

talking to your patients



why?

According to National Institutes of Health (NIH) studies, talking with patients about weight control helps promote healthy eating and physical activity behavior change.

bringing up the topic

The Weight-control Information Network suggests approaching the subject of weight loss if your patient has:

- a BMI of 30 or above
- a BMI between 25 and 30 plus two or more health problems linked to weight
- a waist size over 35 inches (women) or 40 inches (men)--even if BMI is less than 25-- and two or more health problems linked to weight

Use terms preferred by patients, such as "weight", "excess weight", "unhealthy body weight", and "BMI".

setting goals*

Ask your patients how ready they are to adopt healthier eating and physical activity habits. Work as a partner with each patient to develop a plan. Some questions to ask:

- What kinds of foods do you eat on a typical day?
- What does 'healthy eating' mean to you?"
- Do you know how much physical activity you should do each week to stay healthy?
- What are your goals regarding your weight?
- What kind of changes would you be willing to start with?
- Is there a family member or friend you can ask to partner with you in achieving your goal?
- What kind of help would you like from me about your weight?

Keep the focus on changing habits and making lifestyle changes, rather than solely losing weight. Emphasize changing perspective long-term rather than looking at immediate results.

*Information taken from: win.niddk.nih.gov

eat + move

create a healthy eating plan following these suggestions:

eat more: beans, fruits and vegetables, lean meats and seafood, nuts, whole grains (brown rice and oatmeal)

eat less: breads and pasta made with refined grains, foods with butter or other fats that are solid at room temperature, and sugary drinks and desserts

encourage your patients to be more active using these suggestions:

do 30 minutes of physical activity a day, 5 days a week

choose aerobic activities that are fun, like brisk walking, dancing, playing a sport, etc.

build strength with weight lifting at least 2 days a week--cans of food and books are great substitutes for weights

take 10 minute breaks at work to go for a walk outside or to take the stairs

Encourage your patients to participate in the challenge!

For more tips, visit www.Move2HealthCentralVa.org