

A Publication of the Obesity Action Coalition

Summer 2011

# YOUR **WEIGHT** Matters

MAGAZINE

## Exercise During Pregnancy

Breastfeeding  
and Obesity

Weight and  
Intimacy

Kid's Corner –  
Eating Healthy on  
Summer Break

How Pets Can  
Enhance Your  
Health



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## Weight loss surgery was not a “quick fix.” It was the start of my new life.

This was not a fly by night decision. I knew exactly what I was doing. This was the start of being there for my kids; of feeling better as a person; of getting more self-confidence, which was something I had been lacking for quite some time. It's not a quick fix. I still have to work at it every day and for the rest of my life, and I'm okay with that.

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Welcome to the Summer issue of *Your Weight Matters Magazine*. Our current issue is dedicated to the family, and what a perfect time for it. This is the time of the year when you can get outside and enjoy life with the people that you love. It is so much fun to try something different. Try canoeing, geocaching, or biking; and, I know it is not always easy. I am one of the least athletic persons out there. Athletics never did come naturally to me. Maybe you are the same. But, that shouldn't keep you from enjoying the outdoors. You may not do something well, but you can still loosen up and have fun. Don't sit on the sidelines. Get out there and enjoy.

Debuting in this issue, you will find the brand new "Kid's Corner" on page 30. This section is designed for both parents and children to enjoy together. In this issue's "Kid's Corner," we are featuring a great article on "Eating Healthy on Summer Break," a look at the USDA's brand new "MyPlate," which replaced the Food Pyramid, and a fun word search!

Also in this issue, you will see some great articles on pregnancy and weight, weight and intimacy and much more. You will notice this issue is larger than previous ones. This was made possible by the generous support of our advertisers. As such, I would like to welcome Ardyss, BodyMedia and Healthy Brands as new advertisers to the OAC's official publication – *Your Weight Matters Magazine*.

Always remember, the OAC is hard at work for you. I am often asked what the OAC really is. Just think of us as "The Voice." We are out there working for you, doing our best to ensure that obesity treatment is included as an essential benefit in any healthcare benefits package that may be passed. We are the voice talking to legislators and policy makers, making sure that we are not left out and left behind. We hope you enjoy the Summer 2011 issue!



## YOURWEIGHT Matters MAGAZINE

Summer 2011 | Volume VI | Issue 4

*Your Weight Matters Magazine* is the official publication of the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC). The OAC is an independent National non-profit organization dedicated to providing a voice to those affected by obesity.

*Your Weight Matters Magazine* is a quarterly publication published in Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. Subscription to *Your Weight Matters Magazine* is an OAC membership benefit.

Opinions expressed by the authors are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the OAC Board of Directors and staff. Information contained herein should not be construed as delivery of medical advice or care. The OAC recommends consultation with your doctor or healthcare professional.

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*Your Weight Matters Magazine* - OAC ♦ 4511 North Himes Avenue, Suite 250  
Tampa, FL 33614 ♦ (800) 717-3117 ♦ Fax: (813) 873-7838  
[www.obesityaction.org](http://www.obesityaction.org) ♦ [info@obesityaction.org](mailto:info@obesityaction.org)

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# EXERCISE

## *During Pregnancy*

by Stephanie F. Deivert, RD, LDN

**Exercise and taking care of yourself become much more important during pregnancy, because now it is not just YOU anymore.**

So you're pregnant, you're gaining weight, you feel tired and certainly not your best. With all of this, how and why exercise?

The little one growing inside of you is relying on you to take the best care of yourself and provide the healthiest environment for them to develop. Regular exercise builds bones and muscles and gives you more energy and endurance.

When you are pregnant, you may be plagued with backaches, constipation, swelling and bloating, all of which exercise helps. It can help prevent dangerous excessive weight gain during pregnancy, as well as gestational diabetes. If nothing else, it makes you feel like you can get through the day, improving your mood and helping you sleep better.

### **Things to Consider When Exercising While Pregnant**

Some things to take into consideration about your body while you are pregnant when considering exercise are:

- **Your balance**
- **Your joints**
- **Your heart rate**
- **Your rate of breathing**

Remember that during pregnancy you may be carrying an extra 15-40 pounds (in a relatively short period of time, usually centered in your front); this can make you less stable and more likely to lose your balance, especially later in pregnancy. Also, hormones produced during pregnancy cause stretching of ligaments that support your joints, which could put you at a higher risk for injury.

You will also notice that the further along you are, your body will need to work harder just to carry your extra weight. You will notice an increase in your heart rate and rate of breathing, even by just doing simple tasks. Exercise increases the rate of oxygen delivery to the muscles that you are working out and away from other parts of your body (your baby). So, it is important not to overdo it.

**How much exercise is needed during pregnancy?** The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology recommends 30 minutes or more of moderate exercise per-day on most, if not all, days of the week, unless you have a medical or pregnancy complication.

