, it can be helpful to emphasise that obesity is a clinical term rather than a description of physical appearance.

Weight

(rather than heaviness)

Weight management problem

(rather than excess fat)

BMI

(rather than large size)

Unhealthy body weight

(rather than fatness)

Unhealthy BMI

(rather than overweight status)

USEFUL EXAMPLES

"My patient is affected by obesity"
instead of "My patient is obese"

"The man with obesity was on the walking path"
instead of "The man on the walking path was very obese"

APPROPRIATE IMAGES

The use of balanced and sensitive visual content is crucial in helping to reduce obesity–related prejudice and stigma in the media. A range of appropriate image banks can be found at
easo.org/media-portal/obesity-image-bank