

CHIROPRACTIC OBESITY SURVEY

Executive Summary

A RESEARCH REPORT BY



METHODOLOGY

This survey was initiated on August 9, 2011 by MPA Media, publishers of *Dynamic Chiropractic*, *Nutritional Wellness*, *To Your Health*, *Acupuncture Today*, *Massage Today* and *DC PracticeINSIGHTS*. The survey was sent to approximately 16,929 doctors of chiropractic with a response rate of about 1%. Like all online surveys, participants tend to “self-select” based upon their interest in the topic presented.

DISCUSSION

This survey is intended to determine the presence of excess weight and obesity within patients of chiropractic and weight-related programs offered in the practice. This also reveals what musculoskeletal disorders are impacted by excess weight and what doctors recommend to patients for weight loss.

In question one, doctors of chiropractic were asked to rate the overall health of their patients. More than half (53 percent) of those surveyed rated their patients average in overall health followed by 32 percent of doctors who rated their patients’ health as good. And 12 percent rated patient’s health below average.

The results from question two show nearly half (45 percent) of doctors of chiropractic focus on weight loss for patients in need, while 36 percent said they do not. However, nearly one in five (19 percent) answered no, but are considering focusing on weight loss for their patients in need, which equates to approximately 14,000 chiropractors in the United States.

Question three aimed at determining the methods doctors of chiropractic use to define the terms “overweight” or “obese.” Here, 37 percent said BMI calculation is their way to define “overweight” or “obese,” and 27 percent said they define these using the weight scale. Body fat content was answered by 23 percent of doctors surveyed.



Question four found that one in five (20 percent) of doctors surveyed believe that 75 percent or more of their patients are overweight followed by 51 percent that feel that about half of their patients are overweight. In other words, 71 percent of those surveyed believe more than half of patients are overweight. Another quarter (25 percent) of doctors said that about 25% of their patients are overweight.

When asked (question five) what percentage of their patients were obese, 19 percent said that half or more of their patients can be considered obese.

In question six, survey respondents were asked how well they agreed with the following statement: "Chiropractors should take a leadership role in education patients regarding physical activity, proper nutrition and maintaining proper weight." The results showed a large majority, 97 percent of doctors agree or somewhat agree with this statement.

In response to question seven, i.e., how often a patient's excess weight exacerbates a patient's chiropractic-related complaints, nearly three quarters of doctors (72 percent) answered often, followed by nearly a quarter (24 percent) who said sometimes. These answers combined equate to nearly 71,000 U.S. chiropractors who believe that excess weight often or sometimes exacerbates patients' chiropractic-related complaints.

Weight-loss support offered or recommended to patients is ranked in question eight. Diet and nutritional counseling received 83 percent of responses, followed by appropriate exercises with 78 percent, enrollment in weight-loss program with 34 percent, and weight-loss supplements or drinks at 24 percent.

Question nine asked doctors of chiropractic to select any musculoskeletal disorders they believe are exacerbated by being overweight. A large majority chose chronic back pain, degenerative disc disease, degenerative joint disease, and lower extremity chronic pain/dysfunction as those most intensified by being overweight.



