



A VISION FOR HEALTHY WEIGHT ACROSS THE LIFESPAN OF AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES

More than 80 percent of American Indians and Alaska Native adults are either overweight or obese. This high obesity rate is straining the Indian health system with an alarming number of patients with diabetes, heart disease, cancer, orthopedic problems, depression, and other disorders. Obesity is draining our precious resources.

Promoting a healthy weight across the lifespan is critical to improving the health status and well-being of American Indians and Alaska Natives. We need a coordinated approach with culturally appropriate messages to help fight the obesity epidemic. That's why Indian Health Service Director Dr. Yvette Roubideaux has designated **Healthy Weight for Life** as the new "umbrella" initiative for guiding all IHS activities that promote healthy weight in Native communities.

You Can Take Action Now to Fight the Obesity Epidemic in Indian Country

Everyone has a role to play in this initiative: health care providers, parents, teachers, community organizations, elected and Tribal leaders, and businesses. Make a commitment every day to the role you can play to promote and inspire a **Healthy Weight for Life**—for the people you serve, for your loved ones, and for you!

Visit the **Healthy Weight for Life** website—<http://www.ihs.gov/healthyweight>—to find the latest information about nutrition, physical activity, and healthy living activities in Indian Country.

- Use the site to find out if you're overweight or obese and learn what journey you can follow to find your **Healthy Weight for Life**. Also, learn about what you can do in your community and at work to promote healthy living.
- Read about Dione Harjo's personal success in overcoming overweight. If you have a success story, share it with the **Healthy Weight for Life** work group at healthyweight@ihs.gov.
- Take advantage of the growing library of resources on <http://www.ihs.gov/healthyweight>.
- Check back regularly to <http://www.ihs.gov/healthyweight> for updates on the **Healthy Weight for Life** initiative.
- Download the free **Healthy Weight for Life** action-oriented guidebooks from <http://www.ihs.gov/healthyweight>.

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Use the **Healthy Weight for Life** action guides—one for health care providers and one for communities, individuals, and families—to improve your practice and your community. These guides provide evidence-based strategies for taking action now. Both guides also list many online resources for healthy weight management programs and activities.

- Get copies of the **Healthy Weight for Life** action guides from <http://www.ihs.gov/healthyweight>. To order hard copies for you and your team, visit <http://www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/Diabetes/RESOURCES/Catalog/rde>.



How to Use the HEALTHY WEIGHT FOR LIFE Action Guides

Review the guides and bring your team together to discuss the **Healthy Weight for Life** action guides. Assess the current situation at your facility or in your community:

- What are your current healthy weight promotion activities?
- What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
- What is the major priority for taking action?
- What gap needs to be filled?
- What actions can you take with limited resources?
- What additional resources do you need to support your healthy weight activities that you should plan and budget for in the future?

Look over the Resources section of the guides to help plan your **Healthy Weight for Life** action steps. There are dozens of online resources for you to use without reinventing the wheel. Write a **Healthy Weight for Life** action plan with goals, objectives, action steps, timeline, and budget.

Help the Indian Health Service spread the word about HEALTHY WEIGHT FOR LIFE

- Use the information you find at <http://www.ihs.gov/healthyweight> or in the **Healthy Weight for Life** action guides and put it in your own written materials, blogs, notices—wherever. We only ask that you use our information for non-commercial purposes, give us credit, and link back to us.
- Adopt the **Healthy Weight for Life** brand for your obesity prevention activities. Add the **Healthy Weight for Life** logo to your website and create a link to <http://www.ihs.gov/healthyweight>. (Easy instructions are on the website.) Also, add the **Healthy Weight for Life** logo to your healthy weight educational materials.
- Become a **Healthy Weight for Life** partner. We'll post your logo and promote your organization on our "Become a Partner" page.
- Promote **Healthy Weight for Life** in your meeting presentations, e-mails and correspondence, articles, blogs, and interviews with local media.
- Identify inspiring success stories in your workplace, community, Tribe, etc., and promote them via news articles, "Healthy Weight Role Model of the Month" posters, videos, podcasts, blogs, etc.

For more information about **Healthy Weight for Life**, contact us at: healthyweight@ihs.gov.