

Helping Patients Overcome Obesity: A Case Study

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I have always enjoyed working with overweight patients. In fact, when I first started practice 31 years ago I developed a weight loss program for overweight patients which took off like wild fire and within a few months, it was literally standing room in my waiting room. 68% of all Americans are considered overweight or obese. Concentrate on helping these people and you will feel a very good sense of accomplishment.

I have always had a burning desire to help overweight people lose weight. When I was little, my parents took me to the family doctor because I would never eat all the food on my plate. The doctor said, "leave him alone. If he's hungry, he will eat." My parents agreed.

By the time I was 22 years of age, I was ranked among the top middle distance runners in Atlanta as well as becoming a student at Life Chiropractic College in Marietta, Georgia. By the time I graduated, I knew that my practice was going to be one that helped people with back pain but also one that helped people get fit and become more in tune with their bodies.

Now at the age of 56, I rank as one of the top master tri-athletes, kayakers and mountain bikers in Georgia.

Recently, the A&E Channel was at my clinic in Roswell, Georgia for four hours. I was the treating doctor for a 350-pound Roswell man that has been unwilling to acknowledge the fact that he needs to lose weight or have himself examined and treated for a variety of conditions related to his obesity. His family intervened and convinced him the need for professional care.

The man had been in several movies and had connections with the A&E people. They needed an extremely overweight person that was in denial. He fit the bill exactly.

Next, the A&E channel needed a local doctor that was highly fit and could treat his pain and deal with diet and exercise in a professional manner. They located me. The A&E channel was there every step of the way as they filmed our entire consultation, examination and treatment of the 350-pound Roswell man.

During the examination, I checked his blood pressure and pulse rate before, during and after a stationary bike ride. He could only go for 5 minutes on the bike even with no resistance. It took a long time for his pulse rate to come back down even after only 5 minutes on the bike. His abdominal circumference was 61 inches. Anything over 40 inches signifies excess pericardial fat. His BMI (body mass index) was 45. Normal is 18-25 for him. His body fat was 46%. Normal would be 15-20%. He is presently 49 years of age. My calculations give him a life expectancy of less than 60 years of age if he stays the same as he is now.

Tough Truths

I emphasized to him that if he does not lose the fat, he will die prematurely. I also emphasized to his wife who was sitting next to him that if he does not lose weight, she will not have a husband around within 10 years.

Tears were shed on camera by both husband and wife because we were giving him advice that no doctor had given him before. The facts were there. He could either change his lifestyle or he could live a low quality life for the next 10 years or so and then die. I let him know that he was not being fair to his wife by dying prematurely.

I also let him know that I will always be there for him and that we will work as a team. I take this seriously because if we do not succeed, the man will die a slow painful death.

When he was in his 20's, he was of normal weight and had actually run the NYC marathon three times. Psychological stresses began in his life when he was in his 30's which resulted in his children not speaking to him for the past 10 years and as a result, he transferred that stress into overeating. I let him know that the body had memory and that if he had a normal weight it in the past, he can get it back again.

After the examination regarding his body fat and heart, I examined him with chiropractic. He had foot pain, ankle pain, knee pain, hip pain, back pain and neck pain. There was actually a 15 degree lateral tilt in his neck when viewing him from the front. X-rays confirmed the rotational misalignment. He said that he has pain from his neck and into his arm. His feet were flat from the constant weight, he had degeneration of his knees and his hips were wearing much faster than normal. Not only is his heart in a dangerous state, but his joints are approaching the point of no return if nothing is done to correct his problems.

Regimen

When a person is 150 pounds overweight, the amount of pressure exerted on each leg when he walks is actually 1.2 times his body weight which is 420 pounds. If he tried to run, there would be over 1000 pounds of pressure on each leg during impact. Running is not an option but stationary bike, walking, weights, swimming etc are. I asked him if he had a dog and he does. I told him to take his dog for a 30 minute walk each day. I also told him that when he goes to the store, park far away from the store and walk. We put him on a daily exercise program and will monitor him each day.

After the chiropractic examination, I adjusted him and he felt much better. I gave him a list of many exercises that are directed at restoring his functional leg length discrepancy, the neck tilt, the muscle symmetry in his spine as well in the rest of his body. This ongoing program will address not only his body weight problem but the painful and degenerative problems associated with it that only chiropractic can help.

Presently I am working with him with his diet and exercise. For the first 2 weeks, I limited his carbohydrates to 60 grams per day. The next 2 weeks of the month, he is allowed to increase his carbo but stays at 1200-1500 in calories. He will cycle on this diet back and forth with a few dietary modifications over the next several months. Using this method, he will lose weight but will feel good at the same time.

Obese Americans spend over 147 billion dollars per year in health care costs as a result of obesity. That is 10% of the national health care cost. Each obese person spends on the average of \$1500 more

per year as a result of obesity. One mission in my life that I have is to help people that are in pain to get out of pain and another mission I have is to help people lose weight and get fit. There is no drug or surgery that can make you feel as good as it feels to be fit, trim and pain-free using natural methods.

In one year, A&E will return and view the progress we have made. The documentary will be televised within the next month on the A&E channel.