CONCLUSION

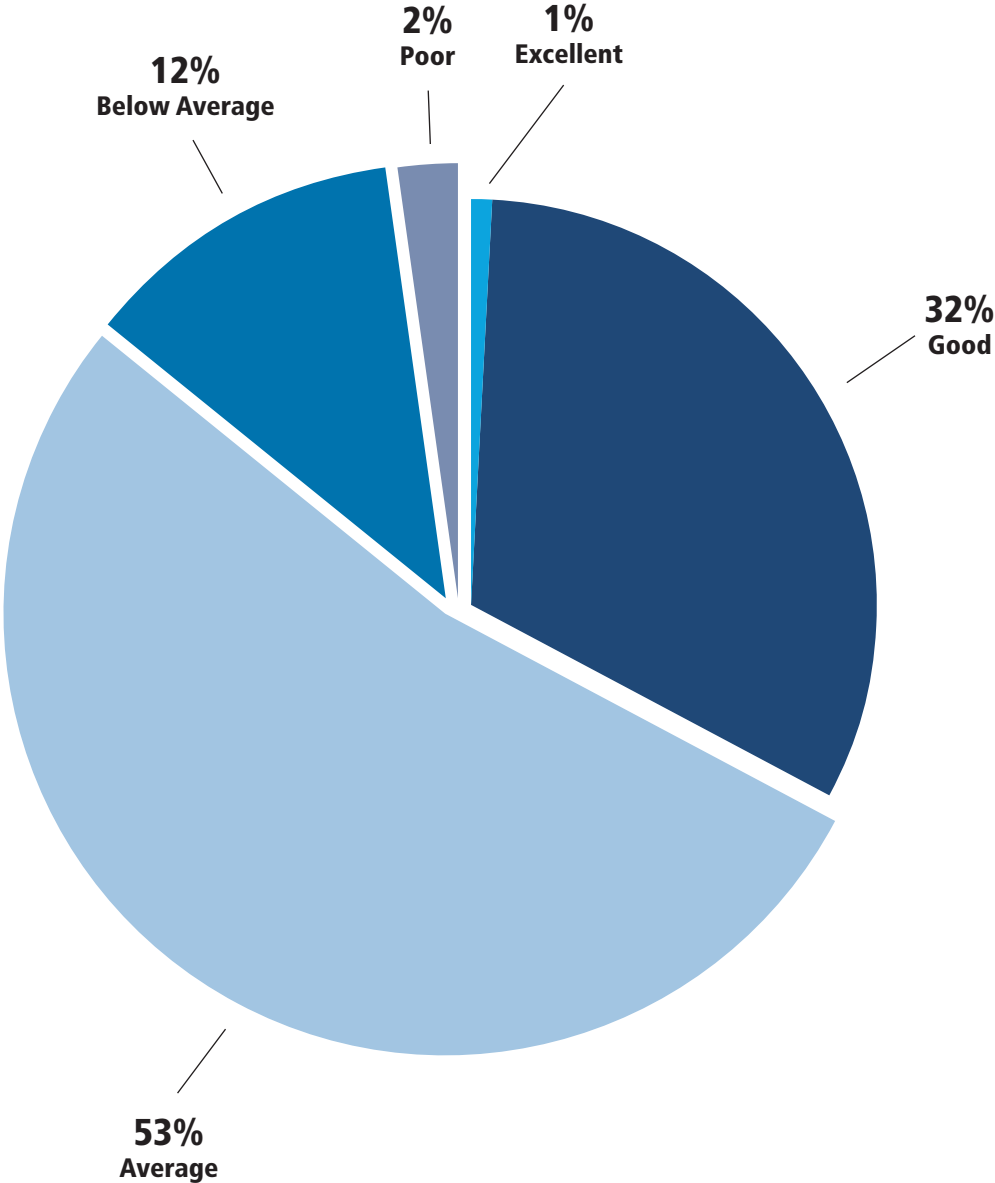
This survey finds that the majority of chiropractors (97 percent) agree or somewhat agree that they should take a leadership role in educating patients regarding physical activity, proper nutrition and maintaining the proper weight. A concern for the physical health of patients has led to nearly half (45 percent) of chiropractors surveyed currently focusing on weight loss for their patients in need, with 19 percent considering to do so. At least 71 percent of chiropractors reveal that half or more their patients are overweight while another 19 percent of chiropractors believe half or more may be obese.

Overall, chiropractors are concerned with patient's excess weight, with 96 percent saying excess weight often or sometimes exacerbates chronic-related complaints in patients. According to chiropractors surveyed, the most recognized musculoskeletal disorders exacerbated by being overweight are chronic back pain, degenerative disc disease, degenerative joint disease and lower extremity chronic pain/dysfunction. This survey finds chiropractors are recommending appropriate techniques to help patients lose weight. The most popular recommendations being dietary and nutritional counseling, appropriate exercises, enrollment in weight-loss programs and suggesting weight-loss supplements and drinks.