### Tips for Safety:

- Before exercise, talk to your doctor about your exercise plans. Your healthcare provider will be able to give you individualized recommendations based on your medical history.
- Exercise at a pace where you can talk comfortably, never to the point of breathlessness or exhaustion.
- Try not to let your heart rate go above 140 beats per minute.
- Avoid bouncy, high impact or jerky motions.
- Listen to your body – take frequent breaks and drink plenty of fluids.
- Avoid exercise in extremely hot or cold weather.
- Wear comfortable footwear with strong ankle and arch support.
- Avoid rocky terrain, and slippery or unstable ground.
- Avoid contact sports or sports that may cause trauma (skiing, horseback riding) while pregnant.
- Avoid standing still for long periods of time.
- During the second and third trimester, avoid exercises that involve lying flat on your back – this decreases blood flow to your womb.
- Include warm-up and cool downs, including stretching with your workouts. Aim for about 10-15 minutes for each warm-up and cool down.

Choosing what type of exercise you do depends on your baseline level of activity. Most types of exercise are safe during pregnancy. If you have not exercised regularly prior to becoming pregnant, you can still start a regular routine; it would just be a good idea to

*Exercise During Pregnancy continued on page 6*



start slowly. Try starting with just five minutes of exercise every day, then try adding five minutes every week until you are up to 30 minutes per-day on most days of the week.

## Exercise Ideas for Everyone



**Walking** – brisk walking gives your total body a workout and is easy on your muscles and joints. Walking is considered a safe form of exercise to initiate during pregnancy.

**Swimming** – swimming works out your body and uses the water as resistance for toning up your muscles. It prevents swelling (as some may get with walking or upright exercises) and it also helps you stay cool in warm weather.



**Aerobics or Pilates** – they have classes or videos especially designed for pregnant women. Other options would include water aerobics or low-impact aerobics.

**Cycling** – preferably use stationary or recumbent positions with your growing belly and precious cargo. You will certainly get an excellent aerobic and strength workout with cycling.



**Yoga** – they have prenatal yoga videos and classes. The stretching, strength and breathing exercises help to prepare you for giving birth and teach you to calm and center yourself.



**Ball Exercises** – these exercises will help you build your core strength, you just need a stability ball (55-75 cm depending on height). You can start during your first trimester and do them as many days as you would like. Even just balancing and sitting on the stability ball will help build core strength.

**Dancing** – some forms of dancing could be a safe and fun way to get some exercise during early pregnancy. Some women take salsa or jazz dance lessons for exercise. However, as your belly grows, you want to be cautious of your increasing lack of balance and also want to avoid jerky and bouncy movements.

If you exercised on a regular basis prior to becoming pregnant, most doctors will tell you it is okay to continue with that form of exercise during pregnancy. You just need to listen to your body and modify your routine as necessary. Remember, if you feel like you are not getting enough oxygen, your baby is feeling the same way.

## Exercises Continued from Pre-pregnancy Routines

**Running** – if you were a runner before you became pregnant, it is okay to continue running.



Choosing what type of exercise you do depends on your baseline level of activity. Most types of exercise are safe during pregnancy. If you have not exercised regularly prior to becoming pregnant, you can still start a regular routine; it would just be a good idea to start slowly.

**Elliptical or Ski Trainers** – this is another great way to get a cardio and strength workout.

### Strength Training –

this helps to increase your muscle tone, and may even help decrease or prevent some aches and pains that are common during pregnancy. Remember, during pregnancy it is a good idea to do less weight and more repetitions.



## Exercises to Help Prepare for Labor

*(Start these early in your third trimester to help strengthen your muscles for delivery.)*

**Kegel Exercises** – these exercises strengthen the pelvic floor. You should do these daily, multiple times per day, to help prevent urinary incontinence, decreasing risk of hemorrhoids and speeding the healing after an episiotomy or tear, should you have one during childbirth.

Some evidence suggests that a strong pelvic floor may shorten the pushing stage of labor. Repeatedly contract (for a count of four) and then relax your pelvic-floor muscles as though you're stopping and starting the flow of urine. DO NOT actually do it while you are urinating.

**Pelvic Tilts** – this variation of the pelvic tilt, done on all fours, strengthens the abdominal muscles and eases back pain during pregnancy and labor. Get down on your hands and knees and as you breathe in, tighten your abdominal muscles and tuck your buttocks under and round your back (like a cat arching its back). Relax your back into a neutral position as you breathe out.

**Squats** – squatting helps to prepare for giving birth. This exercise strengthens your thighs and helps open your pelvis. Stand (you could hold something for balance) with your feet slightly more than hip-width apart, toes pointed outward. Contract your abdominal muscles, lift your chest and relax your shoulders. Then lower your tailbone toward the floor as though you were sitting down on a chair. Take a deep breath in and then exhale, pushing into your legs to rise to a standing position.

**Tailor Pose** – This position can help open your pelvis and loosen your hip joints in preparation for birth. It can also improve your posture and ease tension in your lower back. Sit up straight against a wall with the soles of your feet touching each other (sit on a folded towel or chair cushion if that's more comfortable for you). Gently press your knees down and away from each other, but do not force them. Stay in this position for as long as you're comfortable. You can even sit watching TV this way.

