

Top health tips obesity medicine physicians want you to know

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More than 40% of adults in the U.S. are impacted by obesity, which is linked to over 200 comorbidities, including type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and various forms of cancer. But individuals grappling with obesity often find themselves overwhelmed by a plethora of information on weight management, unsure of where to start or how to get help. Hint: It is more than just eating healthy and being physically active.

Here is a list from the AMA's What Doctors Want Patients to Know™ series—which provides physicians with a platform to share what they want patients to understand about today's health care headlines—on some steps patients with obesity can take.

1 Find additional support with anti-obesity medication

In the battle against obesity, physicians play a crucial role in guiding patients towards a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle. While healthy eating and physical activity remain fundamental pillars in weight management, there are instances when additional support becomes necessary. Enter anti-obesity medications—Food and Drug Administration-approved medications to help people achieve and sustain a healthier weight. But [the world of anti-obesity medications is complex](#), and these new and emerging tools are often misunderstood. Learn more with two obesity medicine physicians.

The AMA regards obesity as a disease that poses a major health concern in the U.S. That is why—with strong support from physicians—the AMA adopted policy that urges [insurance coverage parity for emerging obesity treatment options](#).

2 Bariatric surgery isn't an easy way out

Obesity can result in the development of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers. A healthy diet and regular physical activity have often been the go-to for achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. But diet and exercise alone are often not enough to make lasting change. That is where metabolic and bariatric surgery can help. Two AMA members share more.

3 Take steps to maintain a healthy weight

Losing weight is often hard enough to accomplish and maintaining a healthy weight for the long run can seem like an impossible task for many patients. Many patients may expect weight loss to happen quickly, but just like weight gain, it does not happen overnight. An obesity medicine physician discusses what patients need to do to successfully obtain and maintain a healthy weight.

4 Eat a healthy diet

What you eat plays a leading role in your health and well-being. When someone eats healthy, it helps to protect against many chronic diseases such as heart disease, prediabetes, type 2 diabetes and obesity. But with so many fad diets and food recommendations out there, it can be hard for patients to navigate what to eat and what not to eat.

5 Try to increase physical activity

Staying active is one of the best ways to keep your body healthy. It can also improve your overall well-being and quality of life by relieving stress, anxiety, depression, and anger. Maintaining or increasing physical activity is also a key lifestyle change that can help reverse [prediabetes](#) and lower blood pressure. But knowing what type of activity to choose—whether it is moderate or vigorous physical activity—and how to start can be confusing. Learn more about physical activity.

6 Understand vitamins and supplements

While vitamins and nutritional or dietary supplements can be beneficial to your health, they can also involve health risks. Notably, the FDA does not have the authority to review dietary supplement products for safety and effectiveness before they are marketed. And with more than 90,000 different supplements on the market, it can be confusing to understand what is safe and what is not. An obesity medicine physician took time to discuss what doctors want patients to know about vitamins and nutritional supplements.

The [AMA's Diabetes Prevention Guide](#) supports physicians and health care organizations in defining and implementing evidence-based diabetes prevention strategies. This comprehensive and customized approach helps clinical practices and health care organizations identify patients with prediabetes and manage their risk of developing type 2 diabetes, including referring patients at risk to a National Diabetes Prevention Program lifestyle-change program based on their individual needs.