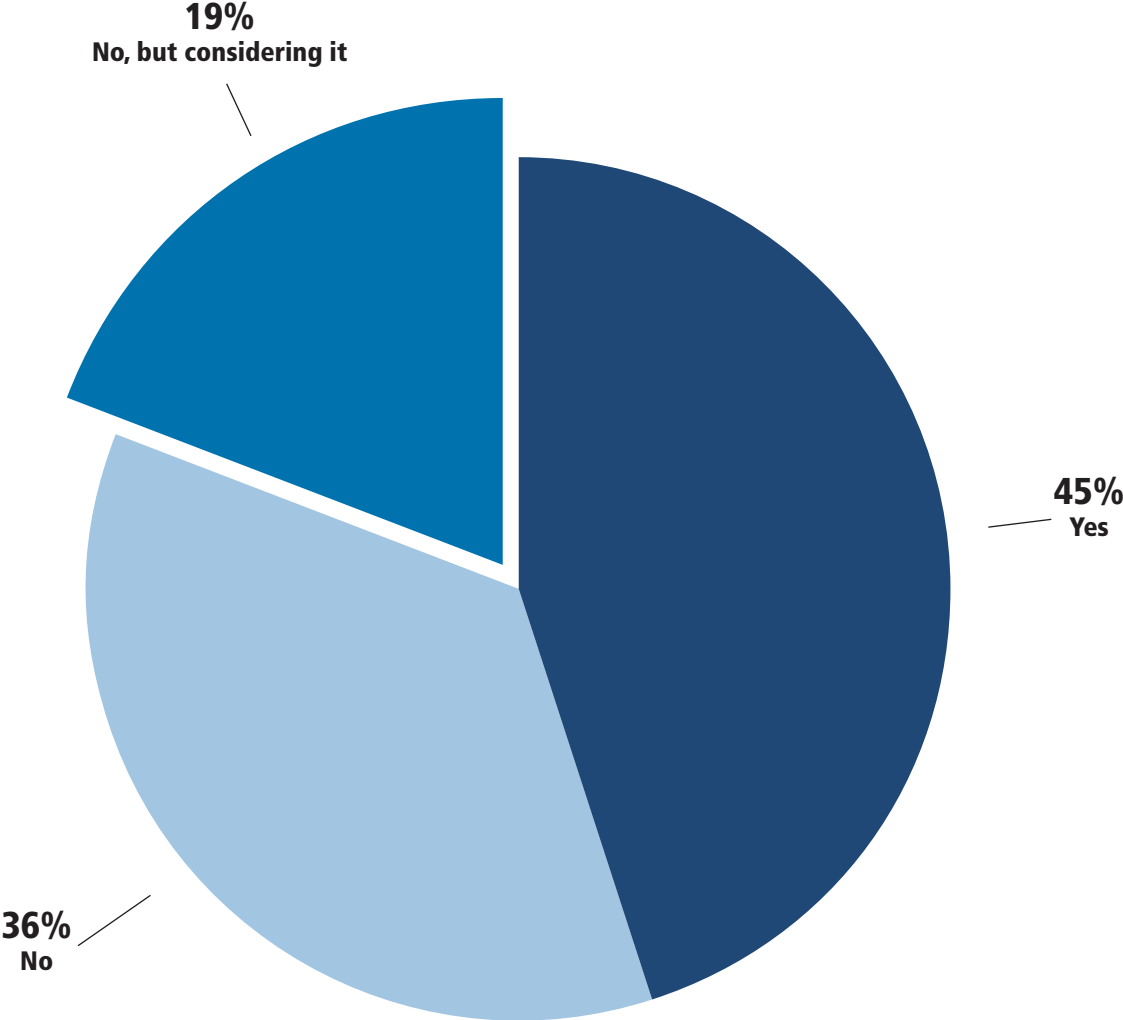
The findings in this survey should be used to better understand the challenges and concerns with excess weight in chiropractic patients. It should also provide information regarding chiropractors' sentiment over excess weight and their efforts to help patients reduce their weight.