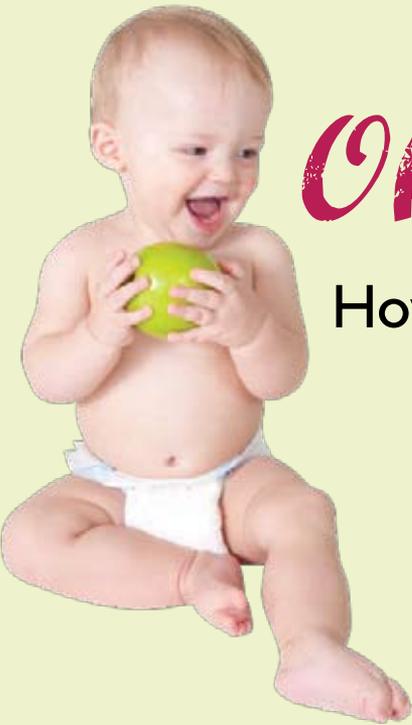
## Exercise Because it's Important

Whether you were inactive when it came to exercise or a marathon runner, light to moderate exercise during pregnancy is important and helpful to keep you and your baby healthy and to build stamina for labor and delivery. Just remember not to overdo it, listen to your body and pick something that is fun and relaxing for you and your baby.



### About the Author:

*Stephanie F. Deivert, RD, LDN, has been with the Center for Nutrition and Weight Management at Geisinger Health System since 2002. She completed her Bachelor's in Nutritional Sciences and Exercise Physiology at Penn State University in 2002 and her Dietetic Internship at Geisinger Medical Center in 2004.*



# Oh Baby! (Weight)

## How to Win at Losing Post-Pregnancy Pounds

by Cynthia Mason, PhD

You've waited nine long months (at the very least) for your little bundle of joy to arrive. You've watched your body evolve into a miraculous creator of life; keeping your baby safe until the time of delivery. In addition to your body taking on a life of its own, literally, you watched the numbers on the scale increase with a mixture of both eager anticipation and dread. Your body, in all its wondrous glory, has grown heavier.

For some women, being pregnant can make them feel their most beautiful and healthiest than at any other time in their lives. However, for other women, pregnancy and weight gain wreaks havoc on their self-image and self-esteem (particularly if they struggled with being overweight prior to getting pregnant). The extra weight gain associated with pregnancy is necessary to provide nourishment to your developing baby.

Following delivery, most women are anxious to lose their pregnancy weight. Nevertheless, women need to have a certain amount of patience with their body. Contrary to Hollywood's portrayal of female characters leaving the hospital wearing their skinny jeans, pregnancy weight gain did not happen overnight and it will probably take at least several months for the excess weight to come off.

## Factors for How Quickly You Lose the "Baby-weight:"

### Your weight prior to pregnancy:

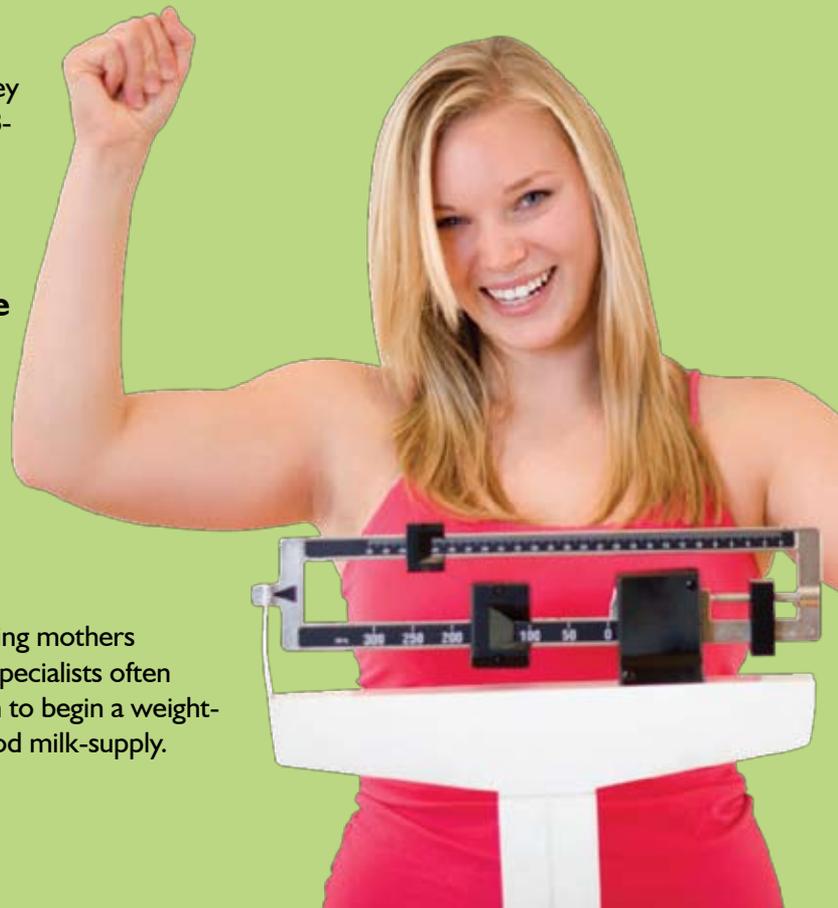
Most women gain approximately 25-37 pounds if they were at a healthy weight before getting pregnant, 28-40 pounds if they were underweight before getting pregnant and 15-25 pounds if they were overweight before getting pregnant.

### Whether you had a c-section at the time of delivery:

Additional time is needed in order for your body to fully recover from surgical procedures. Most medical professionals will advise waiting at least four to six weeks before starting any weight-loss program to allow tissue sufficient time to heal properly.

