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**Obesity Linked to Higher Hospital Charges, Longer Hospital Stays and Higher Rates of Surgical Intervention in Orthopaedic Trauma Patients**

*Obese patients had lower injury severity scores*

**NEW ORLEANS**—Approximately one-third of the American population is obese and the number is rising, as is the number of obese individuals involved in high-energy accidents with multiple injuries.

In the new study, "[The Relationship of Obesity to Increasing Health Care Burden in the Setting of Orthopedic Polytrauma](#)," presented today at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the [American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons](#) (AAOS), researchers identified 301 patients with multiple traumatic injuries (polytrauma) who had orthopaedic injuries requiring intensive care unit (ICU) admission at a major trauma hospital between 2006 and 2011.

Patients with a truncal body mass index (TBMI) <30 were considered nonobese (78.41 percent, 236 individuals), and patients with a TBMI of 30 or greater were considered obese (21.6 percent, 65 individuals). Higher TBMI was associated with longer hospital stays, more days spent in the intensive care unit (ICU), more frequent discharge to a long-term care facility, higher rate of orthopaedic surgical intervention, and increased total hospital costs.

Despite the higher cost of care, and greater frequency of complications, the obese patients in the study, overall, had lower injury severity scores.

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