



# Telehealth Program Pilot Study Addressing Obesity and Physical Inactivity in Cancer Survivors

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## Background

- Overweight and obesity are associated with an increased risk of at least 13 types of cancer and contribute to 40% of all diagnoses in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 31% of cancer survivors live with obesity.<sup>2</sup>
- Preventing excess body weight and obesity can reduce cancer-related mortality and improve health-related QOL of cancer survivors, as well as reducing the risk of developing chronic diseases and secondary cancers linked to excess body weight.<sup>2</sup>
- This pilot study evaluates an evidence-based telehealth weight loss program consisting of 16 one-on-one health coaching sessions over 6 months for individuals with a previous cancer diagnosis and a BMI of 25 or greater.

## Methods

- Participants received tailored guidance through coaching sessions focused on evidence-based behavioral weight loss strategies. (Fig.1)
- Health education on nutrition and physical activity was delivered after each session.

Figure 1: Telehealth coaching session topics<sup>3</sup>



## Measures

- Weight:** participants self-reported initial weight; weight was tracked via connected scales
- Waist circumference:** Waist circumference was self-measured using tape measures provided to each participant.

## Cancer survivors lost an average of 6.2 lbs (SD=6.97, p=0.004) in the first 8 weeks of the telehealth weight loss program

## Results

Table 1. Participant baseline characteristics (n=15)

Characteristic	Mean (SD) or n (%)
Mean age, years (SD)	52.4 (15.6)
Race, n (%)	
White	9 (60)
Black	2 (13)
Hispanic or Latino	3 (20)
Other	1 (7)
Language, n (%)	
Only English	13 (87)
English better than Spanish	2 (13)
Sex, n (%)	
Female	14 (93)
Male	1 (7)
Education, n (%) <sup>1</sup>	
High school/GED or some college	2 (13)
Bachelor's or higher degree	14 (87)
Smoking status, n (%)	
Yes	2 (13)
Never	13 (87)
Current	0 (0)
BMI, kg/m <sup>2</sup> (SD)	36.5 (6.1)
BMI Category, n (%)	
Overweight	3 (20)
Obese	12 (80)
Godin Leisure Time Exercise Questionnaire Score (SD)	21.9 (15.9)
Minutes, MVPA min/week (SD)	66.3 (73.4)