### Whether or not you're breastfeeding:

Breastfeeding expends a lot of energy and breastfeeding mothers require extra calories to feed their babies. Lactation specialists often recommend waiting at least two months post-partum to begin a weight-loss program in order for your body to establish a good milk-supply.



# Here are 10 tips to help you safely lose your post-pregnancy pounds:

- 1 Don't diet.**

Feeling deprived of your favorite foods when you're already stressed out could actually cause you to gain weight. Instead of dieting, eat a variety of well-balanced foods and keep a well-stocked supply of snacks around to keep you from feeling hungry and give your body energy throughout the day.
- 2 Choose healthy options.**

Be sure to include lots of vibrant colors on your plates and remember quality before quantity. Load up on high-fiber fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, calcium-rich foods and lean proteins.
- 3 Breastfeed.**

It's good for both you and your baby. Breastfeeding helps boost your baby's growth and immunity as well as helps reduce your risk of certain cancers. Plus, breastfeeding moms tend to have greater weight-loss compared to those who bottle-feed.
- 4 Drink water.**

Drinking plenty of water prevents you from getting dehydrated and helps fill you up so you eat less. Aim for the recommended eight glasses of water per day, although you may need to increase that amount if you are breastfeeding.
- 5 Get moving.**

Incorporating aerobic and strength-training exercises into your routine will help you burn calories, keep your muscles and bones strong, as well as help relieve the stresses of having a new baby. One way to get started is by simply taking a brisk walk. Walking with your baby gets you both out of the house and breathing fresh air.
- 6 Log it.**

Planning what you eat ahead of time is essential. Keeping a food diary allows you to plan what you're going to eat. Tracking your food intake also helps eliminate spontaneous eating and gives you a record of your progress.
- 7 Sleep.**

Sleep is a restorative process and being sleep-deprived can make it harder for you to lose weight. When you're tired, your body releases cortisol and other stress hormones that promote weight gain. You're also less likely to exercise and make healthy food choices when you're tired.
- 8 Buddy up.**

People tend to be the most successful at changing their behaviors when they feel supported. Join efforts with another new mom who is also trying to lose weight. Or, enlist the aid of a coach or weight-loss professional to keep you accountable, help build your self-confidence, help you solve problems and keep you motivated.
- 9 Give yourself credit.**

As your body becomes leaner, it is important to reward your progress along the way. Choose rewards that are non-food-related such as a hot bath, new haircut, smaller-sized article of clothing or even an afternoon babysitter.
- 10 Focus on what's important.**

Enjoy what little time off you may have from your regular routine. Spend time together as a family and getting to know your new baby.



# Breastfeeding:

## The Infant Feeding Practice

by Linda C. McGrath, PhD, CHES, IBCLC, LLLL, and Vincent R. McGrath, EdD

What if scientists created a product that would protect infants from developing chronic illnesses such as asthma, diabetes, obesity, respiratory infections and ear infections? What if this product could protect infants from developing allergies? What if this same product would also protect mothers from developing breast, ovarian and other types of cancers? What if this product could be used without any of our energy resources and could be used at all times, even in times of natural disasters? What if several billion healthcare dollars could be saved by using this product? What if nature creates a product that encompasses these qualities?

She has, and this product is a mother's milk.

### Healthy People

*Healthy People* is a federal initiative updated every 10 years since 1989 by the Department of Health and Human Services in cooperation with healthcare agencies to improve the quality of our nation's health by producing a framework for public health prevention priorities and actions. Breastfeeding objectives are critical parts of *Healthy People* to improve maternal and child health. These objectives are: 75 percent of mothers breastfeeding at the time of hospital discharge, 50 percent breastfeeding at six months and 25 percent at the end of the first year.

*Healthy People 2020* aims to increase these rates to 81.9 percent initiating breastfeeding, 23.7 percent breastfeeding exclusively through six months, and 34.1 percent continuing at one year. If these objectives were realized, there would be more than four billion dollars saved in healthcare costs. Families would experience lower medical costs as a result of fewer incidences of chronic illnesses in their children. Respiratory and ear infections would seldom occur in infants.

With fewer visits to doctors, working mothers would have fewer days and hours absent from work. Mothers



*"At no other time in life can a complete source of nourishment be contained in one food source as it is in breast milk."*

would lower their risks of developing breast cancer and other types of cancers. Healthy physical and emotional development in both mothers and infants would be noticed with mothering through breastfeeding.

### Infant Nutrition

A mother's milk has every vitamin, mineral and other nutritional element that her baby's body needs, including many that haven't been discovered or named yet, and it changes subtly through the meal, day and year, to match subtle changes in her baby's requirements.

The components in breast milk are in the right composition to be easily absorbed and utilized by the baby for normal growth and development. At no other time in life can a complete source of nourishment be contained in one food source as it is in breast milk. Breast milk is easily digested; therefore, does not add stress to a baby's internal systems which still need months of growth and development.

The growth hormones, which are necessary and can only be found in breast milk, encourage and enhance a strong development in the baby's organs, especially with the brain. All the types of nutrients that are needed to complement the human brain can only be found in breast milk.

*Breastfeeding continued on page 12*

Oh Baby! (Weight) continued from page 9

## Conclusion

Anyone wishing to lose pregnancy weight should get approval from their medical provider before starting any diet or exercise program. Two additional resources that contain practical information on post-pregnancy weight-loss and exercise are: The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding by Gwen Gotsch and Judy Torgus (published by the La Leche League), and Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom by Christiane Northrup.

