

## Healthy Lifestyle 2010

### Inside this issue:

Cause of Weight Gain

Risks of Obesity

Weight Management

- Behavior
- Dietary
- Physical

Pharmacologic and Surgical Options

With the new year rapidly approaching, it's time to start thinking about making our New Year's resolutions for 2010. This year, like so many in the past, as most of us try to set our new goals, we try to decide where we went wrong in 2009.

One resolution that tops most of our lists each year is to get back in shape, or lose weight. This common resolution sounds so simple in concept, yet can be one of the most difficult goals to reach.

In this month's newsletter we give you some tips on how to live a healthy lifestyle that incorporates diet and exercise, and what you can do to better help stick with your weight

loss program in 2010.

### What Causes Weight Gain?

The basic, and most simple reason that people put on weight is because we consume more calories in our diet than we burn through daily exercise.

Additional factors that influence weight are:

- Family History—share food and physical activity habits
- Genetics—strong influence, obesity tends to run in families
- Metabolism—Underactive thyroid
- Behavior or habits—40% of Americans routinely dine out
- Physical Inactivity—sedentary lifestyle, lack of exercise

### Overweight vs. Obesity

While commonly thought to mean the same thing, these are two separate terms. Overweight is having extra body weight. This could be in the form of muscle, bone, fat and/or water weight. Obesity is having a high amount of extra body fat.

Classification of body size is most commonly performed through a calculation known as the Body Mass Index (BMI). BMI is calculated using the following formula: (example: 5'10", 190lbs person)

$\frac{\text{Weight (lbs)} \times 703}{\text{Height (in)} \times \text{Height (in)}}$	$\frac{190 \text{ (lbs)} \times 703}{70" \times 70"}$	BMI = 27.26
---	---	-------------

BMI ranges are shown below:

18.5 — 24.9	Normal Weight
25.0 — 29.9	Overweight
30.0 — 39.9	Obese
> 40.0	Morbid Obesity

### Associated Risks of Obesity

There are many risks and complications associated with obesity. These range from minor to life threatening, and include: Heart Disease, High Blood Pressure, Stroke, Type 2 Diabetes, Cancer (colon, endometrial, breast, kidney, and pancreas), Sleep Apnea, Gallstones, and Osteoarthritis.

It is important to remember that shedding a few extra pounds will not only make you look and feel better, but will help you live a longer, healthier life.

### Weight Management

Successful weight management includes three main types of lifestyle changes to maximize benefit over the long term, these three factors are Behavioral, Dietary, Physical, and when appropriate, pharmacologic and surgical intervention.

### Behavioral Modifications

1. Recognize unhealthy habits that promote inactivity and excessive eating, and change them!
2. Set realistic goals—Too often individuals looking to lose weight are overly optimistic, and often unrealistic with their goals. Target to lose just 5-10% of your body weight over 6 months (typically 1-2lbs/week). Remember that successful treatment is based on lifestyle changes for the long term, not immediate results!
3. Eat slowly—This gives your body time to digest and become full before you overeat
4. Use smaller plates to control portion sizes
5. Don't watch TV while you eat as this not only leads to inactivity, but can distract you from how much you have consumed
6. Keep a record of food intake and activity. Also record your weight at least weekly to track your progress.

### Dietary Changes

1. Reduced calorie diet is the most effective option for the majority of people. Caloric intake should be reduced by 500-1,000 calories per day for most individuals.
2. Foods to limit?
  - Saturated fat—fatty cuts of meat such as ground beef, sausage, bologna, and hot dogs. High fat milk, cream, butter, and ice cream.
  - Trans fat—Partially hydrogenated oils (hard margarines and shortening), baked products and snack foods, fried foods



Your dietary intake will vary based on your nutritional requirements as well as your food preferences and activity level. Talk to your physician or a dietician regarding a custom diet for your needs.

## “Fad Diets”

There are a few diets that you hear about fairly regularly. Many of these diets such as the Atkins or South Beach diet focus on consumption of minimal carbohydrates. While these diets may be beneficial for some in the short term, rarely are they sustainable in the long term. Remember, long term success requires changing your life, not just what you eat.

## Physical Activity

Physical activity is an important aspect not only for weight loss, but more importantly, for keeping excessive weight from returning. It is important to talk your health care provider to be sure that you are healthy enough for physical activity.

