



WEIGHT LOSS / EATING HABITS

A Growing Problem That's Too Big for Us to Ignore

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As we come upon the start of the new year, many of us have spent time thinking about what we can and should do differently in 2024. Your list may include building your practice, changing your office software or adding an associate. For your patients, the health-related portion of their New Year's Resolutions probably includes weight loss and fitness.

A recent article demonstrated just how important these resolutions have become.¹ According to 2022 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):²

- 40% of adults in Louisiana, Oklahoma and West Virginia are obese (BMI of 30.0 or above).
- 35% of adults in 19 other states are also living with obesity.
- 30% of adults in another 22 states are above the obesity level.
- 25% of California, Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Vermont adults are obese.

Only in the District of Columbia does under a quarter (24.3%) of the adult population live with obesity. Worse yet, 17% of children ages 10-17 are obese, with more than 20% of youth in seven states living with obesity.³

While this data is bad news for the health of your patients, it is very good news for the companies that sell drugs prescribed for obesity. Among the most popular are orlistat (\$207-\$726 for a 30-day supply according to GoodRx), liraglutide (\$1,060-\$1,115), semaglutide (\$916-\$978), and phentermine-topiramate (\$159-\$213).

Depending on which state you practice in, at least a quarter of your patients are in need of serious weight loss; maybe as many as a third. Their most likely choices are expensive drugs with serious side effects ("symptoms of liver disease," "signs of kidney stones," "signs of pancreas or

gallbladder disease”, “depression, suicidal thoughts/attempts, or other mental/mood problem,” and/or “serious allergic reaction,” according to WebMD).

Or, you could make 2024 the year you focus on meeting your patients’ need to achieve weight wellness.

As you already know, the first course of action is to improve their diet and exercise routine. But beyond that, there are nutrition-based choices that will certainly cost a lot less than \$1,000 per month with few, if any, side effects.

Needless to say, this could also be a very positive step for your practice. People who lose weight and regain their health are quick to refer others with the same challenges. Weight loss may bring in a whole new group of patients who would never learn about the importance of consistent chiropractic care any other way.

With roughly a third of adults and another sixth of young people obese, safe and economical weight loss is an opportunity to reach more than 100 million people in the U.S. Something to think about as you plan for a better 2024 for your practice and your patients. ?

References

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2. Adult Obesity Prevalence Maps. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Data & Statistics.
3. State of Childhood Obesity. Ages 10-17.
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