If you find that you are still struggling to lose weight, ask your medical team for assistance. A registered dietitian can help design an eating plan that will allow you to lose weight safely and effectively, while your primary care provider can help monitor your weight-loss and alert you to any medical issues that might be interfering with your progress.

And above all, remember to be patient with yourself. With a combination of healthy food choices and regular physical activity, your post-pregnancy pounds should eventually come off.

“Contrary to Hollywood’s portrayal of female characters leaving the hospital wearing their skinny jeans, pregnancy weight gain did not happen overnight and it will probably take at least several months for the excess weight to come off.”

### About the Author:

*Cynthia Mason, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and Director of Mental Health Services of Associated Behavioral Health in Bellevue, WA. She provides bariatric pre-surgical mental health evaluations as well as post-surgical and weight-loss psychotherapy. She is also the mother of two young children and knows, first-hand, the challenges of losing post-pregnancy weight. To learn more about Dr. Mason, please visit [www.abhc.com](http://www.abhc.com).*



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## Infant Health

The first milk is colostrum and contains high amounts of immunoglobulins to compensate for the baby's immature immune system. Colostrum should be recognized as the baby's first vaccine. If a mother gets sick, her body will naturally produce antibodies to fight the infection. These antibodies are then transferred through the breast milk to her baby, who will either not get sick or will have a milder case of the illness. If the baby gets ill, the mother's body will produce antibodies for the illness and transfer the antibodies through her milk. The baby will recover faster, and continued breastfeeding can help prevent dehydration in the baby.

Employed mothers who breastfeed report fewer work days missed and fewer doctor visits with sick babies. Breastfed babies seldom get constipated or have diarrhea, ear infections and respiratory illnesses, because breast milk has all the right components in just the right amounts for infant growth and development. Breastfeeding has now been associated with lower risks of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

## Maternal Health

Mothers who breastfeed have a lower risk of breast, uterine and cervical cancers. Most diabetic mothers who used breastfeeding as the infant feeding practice have required less insulin.

Because lactation is the next stage of female development after pregnancy and childbirth, mothers who breastfeed experience less bleeding, a return to the prenatal body shape and some weight-loss more naturally. With the first six months of exclusive breastfeeding, the return of fertility can be delayed which allows the mother's body time to heal. Natural child spacing with breastfeeding is a science that more mothers are learning and practicing.

## Breastfeeding, Obesity and Other Metabolic Conditions

There are many explanations to describe the link between infant feeding practices and obesity, which have been documented through research. Research reports that the risk factors of obesity are bottle-feeding, a maternal body mass index (BMI) above 27, maternal smoking during pregnancy and more.

## Regulating Feeding

The baby is in control of the amount of milk taken at each feeding. The feeling of satiety (fullness) is developed and learned, which is so necessary for future weight gain. With bottle feeding, the caretaker is in control and usually ensures that the amount in the bottle is taken. This is the beginning of force feeding and can interfere with the natural development of satiety in the baby.

The hormone leptin regulates appetite and is found in higher concentration in breastfed babies. It is now being researched as a preventive component for obesity. Research documents that children who were breastfed, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, have a lower risk of being overweight and obese.

As stated before, the hormone leptin in breast milk regulates appetite and is found in high levels in breastfed infants. A natural development of satiety is established, which results in the infant controlling the amount of milk needed per feeding. This is very important for healthy eating habits in the future.

The high amounts of immunological components in breast milk enhance the maturation of the infant immune system. At birth, the infant depends on passive immunity through breast milk for protection. The transfer of antibodies through breastfeeding stimulates response in the infant's immune system.

At no other time in life can one food source offer total nourishment and protection from pathogens, support emotional needs and complement total growth and development. These positive effects with breastfeeding are dose-dependent, and the introduction of breast milk substitutes in the first six months of life is associated with a higher risk of ill health and premature weaning.

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# Obesity and Diabetes

You Have Questions – The OAC Has Answers

OAC debuts 3 brand new brochures on Diabetes and it's link with obesity.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 26 million Americans are affected by type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is one of the most prevalent diseases associated with obesity.

## *Understanding Excess Weight and its Role in Type 2 Diabetes*

This brochure focuses on the impact of excess weight and how it plays a part in a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes. The brochure also discusses how improving one's weight can help manage their health.

## *Understanding Prediabetes and Excess Weight*

This brochure provides an in-depth look at prediabetes and the effects of excess weight on an individual's health. It also provides information for an individual to determine if they are at risk for prediabetes and information on type 2 diabetes testing.

## *Understanding Excess Weight and Type 2 Diabetes: A Brochure for Individuals Diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes*

This brochure details the link of excess weight and type 2 diabetes. This brochure takes a close look at the complications associated with high glucose levels, such as cardiovascular disease, neuropathy, nephropathy, retinopathy, depression and much more. It also provides type 2 diabetics with hands-on tools to help them manage their type 2 diabetes and weight.