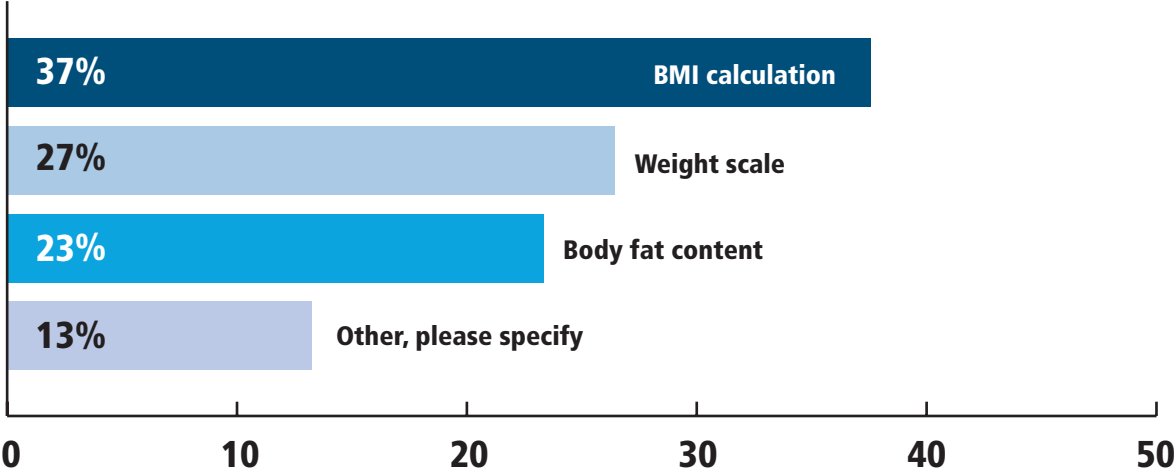
1. How would you rate the overall physical health of your patients?



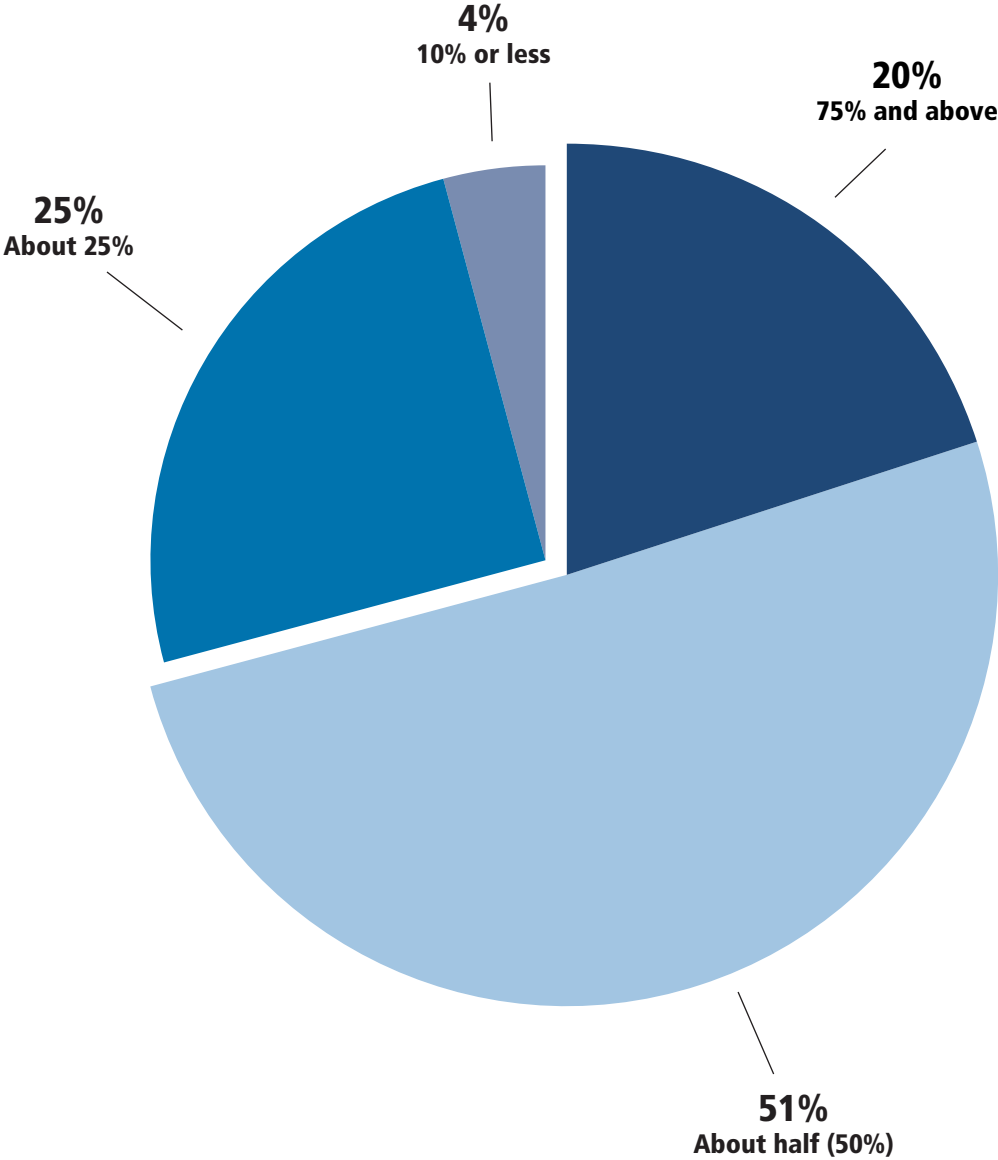
2. Do you currently focus on weight loss for patients in need?



