Obesity Isn't a Failure of Willpower

It's a disease in which the body's weight control system doesn't work as it should.



Obesity is a long-term disease. It affects how the brain, hormones, fat tissue, and metabolism work together to control body weight.

These changes are biological and are not a sign of how hard someone tries or their character or worth.



Understanding that obesity is a disease can reduce blame. It can also help people get better support and treatment.

MYTH

"If I just tried harder, I could lose weight."

Many things that affect weight are outside of a person's control.

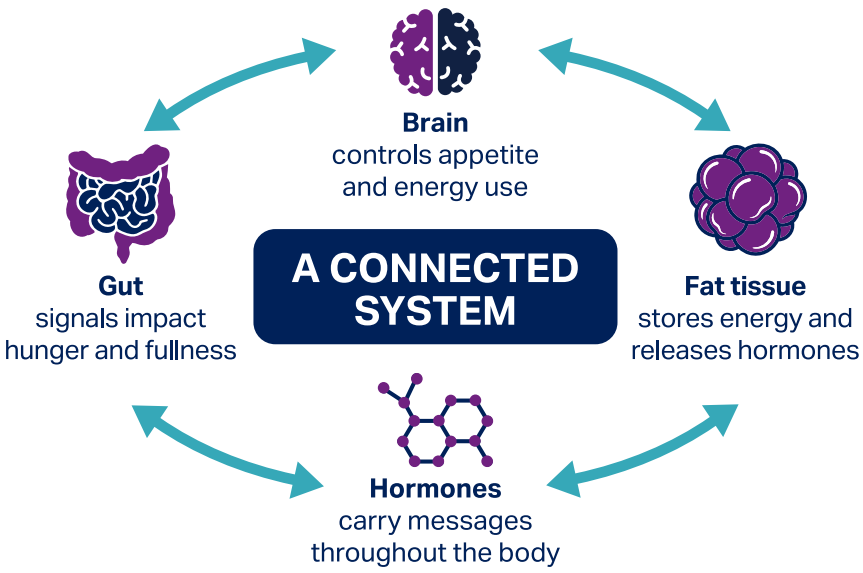
FACT

Many processes in the body affect weight.

The brain, gut, and fat tissue send messages that control hunger, fullness, and energy use.

How the Body Controls Weight

The brain, gut, fat tissue, and hormones work together.



What Happens in Obesity?

Stronger Hunger Messages
The brain receives stronger messages to eat. Messages that say "I'm full" may not work as well.

Slower Metabolism
The body burns less energy during and after weight loss causing the body to gain weight again.

Changes in Fat Tissue
Fat tissue makes hormones that send messages to the brain about energy levels. Sometimes, these messages do not work as they should.

Hormones Change
Leptin is a hormone that helps tell the brain you are full. The brain may not respond as well to this message.

Metabolic Adaptation: Your Body's Survival Response to Weight Loss

After weight loss, the body may burn fewer calories and use less energy. This is a normal survival response, not a personal failure.

Normal Metabolism
- Burns calories at a normal rate
- Normal energy use

After Weight Loss
- Burns fewer calories
- Conserves energy

The Weight Control System Can Be Treated

Different people may need different treatments to support the body's weight control systems.

Lifestyle & Nutrition
Healthy habits and eating patterns that work for you

Sleep & Stress Management
Better sleep and stress support

Behavioral Support
Tips and ongoing support to build healthy habits

Medication
Medicines that impact the body's appetite control systems

Surgery
Changes to the stomach or intestines to impact the body's appetite control systems

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