*This new brochure series is available from the OAC for FREE! To view the brochures or request a free copy, please visit the "Educational Tools" section on the OAC Web site at [www.obesityaction.org](http://www.obesityaction.org).*

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*These brochures were developed by the Obesity Action Coalition in collaboration with Geisinger Health Care System, with support provided by Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and Lilly USA, LLC. Special thanks to the Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity for providing the photography found in these brochures.*

## Conclusion

Yes, if the United States becomes a society that encourages, supports and protects breastfeeding as the appropriate infant feeding practice, infants would receive the healthiest start in life and their birth right – mother's milk. Human nurturing, a unique lifetime bonding that exists between a breastfeeding mother and her child, would be encouraged, supported and protected by all professionals and agencies serving families. Images of a baby at the breasts would be acceptable and natural, and the plastic bottle would be replaced as the icon for infant care.

Exclusive breastfeeding for six months, with extended breastfeeding beyond the first year, is recognized as the appropriate infant feeding practice by the American Academy of Pediatrics and other major healthcare academies, and is listed as a critical strategy in reversing this trend of chronic ill health in children.

For more information on *Healthy People 2020*, visit [www.healthypeople.gov](http://www.healthypeople.gov). To locate healthcare providers and knowledgeable breastfeeding support personnel that can offer assistance and answer questions about

breastfeeding, visit United States Breastfeeding Committee at [www.usbreastfeeding.org](http://www.usbreastfeeding.org). For information about the most recent data on breastfeeding rates in the United States, visit [www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding).

### About the Authors:

Linda C. McGrath, PhD, CHES, IBCLC, LLLL, is a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES), Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) and a La Leche League Leader (LLLL) from Starkville, Miss.

Vincent R. McGrath, EdD, is a Professor Emeritus for the College of Education at Mississippi State University.

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# ADVOCACY NEWS ADVOCACY ACTION

## **The Importance of the Essential Health Benefits (EHB) Package**

*by Chris Gallagher, OAC Policy Consultant*



I am often asked to address the question, “can we secure a national coverage mandate for obesity treatment services?” For the first time since I began working with the OAC in 2008, I feel like we really have a great chance of making this happen!

U. S. Representative Ed Towns (D-NY) has asked his colleagues in the House of Representatives to join him in sending a letter to Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius urging her to “better standardize access to obesity treatment services through HHS establishing a comprehensive definition of preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management services within the essential health benefits (EHB) package under the new healthcare reform law to include the full continuum of medically necessary interventions, including behavioral, nutritional, pharmaceutical, psychosocial and surgical, to treat those affected by obesity.”

The Towns sign-on letter to HHS comes at a critical time as President Obama’s administration is in the midst of deciding which services will be viewed as essential and which ones will not. As an OAC member, you have likely heard a great deal about the Towns letter in late June and early July. At press time, we had secured more than 50 Representatives to join Congressman Towns on this critical letter to HHS.

### **THE OBESITY CARE CONTINUUM AT A GLANCE**

The Towns letter represents three solid years of coordinated advocacy activities led by the OAC. Since early 2008, leadership from the OAC, American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) and The Obesity Society (TOS) have made more than 300 visits with members of Congress and their staff. Last year, these groups joined forces with the American Dietetic Association to form the Obesity Care Continuum – a 100,000 member-strong coalition representing the interests of those affected by excess weight and obesity and the healthcare professionals and researchers who care for, and develop treatments for this population.

The Obesity Care Continuum (OCC) has met with staff on key Congressional healthcare committees, as well as with staff of the Congressional leadership of both parties. We’ve met with policymakers in the First Lady’s Office and HHS, as well as with folks in the Surgeon General’s office. The OCC has made the rounds with state policymakers as well – targeting groups like the National Governors Association, National Conference of State Legislatures and the National Association of Insurance Commissioners.

### **THE “ASK”**

Our “ask” during all these meetings is for policymakers to go beyond just prevention of obesity and embrace a strategy that also actively treats those affected by obesity, and the best way that they could do this would be to specifically include coverage of obesity treatment services in the EHB. The response from federal policymakers continues to be one of strong opposition to anything that appears to mandate coverage of a specific disease state. Often, we are told that obesity treatment services would likely already fall under one of the 10 broad categories outlined for services to be included in the EHB package under the Affordable Care Act.

*Advocacy News continued on page 24*

## OAC Recognizes Outstanding Members

OAC members are the backbone of the Coalition. Thanks to OAC members, we are able to continue raising awareness of obesity throughout the United States, advocate on both the state and federal level for access to care and support each other in the fight against obesity.

Each year, the OAC hosts a reception in conjunction with the ASMBS Annual Meeting where we have the opportunity to publicly thank outstanding OAC members who have gone above and beyond in supporting the OAC and our mission. On June 13, the OAC awarded six awards to OAC members in the categories of membership, education and advocacy.

From personally recruiting hundreds of new OAC members, to increasing access to care in their home-state, the OAC has seen some extraordinary achievements by its members this year. We would like to take this opportunity to recognize these individuals for their outstanding dedication and support:

Outstanding Membership Recruitment:

Outstanding Membership Recruitment by a Physician:

2011 Outstanding Advisory Board Member:

Outstanding Educational Advocate:

Outstanding Member Advocate:

Outstanding Physician Advocate:



The Davis Clinic recipients (center) pose with OAC Chairman of the Board, Barbara Thompson, MLS (left) and OAC President and CEO Joe Nadglowski (right) while receiving their Outstanding Membership Recruitment by a Physician award.



