

NJ Gastroenterology Health and Wellness

OUR WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM

What we want you to know...

When you decide to learn more about managing your weight, you took an important step toward improving your health. The health professional who is advising you can help you develop comprehensive weight management skill while you lose a meaningful amount of weight.

The calorie deficit and portion-controlled diets were developed over 25 years or more for weight reduction. They are used with patients who are overweight and who may have significant medical problems related to obesity. Such problems include hypertension, coronary artery disease, diabetes, lung, joint or bone disease, and the need for non-emergency surgery. These methods of weight reduction have been utilized in hundreds of clinics in the United States. They have been described and evaluated in many professional medical journals since 1974.

Your role....

Your success will depend upon your commitment to understanding and fulfilling your obligations in a course of treatment. It is important that you be willing to:

- Provide honest and complete answers to questions about your health, weight problem eating activity and lifestyle patterns so your health care professional can better understand how to help you.
- Devote the time needed to complete and comply with the course of treatment your health professional has outlined for you, including assessment, treatment, and maintenance phases.
- Work with your health professional and others who may participate in helping you manage your weight loss, including keeping a daily diary, attending your appointments regularly if appropriate, and following your diet and exercise prescription.
- Allow your health care professional to share information with your personal physician.
- Make and keep follow-up appointments with your physician and have any blood test taken or any other diagnostic measure made which your physician may deem necessary during your course of treatment.
- Follow your exercise program within the guidelines given to you by your health care professional and your physician.
- It is vitally important for you to advise the office staff on ANY concerns, problems, complaints, symptoms, or questions even if you may think it is not terribly important, so the physician can determine if you should be seen more often. Keeping the practice informed of any questions or symptoms you have, affords the best chance of intervening before a problem becomes serious.

Potential benefits....

Medically-significant weight loss (usually about 10% of initial weight) can:

- Lower blood pressure, reducing the risks of hypertension
- Lower cholesterol, reducing the risks of heart and vascular disease
- Lower blood sugar, reducing the risks of diabetes

- Lower cancer risks, due to the increased risk of obesity and cancers.

If you are taking medications for one or more of these conditions, dosages may need to be adjusted as your overall health improves. You agree to see our practice physician/s as needed to have these medications reassessed. Our health care professional will share your results with your physician on a regular basis so the physician is informed about your progress.

Other benefits may also be obtained. Increasing activity level can favorably affect the above conditions and has additional benefit of helping you sustain weight loss. Weight loss and increased activity provide important psychological and social benefits as well.

Possible side effects....

The possibility always exists in medicine that the combination of any significant disease with methods employed for its treatment may lead to previously unobserved or unexpected ill effects, including death. Should one or more of these conditions occur, additional medical or surgical treatment may be necessary. In addition, it is conceivable other side effects could occur that have not been observed to date.

Reduced Weight. When you reduce the number of calories you eat to a level lower than the number of calories your body uses in a day, you lose weight. In addition, your body makes some adjustments in physiology. Some of these are responsible, in some participants for rapid improvements in blood pressure and blood sugar; other adjustments may be experienced as temporary side effects or discomforts. These may include an initial loss of body fluid through increased urination, momentary dizziness, a reduced metabolic rate or metabolism, sensitivity to cold, a slower heart rate, dry skin, fatigue, diarrhea or constipation, bad breath, muscle cramps, a change in menstrual pattern, dry and brittle hair or hair loss. These responses are temporary and resolve when calories are increased after the period of weight loss.

Reduced Potassium Levels. The calorie level you will be consuming is 800 or more calories per day and it is important that you consume the calories that have been prescribed in your diet to minimize the side effects. Failure to consume all of the food and fluids and nutritional supplements or taking diuretic medical (water pill) may cause low blood potassium levels or deficiencies in other key nutrients. Low potassium can cause heart irregularities. When someone has been on a reduced calorie diet, a rapid increase in calorie intake, especially overeating or binge-eating, can be associated with bloating, fluid retention, disturbances in salt and mineral balance, or gallbladder attacks and abdominal pain. For these reasons, following the diet carefully and following the gradual increase in calories after weight loss is essential.

