

Overweight and obesity management

Information for the public

Published: 14 January 2025

www.nice.org.uk

Overweight and obesity: the care you should expect

In England, obesity affects around 1 in 4 adults, and almost 1 in 4 children by the time they are 11, and many more people are living with overweight. Overweight and obesity can cause people difficulties in their daily lives, and put them at more risk of serious health problem, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer.

By working together to help people eat well and be active, schools, local authorities, employers and other organisations can help prevent people developing overweight and obesity.

For people who are living with overweight and obesity, the NHS can offer advice and support with making changes to what people eat and how active they are; medicines and surgery to treat obesity; and mental health and other support to help people deal with other problems that may affect or be affected by their weight.

We want this guideline to make a difference to people living with or at risk of overweight or obesity by making sure:

- People understand what a healthy weight is, the risks of living with overweight or obesity, and where they can go for support if they are worried.
- People's weight doesn't stop them getting help and support for other health conditions.
- Healthcare professionals understand how to discuss overweight and obesity sensitively, using non-judgemental language, and how to adapt advice to people's circumstances.
- Healthcare professionals know how and when to check people's weight and ask about any concerns they may have about overweight and obesity, so they can explore the reasons for it and offer support and referral to other services.
- People have clear advice on different options for changing what they eat and how to be more active.
- People understand what medicines NICE has recommended to help manage obesity, whether surgery might be suitable for them and what other services might also be able to support them.
- Schools and childcare settings help children and young people avoid developing overweight or obesity, and help them understand how to eat well and stay active as they grow older.
- Local authorities and other organisations create an environment that helps people of all ages maintain or improve their health, by providing opportunities to be active and to make good food choices.

Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your health and care professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns.

It might help to think about and discuss the following:

- What concerns do you have about your weight?
- Do you have any other physical or mental health conditions that might affect, or be affected by, your weight, what you eat, or your ability to take part in activities?
- Are you taking any medicines that might affect your weight?
- Have you tried to lose weight before? How did you do it, what worked or didn't work for you, and are there other ways you would like to try?
- What matters most to you – what do you want to get out of any support programme or treatment?
- What are you most worried about – are there risks or downsides to any of the options that worry you more than others?
- How will any changes to your lifestyle, changes in your weight, or treatments affect your daily life?
- What happens if you don't want to discuss weight or make changes at the moment?

If you need more support to understand the information you are given, tell your health or care professional.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Where can I find out more?

The [NHS website](#) has more information about obesity and about surgery for obesity.

The organisations below can give you more advice and support.

- [All About Obesity](#)
- [Obesity UK](#)
- [British Dietetic Association](#), 0121 200 8080
- [Obesity Empowerment Network](#)
- [British Obesity and Metabolic Surgery Society](#)

You can also find information about people's experiences of weight and health on [healthtalk](#).

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

We wrote this guideline with people living with overweight or obesity and staff who treat and support them. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

ISBN: 978-1-4731-6764-3