OAC Board member Jeff Haaga (center) poses with OAC Chairman of the Board, Barbara Thompson, MLS (left) and OAC President and CEO Joe Nadglowski (right) while receiving his Outstanding Member Advocate award.



OAC member Beth Sheldon-Badore (center) poses with OAC Chairman of the Board, Barbara Thompson, MLS (left) and OAC President and CEO Joe Nadglowski (right) while receiving her Outstanding Membership Recruitment award.

**Beth Sheldon-Badore**

**The Davis Clinic**

**Holly F. Lofton, MD**

**Tammy Beaumont, RN**

**Jeff Haaga**

**John Baker, MD**

**Congratulations to each of you and thank you for all that you do for the OAC!**

## OAC Teams up with Allergan Inc. to Raise Obesity Awareness through “End Obesity Now” PSA and Open Letter to Congress

The OAC and Allergan Inc. have launched a national public service announcement (PSA) awareness campaign, titled “End Obesity Now.” The focus of the PSA is to reduce the stigma associated with obesity and to continue to elevate and empower those affected by it through education, advocacy and support. To view the PSA, please visit [www.obesityaction.org/psa.php](http://www.obesityaction.org/psa.php).

Last year, Allergan Inc. launched C.H.O.I.C.E. (Choosing Health over Obesity Inspiring Change through Empowerment), an educational initiative to help raise awareness of the critical need for greater access to and acceptance of all effective treatments to fight obesity. The OAC is pleased to co-sponsor C.H.O.I.C.E.’s Open Letter to Congress. We urge you to get involved by signing the Open Letter at [www.mychoicecampaign.com](http://www.mychoicecampaign.com). The



*News from the OAC continued on page 36*

# Family Eating Habits

## How Do We Change Them?

by Traci Baker

In today's fast paced world, many of us consume food in a very different manner and time frame due to time constraints brought on by our professional/personal commitments. Families are busy with different social functions, school/church events, sports, appointments and the list continues to grow. The convenience of food is continually growing and can be found on any street corner at a fast food chain or your local convenient store.

Then there are the times our minds tell us we don't have enough time to prepare a healthy well-balanced meal. We say things like, "I don't have time to cook," and "Eating healthy is too expensive and healthy food doesn't taste as good." All of these factors can lead to poor family eating habits. What about those meals you prepare and believe you are making a healthy choice? How do you identify if your family's eating habits are poor?

### Fun Ideas on How to Change Your Family's Poor Eating Habits

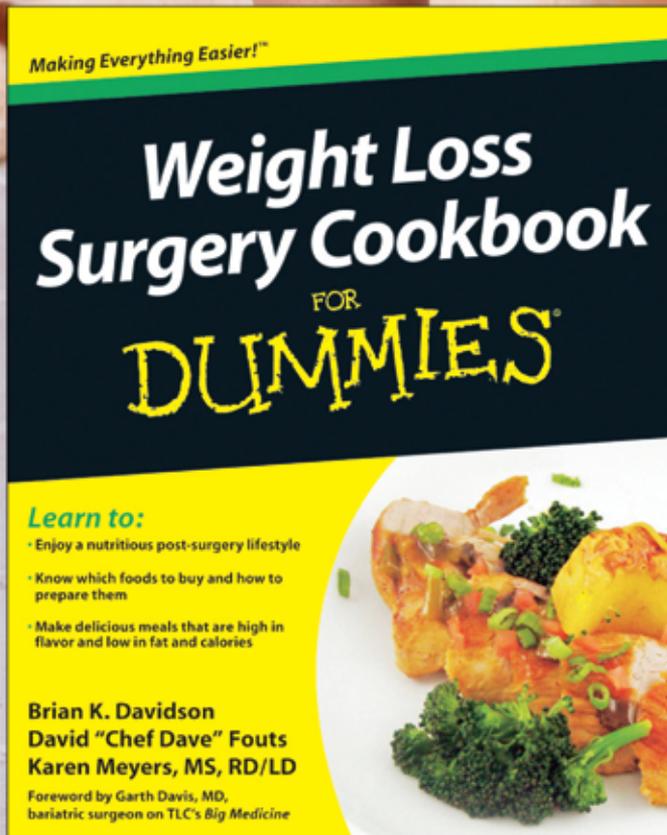
**IDEA #1:** Tell your family you want to do an experiment for a week about the family's eating habits and you need their assistance. Be creative and give each family member a fun pad of paper or create something simple on your computer to print off along with their favorite color pen. Come up with a prize to work toward at the end of the experiment, such as a sleepover with friends and movie night, new CD/DVD, day at the pool with friends, or a canoe/camping trip.

Start by asking them to write down what they think about the family's overall eating habits. Do they think the family has good or bad habits, and why? Ask each family member to write down their meals and snacks

*Family Eating Habits continued on page 20*

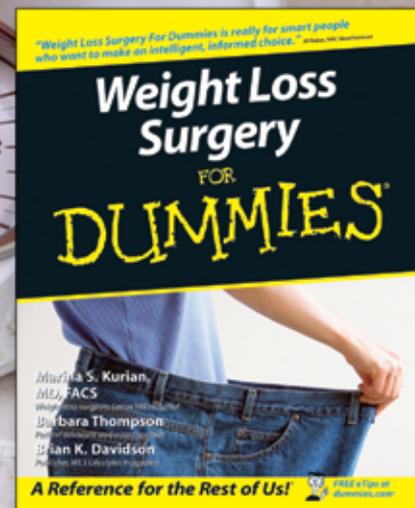


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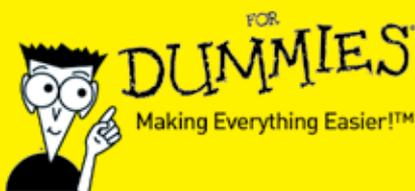


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throughout the next week, the environment while eating (in the car, in front of the TV, standing at the counter, cleaning my plate because mom told me to) and what they do after each meal or snack (took a nap, walked the dog, played basketball, etc.).

