



Adult Weight Management



Indian Health Service Division of Diabetes Treatment and Prevention
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Is a Best Practice Adult Weight Management Program right for your diabetes program?

➔ Do you want your diabetes program to be better at:

1. Raising awareness about the importance of achieving and maintaining a healthy weight?

Yes No

What you will be doing: Conducting clinic and community campaigns ♦ Distributing newsletters ♦ Making presentations and circulating posters ♦ Advocating for a supportive culture and long-term commitment for addressing weight issues in your organization

Who will be doing it: Community program staff ♦ Health care providers ♦ Organization leaders

2. Assessing overweight and obesity?

Yes No

What you will be doing: Including the following components when assessing overweight and obesity: anthropometrics, medical, psychological, nutritional, physical activity, and behavior change

Who will be doing it: Health care providers

3. Treating people who are overweight and obese, and helping them maintain a healthy weight throughout life?

Yes No

What you will be doing: Using individualized lifestyle programs that focus on lower-calorie diets, physical activity, and behavior change ♦ Working with the client to formulate a physical activity plan or prescription ♦ Providing ongoing, culturally appropriate individual and group counseling, interventions, and case management

Who will be doing it: Health care providers

4. Educating patients and their families?

Yes No

What you will be doing: Collaborating with each other to offer complementary, community-based, and culturally appropriate lifestyle programs

Who will be doing it: Community program staff ♦ Health care providers

5. Supporting patients and their families?

Yes No

What you will be doing: Offering support groups for patients, their families, and the community ♦ Using talking circle techniques so participants can share their common experiences and problems

Who will be doing it: Community program staff ♦ Health care providers

➔ If you answered "Yes" to many of these questions, go to page 2 to learn how a Best Practice Adult Weight Management Program can benefit your diabetes program!

What is adult weight management?

A variety of approaches for adult weight management are available to help individuals achieve and maintain a healthy body weight. Obesity is a chronic disease, and health care providers and clients must understand that successful treatment requires a lifelong effort. Strategies need to be formulated to address the social, cultural, and environmental factors that underlie overweight and obesity.

Why is adult weight management important to American Indian and Alaska Native communities?

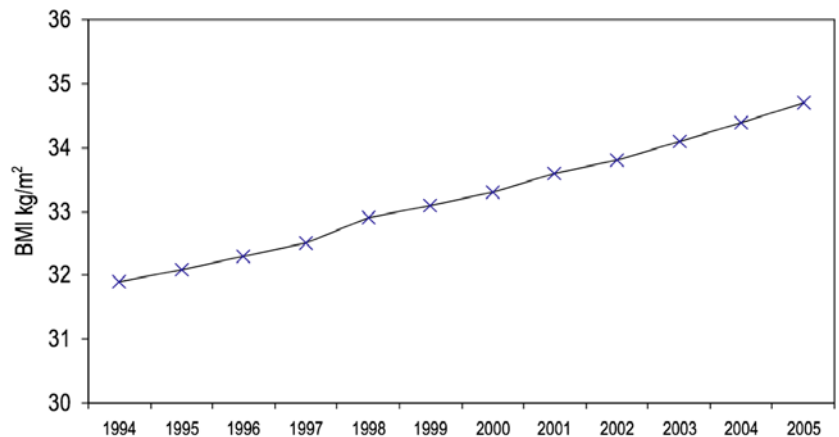
- American Indians and Alaska Natives experience high rates of overweight and obesity.
- Obesity increases the risk for diabetes, high blood pressure and cholesterol, cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, pregnancy complications, and degenerative joint disease.
- People with a body mass index (BMI) ≥ 35 kg/m^2 (Class II Obesity) are 20 times more likely to develop diabetes than people with a lower BMI.
- Overweight and obesity can worsen the complications of diabetes.

The good news about adult weight management...

Even a modest weight loss, such as a loss of 10–15 pounds (5% of total body weight), can have major benefits for people with diabetes. Weight loss can decrease insulin resistance, lower fasting blood sugar levels, and reduce the need for diabetes medication. Among people with prediabetes, a similarly small weight loss can help reduce the risk of developing diabetes.

Body mass index

Adults 20 years of age and older, 1994–2005



Source: IHS Division of Diabetes Treatment and Prevention Statistics, 1994–2005

Higher body mass index (BMI) is an increasing problem among American Indians and Alaska Natives with diabetes. Over an 11-year period, mean BMI increased from 31.9 kg/m^2 to 34.7 kg/m^2 among adults age 20 years and older.

A Best Practice Adult Weight Management Program will require a coordinated approach. Here are some tips on how health care providers, community programs, health care administrators, and tribal leadership can work together.

➔ Working together to improve adult weight management:

1. Who can help?

Ask for and enlist support from: Your local health care team ♦ Community health and wellness programs, such as senior centers, recreation centers, and local walking and running clubs ♦ Community and tribal leaders ♦ Local schools ♦ Local businesses, such as grocery stores, restaurants, and fitness clubs

2. Why is it important to work together?

There are many causes of overweight and obesity (e.g., environmental, genetic, and economic causes). Working with clinic, community, and leadership partners will help you: Leverage resources ♦ Avoid duplicating services ♦ Share staff, ideas, and resources ♦ Get support for your common goal of improving the health of your community

3. How can you work together?

Work with your partners to: Assess the problem ♦ Determine what services are already available ♦ Determine what is needed to create a comprehensive program ♦ Establish programs and activities for the clinic, community, workplace, and home ♦ Maintain regular contact to share and provide support for each other