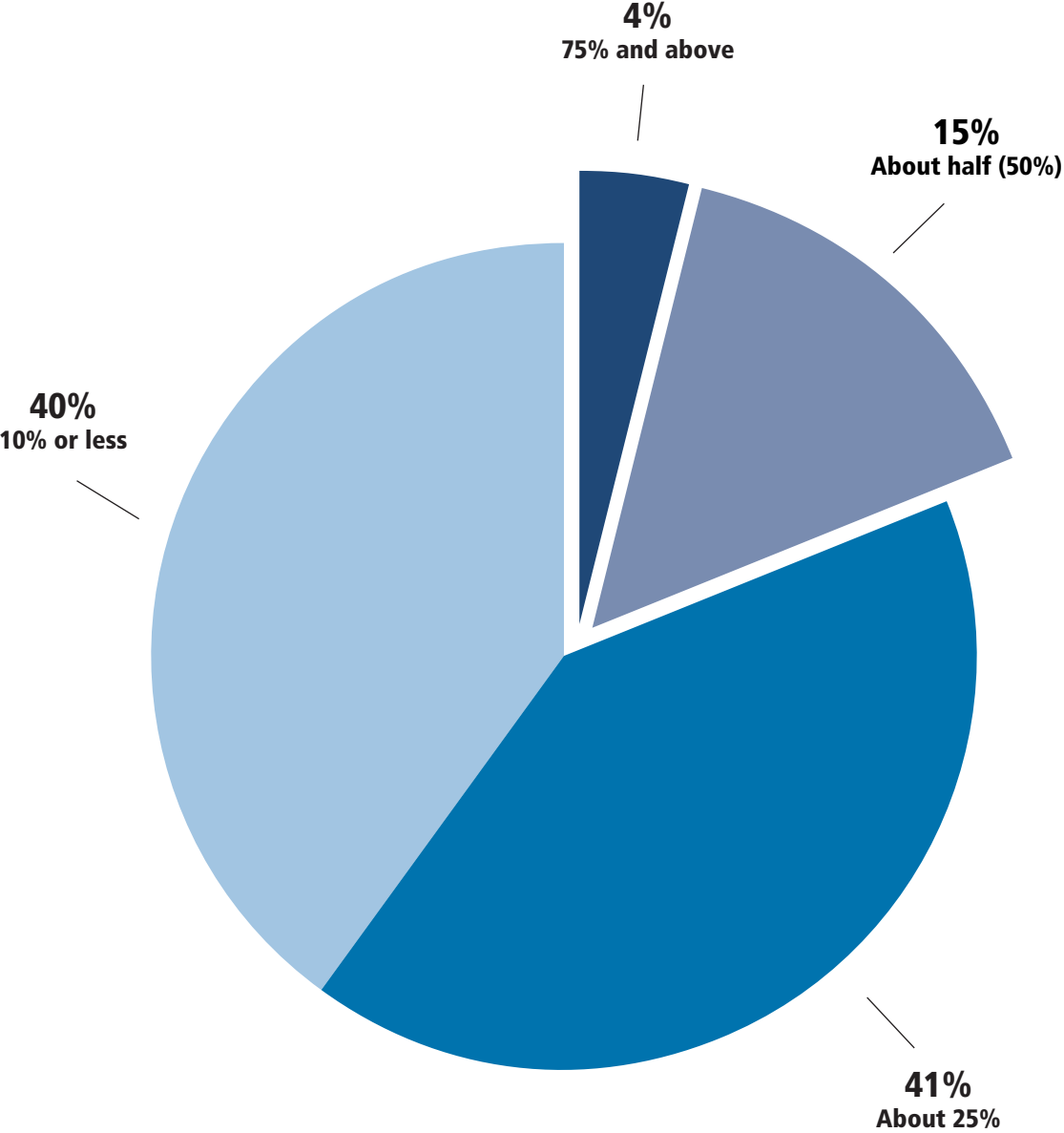
3. How do you define “overweight” or “obese”?



