

Clinical Practice Guidelines for Obesity

Obesity is defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a health risk to the individual. It is a common, serious, and costly chronic disease affecting adults and children that continues to increase in the United States. Obesity can lead to various health complications such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, respiratory problems, and some cancers. Not only is obesity associated with higher health risks, but it is also associated with psychosocial complications and economic burden.

Obesity at a Glance

- Obesity prevalence was **41.9% in adults** from 2017 to 2020 in the U.S
- About **1 in 5 children** and more than **1 in 3 adults** struggle with obesity
- Over **112,000 annual deaths** are attributed to obesity
- Medical costs for obese patients were **\$1,429 higher** than patients of normal weight

Diagnosing Obesity

Obesity is diagnosed as weight that is higher than what is considered healthy for a given height. Body Mass Index (BMI) is a screening tool that is used in the diagnosis of obesity. BMI is calculated as weight (kilograms) divided over height (meters squared). A high BMI can indicate high body fatness. Adults are recommended to be screened annually. (If you are interested in checking your BMI, you can calculate it using this website from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [here](#). $BMI = \frac{Weight (kg)}{Height (m^2)}$)

BMI	Class
< 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Normal
25.0 – 29.9	Overweight
30.0 – 34.9	Obese
35.0 – 39.9	Severely Obese
> 40	Morbidly Obese

Risk Factors Associated with Obesity

- Diet
- Exercise
- Socioeconomic status
- Culture/religion
- Ethnicity
- Genetics

Medical Conditions	Medication Classes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hypothyroidism • Cushing's disease • Growth hormone deficiency • Leptin Deficiency • Insulinoma • Psychiatric Disorders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hypoglycemics • Tricyclic Antidepressants • Antipsychotics • Anticonvulsants • Antihistamines • Corticosteroids

Treatment of Obesity

The current 2013 AHA/ACC/TOS obesity guidelines recommend lifestyle modifications as first line treatment for managing obesity, with the option of adjunctive pharmacotherapy.

Body Mass Index (BMI)	Recommendation
BMI 25 - 30 with obesity-related comorbidity OR BMI ≥ 30	Lifestyle modification
BMI ≥ 27 with obesity-related comorbidity OR BMI ≥ 30	Lifestyle modification with <u>option</u> of adjunct pharmacotherapy
BMI ≥ 27 with obesity-related comorbidity OR BMI ≥ 40	Option of bariatric surgery if no success with lifestyle intervention with or without pharmacotherapy

Physical Activity

- Physical activity progressing to > 150 minutes/week for 3-5 days/week

Dietary Changes

- Calorie-restricted low-fat diet (500 - 750 kcal daily deficit)
- Nutrition counseling and healthy eating

Behavioral Changes

- Self-monitoring and establishing goals
- Stress reduction
- Motivational interviewing
- Stimulus control

Members should be assessed for their readiness in starting treatment. Weight loss goals should be developed with the patient and treatment success relies heavily on a sustained partnership between the member and the clinician.

FDA-Approved Weight-loss Medications

1. Orlistat (Xenical®/Alli®)
2. Liraglutide (Saxenda®)
3. Semaglutide (Wegovy®)
4. Tirzepatide (Mounjaro®)
5. Naltrexone/Bupropion (Contrave®)
6. Phentermine (Adipex®/Lomaira®)
7. Phentermine/Topiramate (Qysmia®)

Disclaimer: Medicaid does not typically cover weight-loss medication; therefore, please check with your health plan drug formulary for coverage of the medications listed above.

Summary

- Management of obesity focuses primarily on lifestyle modifications
- A combination of physical activity, dietary changes, and behavioral counseling should be adopted to reach weight loss goals
- If weight-loss medications are used, it should be used in conjunction with lifestyle modifications

References

- CDC, Obesity, Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/index.html>
- AHA, Obesity, Available at <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/full/10.1161/01.cir.0000437739.71477.ee>

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