YOUR WEIGHT MATTERS FOR YOUR HEALTH

A GUIDE FOR TALKING TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER ABOUT YOUR WEIGHT AND ITS IMPACT ON YOUR HEALTH

A NATIONAL WEIGHT AND HEALTH AWARENESS CAMPAIGN
Brought to You by the Obesity Action Coalition

YOUR WEIGHT
YOUR HEALTH
YOUR TOOLKIT
YOUR TALK
Thank you for taking the Your Weight Matters Campaign Challenge! You’ve taken that important first step in recognizing your weight and its impact on your health.

The Your Weight Matters Campaign Toolkit was specifically designed with you in mind.

The goal of the Campaign Toolkit is to:

- Help you understand how weight impacts your health
- Educate you on safe and effective weight-loss options
- And most importantly, prepare you for the discussion of weight with your healthcare provider

Keep this toolkit throughout your weight-loss journey and remember to bring it with you to your first appointment with your healthcare provider.
INSIDE YOUR TOOLKIT

Inside your toolkit, you will find useful information on the following topics, sample questions for your first appointment with your healthcare provider and much more:

- Weight and Health
- Emotional Issues and Weight
- Health and Wellness Tips
- Weight-loss Options
- Benefits of Weight-loss
- Sample Questions for You to Ask Your Healthcare Provider
- Sample Questions Your Healthcare Provider May Ask You
- Food Journal
- Body Mass Index (BMI) Chart
- How You Can Help

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Okay, time to get started. You’ve taken the Your Weight Matters Campaign Challenge and now you’re ready to take the next step – make an appointment with your healthcare provider.

As we all know, having the conversation of weight can be tough, and that is why this toolkit is so helpful. Inside the toolkit, you’ll find everything you need to prepare for that first visit and learn more about weight and its impact on your health. Let’s get started!
WEIGHT – WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Weight matters to people for many different reasons. The most important reason why weight matters is because of your health. Before we look at the different ways weight impacts your health, you first have to understand weight and the different weight categories. As you learned from the Your Weight Matters Web site, there are five main categories of weight based on body mass index (BMI):

- Underweight – < 18.5
- Normal Weight – 18.5-24.9
- Overweight – 25-29.9
- Obesity – 30-39.9
- Severe Obesity – >40

WEIGHT AND HEALTH

Obesity has been linked to more than 40 other diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension and sleep apnea. In fact, people who are considered “overweight,” are three times more likely to have type 2 diabetes. Excess weight can also impact other areas of your body, such as your joints. An individual affected by obesity is 60 percent more likely to develop arthritis than someone of normal body weight.

As you can see, weight can really impact your health in more ways than one. In addition to the physical impact of weight on your health, there’s also an emotional impact.

EMOTIONAL ISSUES AND WEIGHT

When we address our weight, we usually focus on the physical aspects. We look at the number on the scale and wait to see where it lands. But what about the emotional aspects of weight? Some studies show that people affected by obesity have a 20 percent elevated risk of depression, and people with depression are more likely to binge eat and are less likely to exercise. Emotional eating can greatly impact your weight and can often be difficult to control.

Finding ways to cope with depression are very important when it comes to improving your weight and making healthy lifestyle changes. If you feel that you may be affected by depression, talk to your healthcare provider about it.
HEALTH AND WELLNESS TIPS

Weight and health go hand-in-hand, so it’s not surprising that factors affecting your weight can impact your health and well-being. Health and wellness are important when addressing and managing your weight. Remember, before changing your nutritional habits or starting an exercise program, be sure to talk to your healthcare provider. Let’s take a look at some quick and easy health and wellness facts!

NUTRITION

Nutrition is key when losing weight and improving your health. Here you will find some interesting facts on food, nutrition and more.

How many calories should you consume each day? The average individual should consume approximately 2,000 calories per-day. *This number is based on a 200 pound male. This number may be more or less based on your current height/ weight and should be discussed with your nutritionist/ healthcare provider.

Do you know how many calories equal one pound? 3,500

Do you know how much money spent on food is spent outside the home? Today, it is estimated that 40 to 50 percent of every dollar that is spent on food is spent on food outside the home.