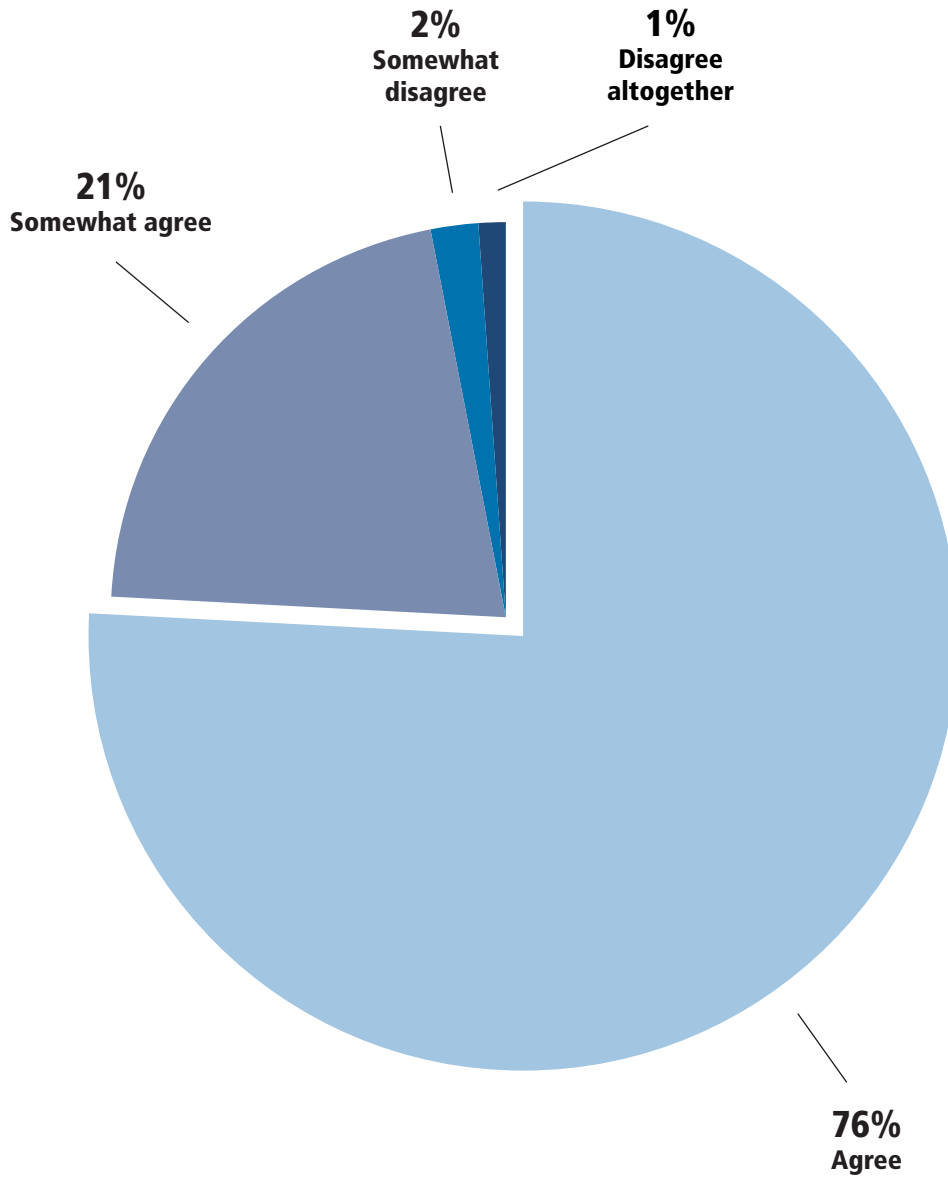
4. Approximately what percentage of your patients are overweight?



