

Courtesy of



Working with Your Primary Care Provider to Manage Your Weight

Your primary care provider (PCP) can help you lose weight and keep it off. Here are some questions to get the conversation started:

1. Is my weight a problem?

If you have a body mass index (BMI) of 25 or higher, you may be at risk for health problems. Your PCP can advise you about how much weight you need to lose to help improve your health.

2. What's the best way for me to start losing weight?

There are many ways to lose weight, and there is no one way that works for everyone. Healthy eating and physical activity are important. Your provider can help you figure out changes that work for you.

3. What eating plan should I follow?

- There are many different types of eating plans. The most important thing is finding one that you can stick to.
- It is important to let your PCP know about your experience with previous diets.
- In preparing for your visit, it is helpful to jot down diets you have tried and your experience with them.
- You might also write down everything you eat and drink for a few days.
- Your PCP can advise you if there are diets that may be better for you based on your medical problems. For example, some are better for lowering cholesterol, and others may help to lower blood pressure.
- The closer you follow the diet, the more successful you will be with weight loss.

4. Can dietary supplements help me to lose weight?

- There is little evidence that these help with weight loss.
- If you are taking supplements, bring them to your PCP visit. Your PCP can make sure you can safely take them.

5. Are there medications that can help me to lose weight?

Your PCP will determine whether medications can help you and which ones may be best for you. Your PCP may want to refer you to an Obesity Medicine specialist.

6. Are my medications causing me to gain weight?

- Gaining weight is a side effect of some medicines. Your PCP can review your medicines to see if some are causing you to gain weight.
- If there is a medicine that is making you gain weight, sometimes your PCP can change the medicine.
- If you notice weight gain after starting a medicine, tell your PCP.

7. Should I get weight loss surgery?

- Your PCP can advise you about the risks and benefits of weight loss surgery.
- Based on your weight and health problems, your PCP can tell you whether you are eligible for weight loss surgery.
- If you decide that weight loss surgery is right for you, your PCP can refer you to a bariatric surgeon.
- If you have weight loss surgery, it is important to work with your PCP after surgery because medications may need to be adjusted.

8. My PCP doesn't help me with my weight—what should I do now?

Many healthcare providers have expertise in weight management. A good place to start is by asking for a referral to a registered dietitian or Obesity Medicine specialist.

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