How many calories are in a 16oz can of cola? 200 calories
- Approximately 10% of your recommended daily caloric intake is made up in one can of cola.

Do you know how much fruit you should have each day? An adult should have two cups of fruit each day.
TIPS FOR HEALTHY EATING

• Ignore fad diets that recommend cutting out an entire food group.
• Stop eating when feelings of fullness occur.
• Eat slowly.
• Drink plenty of water and calorie-free beverages.
• Get plenty of fiber from fresh fruits, vegetables and high-fiber starches.
• Keep healthy food choices around and get rid of unhealthy food choices.
• Limit fruit juices, regular sodas, high-fat foods, and alcoholic beverages.
• Eat only ½ of the portion served at restaurants.
• Make a shopping list of healthy foods before traveling to the grocery store and stick with the list.

FOOD JOURNAL

Located on pages 12 and 13, you will find a food journal that you can use to log your food for your appointment with your healthcare provider. Remember to write down all foods you eat or drink, even snacks!

MY PLATE

Remember learning about the Food Pyramid in school? Well, now there’s MyPlate. MyPlate does an excellent job at showing you how much of each food group you should consume daily. For more information on MyPlate and other nutritional resources, visit www.choosemyplate.gov.
EXERCISE

Combining an exercise plan with your nutritional plan is a key step in reaching your weight-loss goals. Increasing your physical activity will help you feel better and give you more energy. No matter what exercise you choose, make sure your goals are SMART.

EXERCISE FAST FACTS

- It is estimated that there are 2,000 steps in one mile.
- The CDC recommends that you get 10,000 steps in each day.
- One hour of Power Yoga will burn approximately 300 calories.
- Did you know the average person burns 1.3 calories a minute while laughing?

TECH CORNER

Long gone are the days of just having a stopwatch to track your lap times. Today, there are a wide variety of technology devices, apps and programs that can help you lose weight and improve your health.

Self-monitoring devices can easily track your sleep patterns, physical activity and much more. Looking for that perfect app for your smartphone or tablet? No worries, there are hundreds of different apps that you can use to help keep you eating healthy. In fact, there are even apps that will tell you how many calories are in a food just by taking a picture of it! Technology has truly changed the way you can improve your health.
WEIGHT-LOSS OPTIONS

It’s been proven that the “eat less and move more” approach to weight-loss is flawed. Let’s face it, if it were true, you probably wouldn’t be reading this toolkit. So what is available today to help you achieve your weight-loss goals and improve your health? Well, the short answer to this question is – a lot. But while there are many options available, it is important that you use a safe and effective weight-loss method.

Lifestyle and Behavioral Changes

Lifestyle and behavioral changes are very important in addressing your weight. In today’s modern society, we’ve become accustomed to quick and easy food sources such as fast food restaurants. Advances in technology have also contributed to our weight gain. Walking has been replaced by cars and few of us find time to leave our computers for physical activity. Changing your behaviors is key to an overall weight-loss plan. When you talk to your healthcare provider, ask them what you can do to improve your lifestyle. Remember, start small. You don’t have to run a marathon in your first week of living a new lifestyle. Slow and steady wins the race.

Commercial Weight-loss Programs

Non-clinical methods can take many forms. They include, but are not limited to, weight-loss chains, health coaches, diet books, Web sites, over-the-counter (OTC) medications, body monitoring devices, meal replacement items, meal replacement programs, and support groups. Some non-clinical weight management methods may require you to use the program’s foods or supplements, and there may be fees for professional services. It is important to remember that not all methods and weight-loss claims are reviewed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), who ensure the safety and effectiveness of medical devices, and weight-loss medications but not weight-loss supplements or books. A good rule of thumb is if a product or claim sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Medications for Weight Management

Today, there are FDA-approved medicines available that can assist you in managing your weight. Most times, your healthcare provider will use these medicines in conjunction with lifestyle and behavioral changes. Your healthcare provider may also encourage you to see a dietitian, exercise physiologist or other healthcare professional to help you create a weight-loss plan that will work for you.
Bariatric Surgery

Bariatric surgery is a weight-loss treatment commonly used for those affected by severe obesity. There are many surgery types available and each one requires different lifestyle changes. As with any weight-loss option, your healthcare provider will encourage you to seek the help of a dietitian and other healthcare professionals to achieve your weight-loss goals.