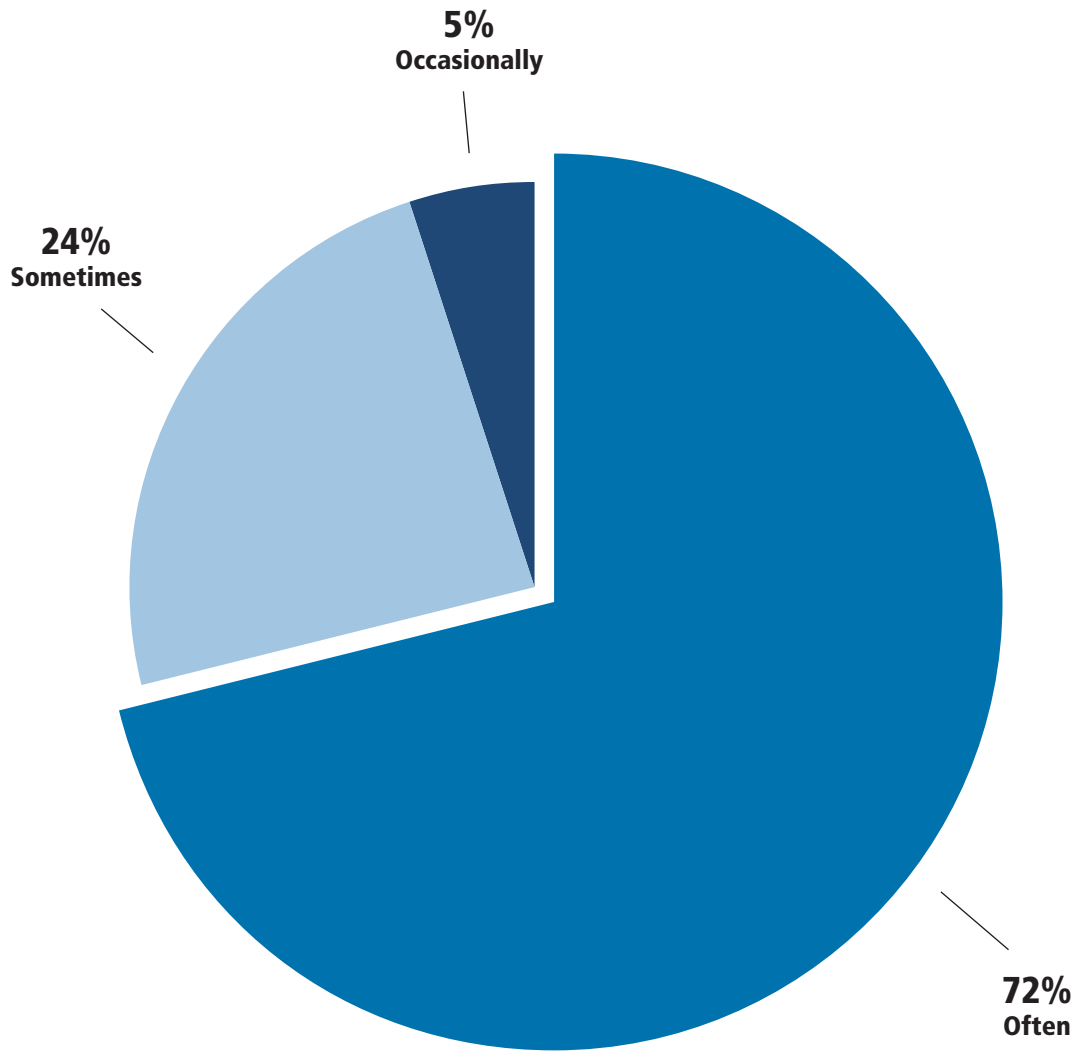
5. Approximately what percentage of your patients are obese?



