

**With patients who are overweight or obese, how do you decide when to bring the subject up and what do you say?**

1. We weigh patients at every visit. If they have diabetes or cardiovascular disease, we discuss at every visit as a risk factor, just like their cholesterol or A1c. If they are established pt. with no chronic illness, just in for sinusitis or something, and show a weight increase, we mention it and ask if that is a concern to them. If they have a family history of CV disease or diabetes, we mention it as a risk factor and ask if they would like information about reducing weight as a way to reduce a risk factor.
2. Almost all obese people are in for obesity aggravated diseases (hypertension, diabetes, CHF, etc.) At the end of the visit, while discussing management, I will usually say something like "your weight is adding to this problem--what are you willing to do about it?".
3. Usually, I do not have to bring this up. Most patients discuss this with me themselves. I have posted in every examination room a BMI chart. Also, we have a flow sheet to track weights from one visit to another.

Treatment strategies are discussed with each visit. I try to start on a positive note such as "Wow, it looks like you haven't gained any weight since your last visit" or "I am so glad you came to see me today". We focus on the things that are done right such as exercise, eating fruits and vegetables, etc... All treatment strategies are discussed including Bariatric surgery, support organizations, medications. Then, a follow-up appointment is set to track progress once a treatment strategy is set.

I do not feel that it is taboo to discuss weight with patients. I have not had a patient complain about discussing their weight, either. Most people know if they are overweight. Most people know it is the cause of many of their complaints. It still remains a difficult condition to treat. It requires a lot of will-power on the part of the patient, and that is tough!

4. I never bring up the subject on the first visit. All overweight patients know they are overweight, they do not need to be told, as a matter of fact telling them just makes them feel like more of a failure. I usually wait until they bring up the subject or I have labs that would improve, such as glucose, with weight loss. I try never to use the term diet or weight loss but instead talk about eating healthier.