When you talk to your healthcare provider about your weight, you may discuss some of the options mentioned in this toolkit. Be clear with your healthcare provider about all the weight-loss options you’ve tried in the past or if you haven’t tried any. Remember, they’re there to help you.

Benefits of Weight-Loss

There are many benefits of weight-loss. Weight-loss of even 5 percent has been shown to significantly improve health and reduce the risk of complications from other diseases such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Remember, you may not see immediate results from your weight-loss plan but that’s okay. It is important to stick with it. If you feel that your weight-loss plan is not working, talk to your healthcare provider. Explain your concerns to them. They are there to help you. And always remember, Your Weight Matters because of your health!

Talk to Your Healthcare Provider

Okay, so you now know how weight impacts your health, the benefits of weight-loss, and you even know about the different weight-loss options available. Are you ready for your first appointment? Not quite yet, but don’t worry, we’re almost there.
WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR FIRST APPOINTMENT

Your first appointment with your healthcare provider to discuss your weight should be a joint effort. The provider-patient relationship is very important when addressing your weight. In your first appointment, you can expect to discuss the following:

- Your daily eating and physical activity habits
- What types of weight-loss methods you’ve used in the past
- Personal stress levels
- Current medications
- and more

At your first appointment, your healthcare provider may send you for labs (blood test, urine analysis, etc.), check your blood pressure and pulse. Your provider may also refer you to a dietitian or nutritionist to learn more about proper nutrition and dietary needs.

Following your healthcare team’s guidance and being open and honest with them will greatly help you and your healthcare team address your weight and improve your health.

Sample Questions for You to Ask Your Healthcare Provider

At your first appointment to discuss your weight, ask questions! The best way to get control of your weight and improve your health is to be proactive and involved in your care. We’ve given you a list of sample questions to ask at your first appointment.

1. What is my current weight?
2. What is my height?
3. What is my Body Mass Index (BMI)?
4. What does my BMI measurement mean?
5. How much should a person of my gender, height and size weigh?
6. What conditions am I at risk for because of my weight?
7. Is my weight impacting any conditions I currently have (if any)?
8. How do I start getting my weight in control?
9. How often should I monitor my weight/weigh myself?
10. How do you recommend I deal with weight? Should I be treating my weight?
11. Why is it so hard to control my weight?
12. Do I need to have blood work done to assess my health values?
13. Will my blood work improve if I lose weight?
14. Why is weight a challenge for me?
15. Why is it important to address my weight issues now, rather than later?
Sample Questions Your Healthcare Provider May Ask You

At your first appointment, be prepared to answer questions about your current health status. Not only will you have a lot of questions, but they will also have many questions for you to help gauge your lifestyle and behaviors. In addition, they will want to learn about your family and health history. It’s important that you are prepared to answer these questions so they can best assess you and your health. Below, is a list of sample questions that they may ask you. You may want to jot down your responses in the blanks provided.

Questions about Your Medical History

1. When was the last time you saw a healthcare provider?
2. Have you ever discussed your weight with a healthcare provider?
3. When did you last have blood work done?
4. What medications do you currently take (over-the-counter, prescription and supplements)?
5. What conditions have you been previously diagnosed with?
6. Do other members of your family have issues with weight or weight-related conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes?

Questions about Your Lifestyle

1. How long have you struggled with your weight?
2. How have you tried to lose weight in the past? Why do you think you failed?
3. Have you undergone any life experiences that contributed to your excess weight?
4. What is your perception of your weight? Why do you think you have a weight issue?
5. What are some barriers you face with eating? For instance, are you on the road a lot?
6. How physically active are you? What do you do for physical activity?
7. Do you think you are depressed because of your weight?
8. Why do you care about your weight?
FOOD JOURNAL

Before your first visit with a healthcare provider to discuss your weight, log the food you eat or drink for one week. Keeping a food log will help you and your healthcare provider understand your eating behaviors.

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When logging your food, be sure to include everything you eat, even snacks and desserts. Be honest and open — this log is only used to help you!

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BMI CHART

Knowing your weight category is important in talking to your healthcare provider about your weight.