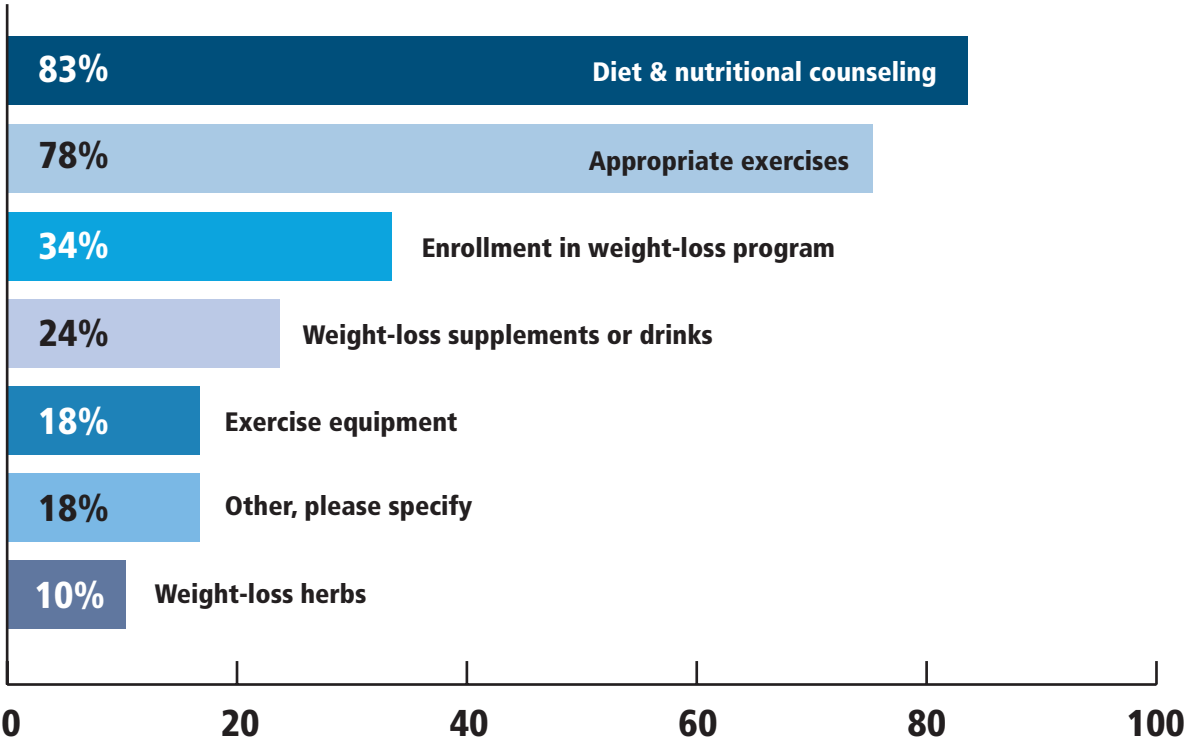
6. How well do you agree with this statement: Chiropractors should take a leadership role in educating patients regarding physical activity, proper nutrition and maintaining the proper weight.



7. How often does a patient's excess weight exacerbate their chiropractic-related complaints?



**8. What do you offer or recommend patients to help them lose weight?
(Please choose all that apply.)**



9. Which of the following musculoskeletal disorders do you believe are exacerbated by being overweight? (Please choose all that apply.)

