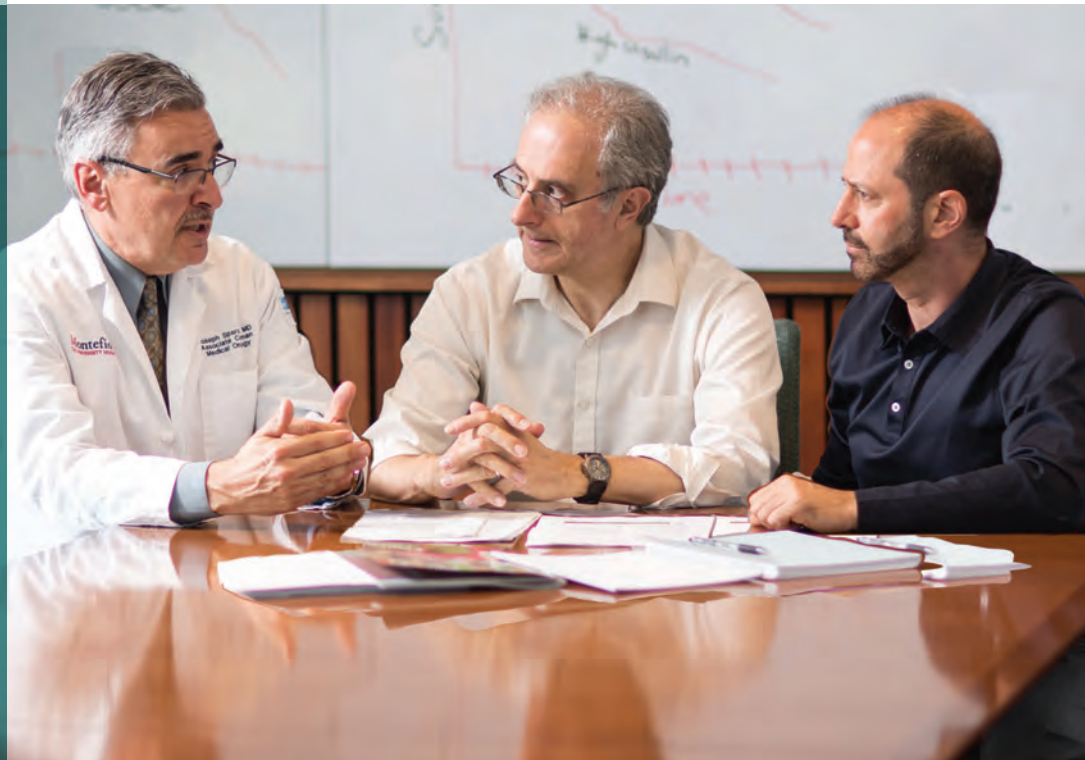


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NEWS

Einstein Cancer Center



Obesity: An Important Cause of Cancer

Beginning about a decade ago, scientific papers started linking obesity to greater risk for developing breast cancer and other types of cancer.

Obesity was already known as a risk factor for major killers such as heart disease, diabetes and stroke. Yet the notion that excessive fat could somehow cause cancer had seemed far-fetched. Not anymore.

"We know that obese patients are more likely to get cancer and to die of cancer," says Joseph A. Sparano, M.D., a professor of medicine (oncology) and of obstetrics & gynecology and women's health at Einstein and associate chair of oncology at Montefiore, the University Hospital and academic medical center for Einstein.

Evidence overwhelmingly links obesity (defined as a body-mass index, or BMI, above 30) to major cancers, including postmenopausal breast cancer and cancers of the colon, endometrium, kidney and esophagus. The American Institute for Cancer Research estimates that obesity, which affects more than one in three Americans and is on the rise, causes more than 100,000 extra cases of cancer in the United States every year.

On the cover: Working together to understand the interrelationship among obesity, diabetes, hormones and cancer are Joseph A. Sparano, M.D.; Thomas E. Rohan, M.D., Ph.D.; and Howard D. Strickler, M.D., M.P.H.