Body mass index (BMI) is the most common measurement tool to determine weight category. Most times, a BMI chart is used to find out your BMI. BMI is not a perfect indicator of weight; however, it is a good basis to go by when looking at weight measurement.

Before you visit your healthcare provider, take a second to find your BMI.
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**Obesity** = 30 - 39.9  |  **Severe Obesity** = Greater than 40  |  **Obesity**  |  **Severe Obesity**

**DATE**

**BMI**

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**YOUR WEIGHT MATTERS – FOR YOUR HEALTH**
Please use this section to write down important notes about YOUR HEALTH. You can use this section to capture information such as lab results, favorite exercises, thoughts, goals and much more!
HOW YOU CAN HELP

Taking the *Your Weight Matters* Campaign Challenge was the first-step, but there are still ways that you can support this campaign and effort. You’ve received your toolkit and you’ve made your appointment to talk to your healthcare provider. What else can you do? It doesn’t stop there. Here are ways that you can help the *Your Weight Matters* Campaign.

Encourage Others to Take the *Your Weight Matters* Campaign Challenge

If you are reading this toolkit, you have already signed-on to take the *Your Weight Matters* Campaign Challenge. We are challenging you to encourage others to visit [www.YourWeightMatters.org](http://www.YourWeightMatters.org) and take the Challenge.

Help Share the *Your Weight Matters* Campaign

Once you have taken the challenge, you probably realized how important this message is to your health. We need you to help us spread the word to friends, family and the public about the importance of weight and health.

We’ve developed a special section on the Campaign Web site to help you share this campaign. Visit [www.YourWeightMatters.org](http://www.YourWeightMatters.org) and click on the “Spread the Word” link at the top of the page. This page will give you the tools and resources to help us spread the word, such as:

- Sample newsletter stories to submit to other organizations/companies for inclusion in their newsletters and/or e-newsletters
- Sample social media posts
- Downloadable banner ads
- And much more!
Attend the *Your Weight Matters* Annual Convention

Taking the Campaign Challenge is the first step in addressing your weight and improving your health. As you progress in your weight-loss journey, education will be the key in improving your health. The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC), founders of the *Your Weight Matters* Campaign, host an event, titled *Your Weight Matters* National Convention, designed for those interested in learning more about weight and how it impacts their health.

The *Your Weight Matters* National Convention is designed to be a welcoming environment where any individual can come to learn useful, evidence-based weight management strategies to improve their health.

To learn more about the *Your Weight Matters* National Convention and for information on this year’s dates and location, please visit [www.YWMConvention.com](http://www.YWMConvention.com).

Share Your Journey with Us

After your appointment with your healthcare provider, tell us how your weight-loss journey is progressing. Did your healthcare provider help you make a weight-loss plan? Have you seen any results? Did you tell others about the Campaign?

**Share your journey with us by emailing info@yourweightmatters.org.**

We thank you for your feedback!

Join the Campaign’s Social Network

Stay connected with the *Your Weight Matters* Campaign and encourage others to learn more about it by joining the Campaign on Facebook, Twitter or Pinterest. Simply visit the Campaign Web site at [www.YourWeightMatters.org](http://www.YourWeightMatters.org), scroll to the bottom of the home page, and click on a social networking icon to join us today!
I thought my weight was just my doing.

Turns out it’s also science.

Science now shows what many of us have long suspected:

• After losing weight, your body’s response is to try to put it back on
• One study showed that a body’s response to weight loss may turn up signals that trigger appetite for at least 12 months, which can potentially cause overeating
• Healthy eating and physical activity may not be enough to maintain your weight

To learn more and get your free personalized TrueWeight™ Report go to TruthAboutWeight.com
THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC) AT A GLANCE

The Your Weight Matters Campaign was developed by the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC). The OAC is a more than 52,000 member-strong 501(c)(3) National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to the individual affected by the disease of obesity and helping individuals along their journey toward better health through education, advocacy and support. Our core focuses are to raise awareness and improve access to the prevention and treatment of obesity, provide evidence-based education on obesity and its treatments, fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination, elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health and offer a community of support for the individual affected.

To learn more about the OAC, visit www.ObesityAction.org or contact the National Office at (800) 717-3117.

Your Weight Matters – For Your Health!

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