

Natural Health and Weight Management

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Nearly every day, those of us in the health and wellness field face a patient who is 50 or more pounds overweight and wants to know what can be done. Many of these patients had been thin and trim much of their adult lives, but are now fighting the battle of the bulge. What can we do to help them with efficient weight management without using fad diets? Let's examine weight from a wellness perspective.

First, we need to detect and correct any vertebral subluxations to help the patient's body prepare for weight loss. Obviously, subluxations prevent specific organ systems from functioning at their optimal potential, making weight management more challenging.

There are various ways to determine system weakness imbalances, in addition to vertebral subluxation analysis. In our chiropractic office, I use contact reflex analysis (developed by Dr. Vermendeal) to determine these imbalances, and then recommend specific designed nutrition for a patient. This promotes the strengthening of any weak systems, which must be addressed before the individual can accomplish successful weight management. I have also recently designed natural health and weight management surveys that the patient fills out to help identify specific system imbalances. A medical issue can obviously affect the patient's inability to lose weight, so we always refer him or her to Dr. Streeter to make sure that Wilson's syndrome is not an issue. (Wilson's syndrome will be examined by Dr. Streeter in an upcoming column.)

Let's look at six specific body systems that can be weak or out of balance, preventing the body from working at its optimum potential, which could result in difficult weight management for the patient.

Eating more calories than we burn certainly contributes to most weight problems. A patient may have gone from an active to a sedentary job, changed eating habits, or be experiencing typical physiological changes from aging. Recommendations include:

- Eat more fruit and vegetables to the diet, with an emphasis on fruit that has a fairly low glycemic index.
- Meals heavy in animal protein, dairy, breads, gourmet foods and refined carbohydrates should be avoided, particularly after 5:00 p.m. or within 4-5 hours of going to bed.
- The patient should remember: Breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a pauper.
- Exercise at least three days a week.

Hormonal imbalances must be addressed for the patient to experience successful weight management. Many women who have become estrogen-dominant, for example, need natural progesterone (as discussed in previous articles). You may need to recommend specific nutritional support for the thyroid

or adrenals if they have been identified as imbalances, or a specific medical issue (Wilson's syndrome) may need to be identified by the appropriate health professional. Other endocrine system imbalances may exist that you can support with specific nutritional data.

Patients with low blood pressure, and those addicted to soda pop, refined carbohydrates, and/or alcohol present another real challenge. These patients often have a severe weight problem. Once we have identified a blood sugar imbalance, appropriate nutritional support is recommended. This may include glucose tolerant factor chromium. Dr. Streeter has found gymnema sylvestre, which helps feed and heal the pancreas, to be quite helpful. I also have the patient fill out a B-complex vitamin deficiency syndrome survey to see if this is indicated for system support. The patient should be encouraged to switch from simple refined carbohydrates to complex ones (fruit/vegetables) and be weaned off sugar-laden liquids, substituting these with diluted fruit juices.

Bladder/kidney system imbalances also play a significant factor in weight gain. Identify subluxation levels that affect those systems first to facilitate the body's healing. If a bladder/kidney system weakness/imbalance has been identified (possibly through the methods indicated above), there is specific nutritional support. We provide the patient with a list of foods and liquids that are bladder/kidney friendly and facilitate the body's natural elimination of excess fluid (a significant contributor to weight gain).

For liver/gallbladder imbalance, we use a specific flush system and nutritional support. Beets are a wonderful cleansing agent, and most patients will experience successful weight management once the liver/gallbladder systems are balanced.

Patients with digestive enzyme imbalance need natural enzymatic support to accomplish weight management.

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