For those first starting a new exercise program, it is important to start slowly and increase duration and intensity of exercise over time. Your ultimate goal should be 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity 5-6 days a week.

When many people think of physical activity to lose weight, they think of taking 2 hours out of their day to go to the gym, and the usual response is that people “just don’t have time” for that kind of commitment. The truth is, even small lifestyle changes can be very helpful in reducing weight. These types of changes can include taking the stairs at work, parking your car further from the door, walking while on your break, etc.

When setting up a more intensive exercise regimen, try to choose activities that you find fun and enjoyable, rather than monotonous and boring. For example, try low impact activities such as biking or rollerblading, rather than running or jogging. If you have young children, try to become active in things that they enjoy. 20 minutes of basketball in the driveway is a fun, family activity, in which you will easily burn calories without having thought of this as exercise.

The most important thing to remember is that exercise should be made a priority along with your other daily activities. While it takes some time to get into a routine, these little lifestyle changes quickly become a part of your day that you look forward to. It is important to find a time that is most convenient in your daily routine. While timing should be most convenient for you, do not wait until too late in the evening as this could lead to difficulty in falling asleep.

## Pharmacologic and Surgical intervention

Drug therapy and/or surgical intervention should be reserved as a last line option for most individuals, after they have tried behavioral, dietary and physical approaches without optimal success. While these factors may not be adequate in helping everyone reach their target weight, they will ensure the healthiest path to your goal, and ensure optimal benefit when combined with additional therapy.

### Pharmacologic Therapy

Drug therapy is moderately efficacious in helping individuals to lose weight. It is important to note that the efficacy of drug therapy is greatly increased when combined with the previously discussed strategies such as behavioral, dietary, and physical therapies.



There are presently two FDA approved medications for long term use; sibutramine (Meridia) and orlistat (Xenical, Alli).

Sibutramine is available through prescription only, and signals your brain to curb your appetite. It is important to note that sibutramine can elevate your blood pressure and increase your heart rate so these two values should be closely monitored during therapy.

Orlistat is available as both a prescription product (Xenical) and an over the counter product (Alli). Orlistat reduces the breakdown and absorption of fat.

Other agents such as phentermine are available for short term use (12 weeks or less). Phentermine is a stimulant, and like sibutramine can elevate your blood pressure and heart rate, while making it difficult for some to sleep.

The final options for weight loss are those over the counter agents commonly marketed as natural, herbal therapies. While these products are too numerous to list, they include Dexatrim, Met-T, etc. It is important to note that these products are not FDA approved, or extensively studied and therefore not typically recommended.

### Surgical Intervention

Surgical intervention is an option for those with a BMI > 40, or a BMI > 35 who also have a life-threatening condition due to their obesity. In most cases, surgery should be considered a last line option after diet, exercise, and medication therapy have been attempted without desired results.

As with any surgery, weight loss surgery carries the risk of various complications such as infection or other surgical complications as well as an often need to supplement vitamins and nutrients in the diet due to decreased absorption from food sources. There are various surgical options available beyond the scope of this newsletter. Talk to your physician about these options if you feel they are right for you.

**The most important thing to remember when trying to lose weight is that weight loss programs are not one size fits all. What worked for your neighbor or friend may not work as well, or at all for you. Find a program that you enjoy and can stick with. Be patient, be committed, and enjoy the benefits of a healthier lifestyle.**

**CONTACT US:** While it is important to keep open lines of communication with your physician and local pharmacist regarding your prescriptions, we understand that the amount of information received can sometimes be overwhelming.

We would like to remind you that our clinical department is here to help! We want to see our members taking the right medication at the right cost. While not all medications have a true generic, there are often therapeutic alternatives available that could provide the same benefit, while costing you less.

Please feel free to contact our clinical department at any time for questions regarding your prescriptions, or for cost saving alternatives.

For more information visit our website at: [www.proactrx.com](http://www.proactrx.com)

To subscribe to an electronic version of our monthly newsletter, please email us at [Newsletter@proactrx.com](mailto:Newsletter@proactrx.com) with the subject line “Subscribe”

29 East Main St.  
Gouverneur, NY 13642



Phone: 315-287-3652 ext. 624

Fax: 315-287-7864

E-mail: [ClinicalPharmacist@proactrx.com](mailto:ClinicalPharmacist@proactrx.com)