



WEIGHT LOSS / EATING HABITS

## Weight Loss: It's Time We Help (the Right Way)

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As a chiropractor, you work with dozens of patients whose problems could be alleviated if they were to lose weight. But most of your patients don't know how to do that on their own, and unfortunately, most chiropractors don't see weight loss as something they can help their patients navigate.

### Why We're Needed

Many chiropractors assume weight loss is a personal problem patients need to tackle on their own, but research shows that 84 percent of individuals who try to lose weight are not successful.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, our patients need our help. When it comes to healthy, nutrition-based weight loss, chiropractors have skills that are uniquely suited to helping patients succeed. We studied nutrition in school. Most medical doctors didn't.

The truth is that while only 5-12 percent of the American population sees a chiropractor on a regular basis, 56 percent of all adults want to lose weight.<sup>2-3</sup> Excess weight is associated with high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and an increased risk of stroke.<sup>4</sup>



If you want to help your patients get truly healthy, you should offer nutrition-based weight-loss solutions in your office. This will not only do more to help your patients leave your office feeling satisfied with your care, but will also help you tap into the much larger pool of individuals who are interested in losing weight.

#### Step #1: Teach Them What to Eat More of (and What to Avoid)

But here's the key - you have to be committed to teaching your patients how to eat a nutritionally dense, unprocessed, plant-based diet, and you need to provide them with the resources they need to succeed. If you put your patients on fad diets or offer short-term solutions, it just won't work.

Calorie-restricted diets that don't pay attention to nutrition consistently fail, and for one simple reason: they don't modulate the body's glucose and insulin levels.<sup>5</sup> If you have a patient who is only eating 1,500 calories per day, but is getting all of those calories from junk food, any weight loss that happens will *not* be sustainable. Processed foods are a double-edged sword. They damage the body when they spike blood glucose levels on their way in, and they damage the body over time by causing increased resistance to insulin.<sup>6</sup> If your patients are eating too many refined carbohydrates in a meal, those foods are going to cause a significant spike in blood glucose levels, which will leave them feeling hungry again within hours.

Your patients' cells will start to become [insulin-resistant](#) after being plastered with so much glucose for so long, and eventually, they'll start storing that excess energy as fat. If your patients' blood sugar levels are all over the place, it will be almost impossible to lose weight and keep it off.

The truth is, long-term weight loss just isn't possible without nutrition. Your patients need to learn how to eat foods that are unprocessed, plant-based and rich in fiber. Whole grains and legumes, fresh vegetables, and fruits won't spike your patients' blood sugar levels and cause a dramatic insulin response. These foods won't stimulate the production of fat-storing hormones, and they

won't leave your patients in a state of chronic nutritional deficiency.

When your patients make the switch and start eating foods that are unprocessed and nutritionally dense, they won't feel so hungry and they'll naturally be able to consume fewer calories. Eating a diet that is rich in fiber will support a healthy [gut microbiome](#), which has been associated with everything from improved mental health to reduced rates of diabetes.<sup>7-8</sup>

Being healthy and lean is really all about consuming fresh, plant-based foods instead of processed foods from a box, bag or can.

## Step #2: Give Them the Tools and Create a System of Accountability

But for a lot of patients, this isn't going to be intuitive or easy. That's where you come in. Your patients need help learning which foods to eat, which foods to avoid, and how to integrate this new way of eating into their busy lives. This means you'll need to provide recipes, example menus, a food journal, checklists, and the accountability to stay on track.

To get started, I recommend you either find an existing booklet containing all of this information or create your own. You can also put all of the required supplements together in a bag. Then, when a patient agrees to change the way they eat, you can provide them with this "kit" containing everything they need.

This way, all of the tools and resources your patients need are packaged in an easy-to-use format that streamlines and simplifies the process for them.

At this stage, I also recommend that you schedule each patient for weekly "accountability" visits where you or a staff member reviews their progress and makes sure they stay on track.

During these visits, you should review the patient's food journal and make sure they have followed the guidelines you provided. If anything is amiss, you'll have the chance to correct the problem and make sure the patient can move forward and achieve the results they are looking for.

When you make everything this straightforward *and* provide the resources I've mentioned, you will find that your patients get great results.

## A Great Bonus: The Practice Benefits

If you help your patients lose weight the healthy and natural way, they'll thank you for it. They'll appreciate the comprehensive and life-changing care they've received in your office, and they'll want to keep coming back again and again. And when a patient is really happy with their care, they'll tell their friends and family members about it, too! No one wants to keep such good news a secret.

If you've been looking for a way to retain more patients, keep them coming back and get them referring new patients to your office - this is it. You'll help more people, change more lives and build a thriving clinic in the process. And isn't all that why you became a chiropractor in the first place?

## References

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