New Research Using Home Health Devices Underscores the Need to Reexamine the Relationship between Weight and Health

Analysis of 3.4M Consumers Body Mass Index Shows that 38.2 Percent of Users classified as Obese or Overweight Are Classified as not Obese or not Preclinically Obese Under the Newly-proposed Definition

Boston, MA – March 4, 2025 – Withings, a pioneer in connected health, has performed an analysis indicating that 38.2 percent of consumers classified as overweight or obese under traditional Body Mass Index (BMI) definitions would no longer carry that diagnosis with newly proposed criteria. The study aimed to validate recently published criteria for obesity disease diagnosis in *The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology*. These insights are derived from an extensive analysis of data from 3.4 million anonymized Withings scale users aged between 20 and 79 years old. Withings has been offering scales with body composition assessment since 2009, amassing a substantial database of this biomarker across a vast population.

This groundbreaking analysis also revealed:

- **More than a third (38.4%)** of people classified as "overweight" under BMI guidelines have unhealthy fat and should receive further screenings for organ dysfunction and metabolic disease;
- **2%** of people with a "normal" BMI have high body fat percentages, exposing hidden metabolic risks;
- **6%** of those classified as "obese" based on BMI exhibit low health risks when assessed through body composition analysis and would not be considered obese under the new guidelines.

"Relying solely on BMI oversimplifies health assessments, leading to misjudgments, treatment disparities, and weight-related stigma," stated Aline Criton, Chief Clinical and Regulatory Affairs Officer at Withings. "Our findings highlight the significant impact of adopting a more reliable definition of obesity. With this new definition, over a third of our users would be reclassified, profoundly influencing clinical and lifestyle decisions."

A More Precise Framework for Assessing Obesity

Current clinical guidelines primarily use BMI, which is a calculation of weight divided by height, to classify individuals as either underweight, normal, overweight or obese. However, this method overlooks critical factors/conditions such as fat distribution, muscle mass, and metabolic health.

While BMI has historically been the only inexpensive, non-invasive approach for identifying obesity in clinical settings, advances in technology and methodology have rendered clinical reliance on this outdated tool obsolete.

The framework proposed by the international commission in *The Lancet* introduces a much more scalable, timely and precise classification system that distinguishes between:

- **Preclinical obesity:** Excess body fat without organ dysfunction;
- **Clinical obesity:** Excess body fat leading to organ impairment or metabolic abnormalities.

By shifting the clinical focus to fat distribution and visceral fat, healthcare professionals can significantly improve diagnostic accuracy, reduce treatment disparities, and correct for sex- and ethnicity-based biases. Utilizing home-based connected devices, such as Withings' body composition scales, empowers both physicians and users to tailor treatments and health behaviors effectively. This approach aligns with the principles of 4P medicine—predictive, preventive, personalized, and participatory—by enabling continuous monitoring and personalized health insights, thereby enhancing patient engagement and outcomes.

Moving Beyond BMI: A More Precise Measure for Targeted Treatment

Body Pro 2 from Withings Health Solutions is an advanced, cellular-connected scale already integrated into a variety of metabolic health programs, including weight management, diabetes prevention and care, hypertension management, kidney care, and cardiovascular disease treatment.

Building on this experience, Withings Health Solutions, a division of Withings that partners with health professionals, anticipates that the newly proposed obesity criteria, combined with real-time body composition tracking technology, will enhance treatment methods, redefine reimbursement strategies, and improve patient outcomes across a broad spectrum of conditions, including:

- Weight Management – Enhancing the effectiveness of weight-loss programs and medications
- Type 2 Diabetes and Metabolic Syndrome
- Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) and Hypertension
- Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD)
- Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)
- Musculoskeletal Conditions (e.g., Osteoarthritis)
- Sleep Apnea

"We expect to see a large shift in the weight loss and healthcare industries," said Antoine Robiliard, vice president of Withings Health Solutions. "Leveraging body composition will soon be the new standard in the healthcare industry, particularly in GLP-1 medication-based programs, to ensure safer weight loss. Withings remains committed to equipping both healthcare professionals and individuals with the technology they need to make more informed, data-driven health decisions."

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About Withings and Withings Health Solutions
Withings Health Solutions is a dedicated division of global connected health leader Withings, serving healthcare professionals across chronic disease prevention and management, remote patient monitoring, clinical research and more. Its mission is to bridge the gap between patients and their care teams by continuously and effortlessly providing healthcare professionals with medical-grade data generated by patients from an ecosystem of connected devices.

Withings created the first smart scale in 2009 and has been the pioneer in connected health ever since. Its clinically validated and multi-award-winning range is used by millions worldwide and include smart scales, hybrid watches, blood pressure monitors, sleep analyzers, and more. For more than 15 years,

Withings has built expertise in user experience, engagement, and retention. Withings Health Solutions extends this expertise to the healthcare industry to remove friction in the patient's journey and allow digital health to expand. For more information, visit www.withingshealthsolutions.com