Gallstones. Overweight people develop gallstones at a rate higher than normal weight individuals. The occurrence of symptomatic gallstones (upper abdominal pain) in individuals 30% or more over desirable body weight not undergoing current treatment of obesity is estimated to be 1 in 100 annually, and for individuals who are 0-30% overweight, about one-half that rate, or 1 in 200 annually. It is possible to have gallstones and not know it; as many as 1 in 10 can have “silent” gallstones at the onset. As body weight and age increase, so do the chances of developing gallstones. These chances double for women, women using estrogen, and smokers. Losing weight-especially rapidly-may increase the chances of developing stones or sludge and/or increasing the size of existing stones within the gallbladder. Should

any symptoms develop (fever, nausea, and a cramping pain in the mid-upper and/or right upper abdomen), let your physician and health care professional know immediately. Gallbladder problems may require surgery to remove the gallbladder, and less commonly, may be associated with more serious complications of inflammation of the pancreas or even death. A drug (Actigall) is currently available that may help prevent gallstone formation during rapid weight loss. You may wish to discuss Actigall with your weight management physician for more information.

Pancreatitis. Pancreatitis, or inflammation of the pancreas, may be associated with gallstones or even one of the weight loss medications prescribed (Liraglutide/Saxenda or Wegovy/Semaglutide). Symptoms may include pain in the mid-abdominal area that can radiate to your back along with nausea and fever.

Pregnancy. If you become pregnant, report this to your health care professional and physician immediately. Your diet must be changed promptly to avoid further weight loss because a restricted diet could be damaging to a developing fetus. You must take precautions to avoid becoming pregnant during the course of weight loss, especially if taking weight loss meds.

Binge Eating Disorders. BEDs is defined as the habitual, uncontrolled consumption of a large amount of food in a short period of time. Participation in a calorically restricted diet has been shown in one study to increase binge eating episodes temporarily. Several other studies demonstrated reduced episodes of binge eating following a calorie deficit and portion-controlled diet. Extended binge eating episodes are associated with weight gain.

The risk of weight regain....

Obesity is a chronic condition, and the majority of overweight individuals who lose weight has a tendency to regain all or some of it over time. Factors which favor maintaining a reduced body weight include regular physical activity, adherence to a restricted calorie, low fat diet, and planning a strategy for coping with weight regain before it occurs.

Successful treatment may take months or even years. Medical studies of calorie deficit/portioned-controlled diets (including modified fasting) have shown varying results for percentage of patients who maintain weight loss. In some studies, the percentage has been fewer than 5% of the patients after five years. A group of patients who have been followed for 3 years show that patients have maintained about one-half of initial weight loss. Additionally, if you have had fluctuations in your weight in the past, it may be more difficult to maintain the weight you lose during and after this program.

Sudden Death. Patients with morbid obesity (BMI > 40), particularly those with serious hypertension, coronary artery disease, or diabetes mellitus, have a statistically higher chance of suffering sudden death when compared to normal weight people without such medical problems. Rare instances of sudden death have occurred while obese patients were undergoing medically supervised weight reduction, though no cause and effect relationship with the diet has been established. The possibility cannot be excluded that some tiredness, psychological problems, medication allergies, high blood pressure, rapid heart rate and heart irregularities. Less common, but more serious risks are primary pulmonary hypertension and valvular heart disease. There are other possible risks, could, on occasion be serious or fatal.

Your rights and confidentiality....

You have a right to leave treatment at any time without penalty, although you do have a responsibility to make sure the physician knows you are discontinuing treatment and to verify your physician is able to assume medical care for you after you leave treatment.

I, the undersigned, have reviewed this information with my health care professional or my physician, and have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

Participant Signature

Date

I hereby certify that I have explained the nature, purpose, benefits, risks of, and alternatives to, the proposed program and have answered any questions posed by the patient. I believe the patient/relative/guardian fully understands what I have explained and answered.

Physician Signature

Date