

OBESITY

About two thirds of the US population is overweight or obese. Obese individuals are prone to developing diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, respiratory problems and arthritis. Obese people frequently turn to a professional or commercial weight-loss program for help. These programs will work only if the amount of calories in the diet are decreased, and/or burned with increased physical activities.

Obesity is a chronic condition that can be falsely viewed as a temporary problem, amenable to treatment with strenuous diet. As most overweight people know, **weight control must be considered a life-long effort**. To lose weight, follow the guidelines below.

1. The weight-loss diet should be safe. It should include all the Recommended Daily Allowances (RDA) for vitamins, minerals, and protein. It should be low in calories, not in essential foodstuffs.
2. The weight-loss program should aim for a **slow, steady weight loss**. Expect to lose only about a pound a week after the first week or two. With some diets there is an initial rapid weight loss due to fluid loss, which is regained when you return to a normal diet.
3. If you plan to lose more than 15 to 20 pounds, have any health problems, or take medications on a regular basis, you should be evaluated by your medical doctor, particularly if you follow a liquid diet.
4. It is of no benefit to lose weight, only to regain it later. Weight maintenance requires perseverance and a long-term commitment of behavior modification, healthy eating habits and increased physical activity, factors frequently overlooked in weight-loss programs. You have to permanently alter the lifestyle that contributed to weight gain in the past.

You can find additional information about the causes and treatment of obesity in the NIH Website:
<http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/understanding.htm>

Obesity increases the risk of surgery, particularly abdominal obesity, and the chances of mechanical failure of the artificial joint replacement. The heavier you are the higher the risks. Body Mass Index (BMI) determines whether you are overweight or obese. You can determine your BMI by accessing <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/calc-bmi.htm>

Every effort should be made to lose weight before surgery to decrease the risk of complications. Maintaining the weight loss will prolong the life of the artificial joint by reducing the loads it will be subjected to on every single step and on any weight-bearing activity. The hip joint works as a lever arm. So if you lose one pound the hip joint load may decrease several pounds depending on the activity.

For additional information you can contact the Weight Control Information Network, 1 Win Way, Bethesda, MD 20892-3665 Phone: (202) 828-1025 Fax: (202) 828-1028 E-mail: win@info.niddk.nih.gov Internet: <http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov> Toll-free number: 1-877-946-4627

At Hospital for Special Surgery you can request a specialized nutritional consult with Deborah McInerney, MS, RD, CDN by calling (212) 774-7638

The local Weight Watchers leader Mrs. Pamela Dadlani meets with members every Friday at 12.15PM on 244 East 93rd Street (corner of Second Avenue).

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