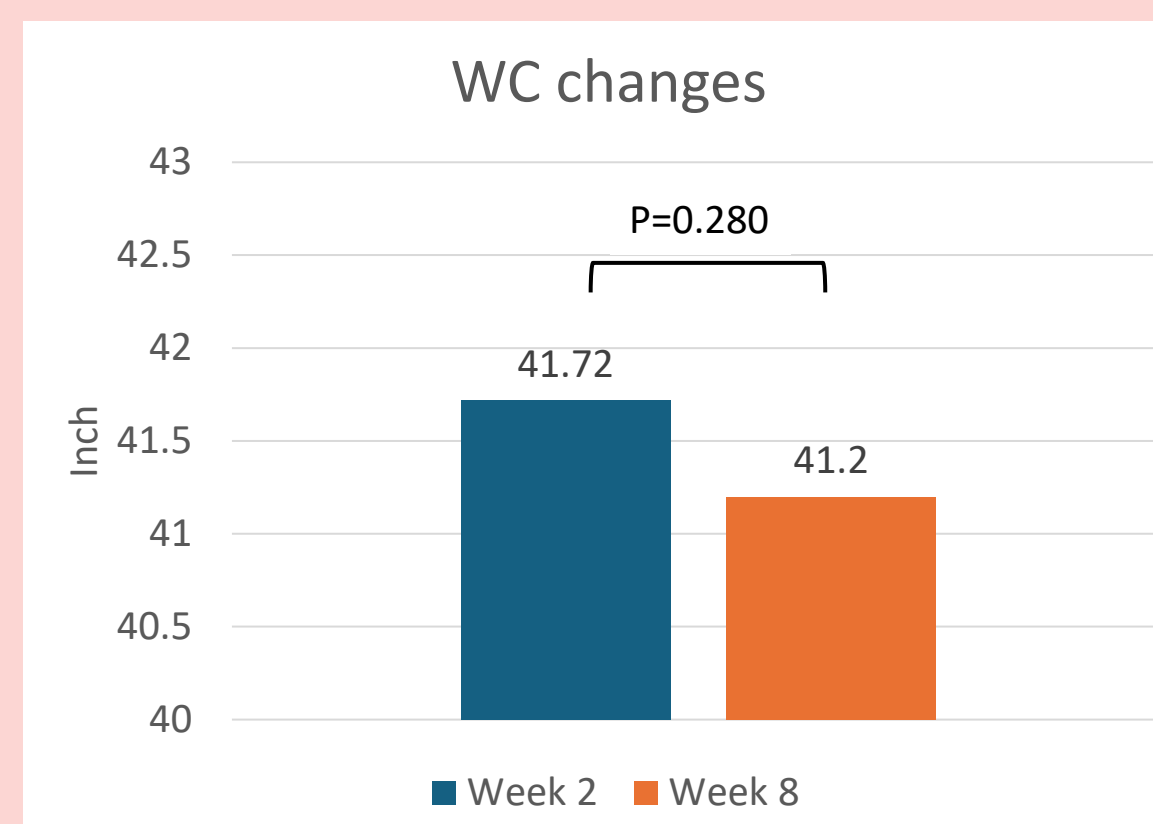
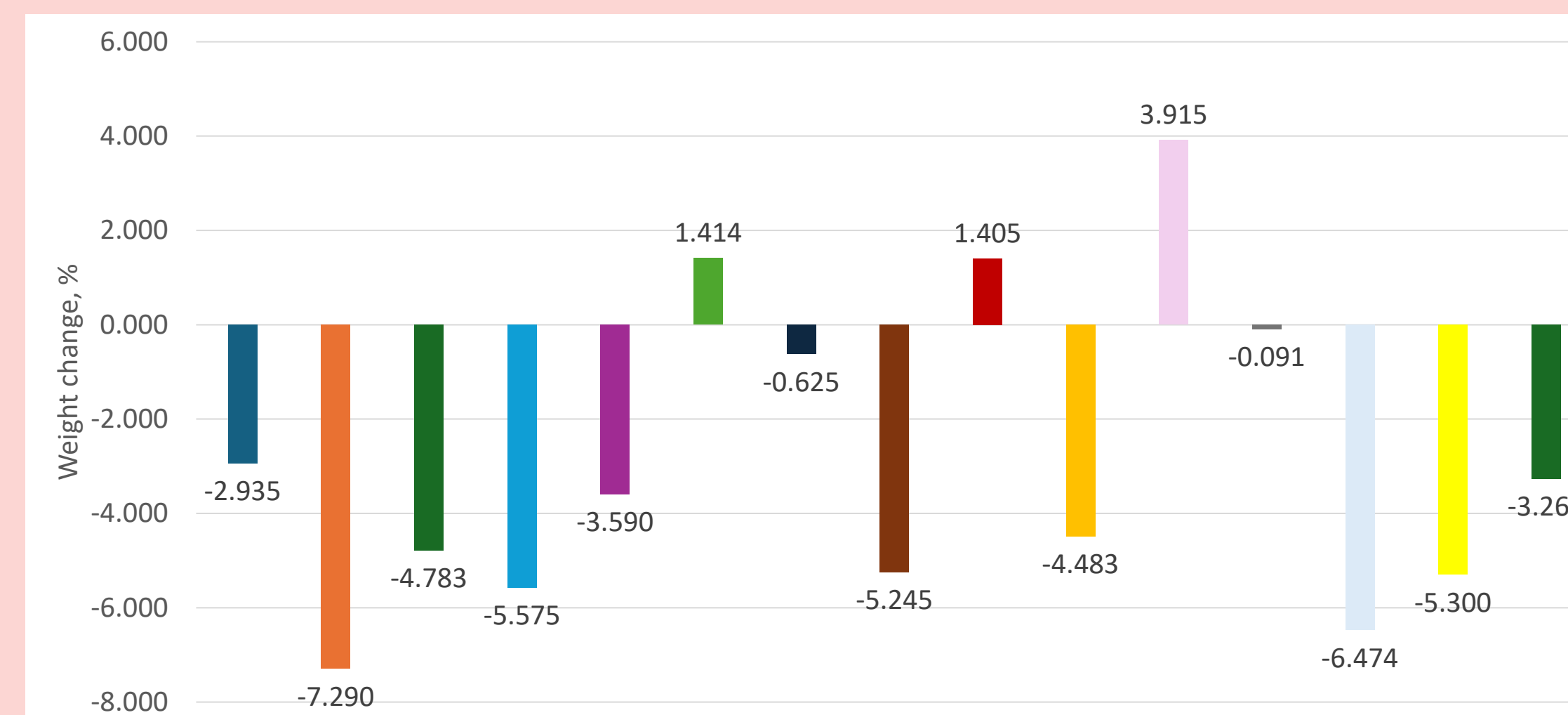
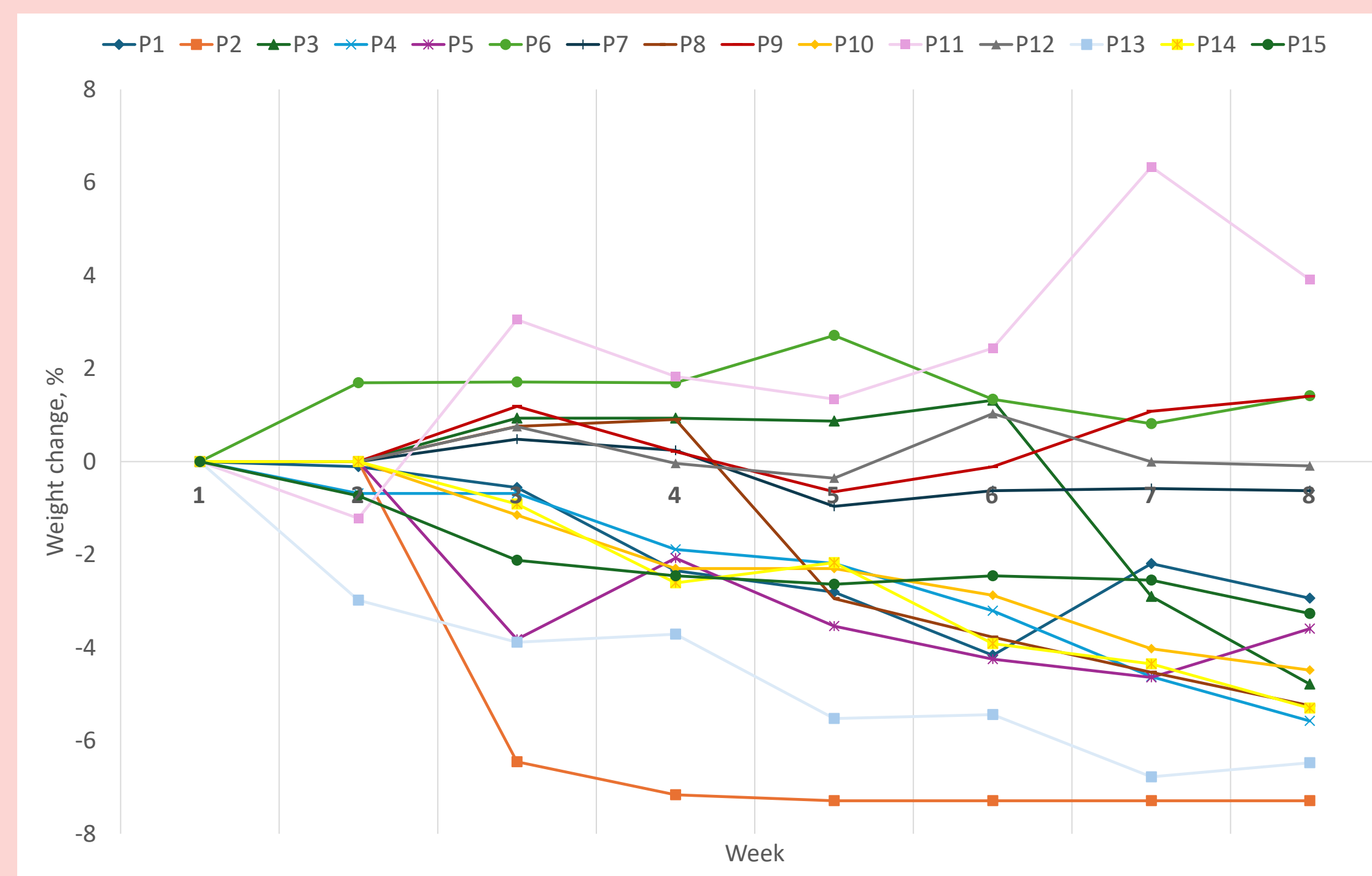


Figure 2: Changes in weight and waist circumference



## Conclusion

- The prevalence of obesity, overweight, and low physical activity among participants, combined with their elevated risk of cancer recurrence and development of secondary cancer or chronic disease, underscores the need for tailored lifestyle interventions.
- The telehealth-based program offers a promising approach to addressing risk factors in cancer survivors and supporting weight loss by increasing healthy eating behaviors and physical activity through coaching and health education.
- 6-month assessments will offer valuable insights into the impact, feasibility, acceptability, and effectiveness of the tailored behavioral weight loss intervention, including changes in physical activity and weight-related outcomes.

## References

- US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2025, June 11). Obesity and Cancer. <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/risk-factors/obesity.html>
- National Cancer Institute, NIH, DHHS, Bethesda, MD, (2025, April). Cancer Survivors and Weight. Cancer Trends Progress Report. <https://progressreport.cancer.gov/after/weight>
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