

# How to Talk to Your Healthcare Provider About **Weight**



If you or someone you know is affected by overweight or obesity and is ready to talk about weight management, primary care providers, including physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners, can help. Often, however, primary care providers are hesitant to start the conversation. Here are some tips for patients ready to discuss this important topic.

1

## Prepare for the appointment

- › Write down questions you may have about weight and/or weight management. If you don't know what to ask, you can find examples of questions that are provided as a downloadable resource.
- › Write down all of the medications and supplements you take and take that list with you to your appointment.

2

## Be honest about your lifestyle and eating habits

- › Although you may feel anxious or embarrassed to talk about weight, your healthcare provider is not there to judge you. Instead, they need to know about things such as diet, exercise, and sleep to help develop a plan that will work best for each person.

3

## Think about weight management goals

- › Working together, a patient and their healthcare provider can set a safe and realistic goal for weight management, depending on age, sex, and lifestyle. Remember, losing just a small amount of weight can have big health benefits.

4

## Find the weight management tools that are best for you

- › When it comes to weight management, one thing that might work for one person might not work for someone else. So, your healthcare provider can help you choose strategies that might work best for you. In general, weight management starts with dietary and lifestyle changes, an exercise plan, and behavioral counseling. If those methods don't work, medications or surgical procedures may be options to discuss.

5

## Weight management is an ongoing process

- › Managing weight is not easy. It is a process that requires long-term support and assistance. A weight management plan will probably need to be adjusted over time as you and your healthcare provider find out what is working and what isn't.