

Clinical Practice Guidelines on Obesity



This department covers selected points from the 2007 Endocrine Update: A CME Day from the Division of Endocrinology and Metabolism at McMaster University and the University of Western Ontario.
Program Chairs: Aliya Khan, MD, FRCPC, FACP, FACE and Terri Paul, MD, MSc, FRCPC



D. Lau, MD, PhD, FRCPC; and Nazir Khan

Despite major advancements in our knowledge of obesity, we are witnessing epidemic proportions of overweight and obese individuals in Canada and the rest of the world. Approximately 59% of the adult Canadian population is overweight, with 23% being obese. Even more alarming is the rapid increase in childhood obesity; in 2004, one in four (26%) Canadian children aged two to 17 years was overweight.

Obesity is no longer a body image, but a societal and public health issue. Scientific evidence suggests that overweight people are at increased risk for numerous health problems, including:

- Type 2 diabetes,
- hypertension,
- dyslipidemia,
- coronary artery disease,
- stroke,
- osteoarthritis and
- certain forms of cancers.

Significant advances have been made in dietary, exercise, behavioural, pharmacologic and bariatric surgical approaches to the management of obesity.

Dr. Lau is a Professor of Medicine, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Julia McFarlane Diabetes Research Centre, University of Calgary; and Staff Endocrinologist, Foothills Medical Centre and Calgary Health Region, Calgary, Alberta.

Mr. Khan is a Third Year Health Science Student, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.

Lifestyle modifications continue to be the most useful treatment strategy, though long-term adherence is poor. Pharmacotherapy and bariatric surgery are useful modalities in specific segments of overweight and obese people.

Among the key recommendations of the evidence-based 2006 *Clinical Practice Guidelines on Obesity* was the measurement of waist circumference in addition to BMI in all adults and adolescents for the assessment of cardiometabolic risks. Specific cutoff points for different ethnic groups should be used to assess health risks and determine appropriate management strategies. In addition, BP, heart rate, fasting glucose level and lipid profile should be evaluated. Individualized, comprehensive lifestyle modification programs, including dietary counselling and at least 30 minutes of moderately intense daily activity should be developed to help overweight and obese individuals achieve healthy weight goals. The guidelines emphasize the health benefits that can be achieved through a modest 5% to 10% loss of body weight. Regular monitoring and reinforcement of health goals should help patients maintain their healthy weight targets.

The complete guidelines provide detailed evidence-based management and prevention strategies for all age groups and will benefit primary care and specialist health professionals working with overweight and obese adults and children. 