At the end of the week, everyone will pass their entries to another family member for review. The goal is to highlight any repeated poor eating habits within the week. Here are some red flags to look for:

- Eating a limited variety of foods
- Indulging in too many foods like soft drinks, doughnuts, chips, candy or ice cream
- Not including all food groups such as vegetables
- Skipping breakfast

Ask everyone to give feedback on any items they highlighted and why they identified those as poor habits, then what a healthier choice would be.

**IDEA #2:** As a family, make a list of healthy meal/snack choices and post the list in a visible space for everyone to see. Then, make a list of all the recognized poor eating habits and ideas on how to change those to healthy eating habits. Decide together which family members deserve recognition and earn prizes on things such as:

- Identifying the poorest eating habits
- Providing healthier choices
- Creative ways to change those habits

At the end of the week, ask each family member the same question you did before the experiment started. Do they think the family has good or bad habits, and why? Then compare both answers.

Create a plan of action on how to replace the poor eating habits and what other changes will help promote healthy eating habits.

Make this a fun project by including all family members and assigning tasks they enjoy. For example, purchase a bright colored poster board/trifold science board and create a title that fits your family. Make it visual by cutting out pictures of healthy foods, asking someone to be creative and decorate the board, create a healthy food list, list new habits to promote change and keep it visible in the kitchen as a reminder for the family.

## Sample Changes to Help You Get Started

Here is a list to help get you started on some changes to promote healthy eating habits:

1. Keep only healthy food options in your home. Have a family participation session to “purge the pantry” and remove all items not on your healthy list.
2. Pick a specific time frame each night and agree to designate this as “family dinner time” with no interruptions.
3. Make it a habit to sit together at a kitchen or patio table to encourage the importance of doing this together as a family.
4. Slow down – it takes our minds 20 minutes to catch up with our stomachs. Practice putting your fork down between bites to force yourself to eat at a more leisurely pace. Engage in conversation as another way to slow your pace of eating.
5. Stop eating when you feel full. The “clean your plate” mentality will lead to extra unnecessary calories in your body.

Ask each person to pick a day of the week and create a healthy meal plan and then help by preparing the meal. Make it fun by adding a theme, (Mexican, American, Italian, etc.) researching the Internet for healthy recipes or a specific color and use paper/plastic (cups, utensils, plates, napkins) to set the table.

Be creative, have fun and step out of your comfort zone while tasting new healthy food items. By encouraging your family to stay involved and repeating these behaviors, their healthy eating will become a daily habit!

### **About the Author:**

*Traci Baker is a professional in the field of bariatrics at the IU Health Bariatric & Medical Weight Loss. She is also the president of Bariatric Life Coach Association, LLC, where she works as a certified life coach specializing in working with all weight-loss patients. She is a support group leader, patient advocate and a member of the OAC.*



# How Pets Can Enhance Your Health

by Tracy Martinez, RN, BSN, CBN



A pet is certainly a treasured friend. Dogs have been called man's (and woman's) best friend for decades. But, did you know that owning a pet can have a beneficial impact on physical, social and psychological health? In fact, for nearly 25 years, research has shown that living with pets provide certain health benefits.

## Benefits of Owning a Pet

Pets can help lower blood pressure, lessen anxiety and boost your immune system. In one study, stockbrokers with high blood pressure who adopted a cat or dog had lower blood pressure readings in stressful situations than those without pets. People in stress mode get into a state of "dis-ease" in which harmful chemicals like cortisol and norepinephrine negatively affect the immune system.

Like any enjoyable activity, playing with a dog can elevate serotonin and dopamine – nerve transmitters that are known to have pleasurable and calming properties. Heart attack patients who have pets survive longer than those without pets. Male pet owners have less sign of heart disease – lower triglycerides and cholesterol levels than non pet owners, researchers report.<sup>1</sup>

There are emotional benefits of owning a dog. Coming home to a dog eliminates frustration, loneliness and can build self-esteem. You are wanted, needed and adored simply because of you. Who is happier to see you when you come home? People living alone report less feelings of loneliness.<sup>2</sup>

Calming effects of stroking your cat or dog are widely known. Some suggest that this stress

reducing activity can actually lower blood pressure. Clarissa Baldwin, Chief Executive Officer of the charity Dogs Trust says, "We all know that dogs offer companionship and make us laugh, but they provide wider health benefits too." Dog owners are generally healthier and make fewer visits to their general practitioner.<sup>3</sup>

## Owning a Dog Helps You Get More Exercise

Throughout the last 30 years, there has been increasing scientific evidence that pets can help keep us fit and well. Pets can even help speed up recovery after major illness.<sup>4</sup>

Don't want to spend money on a gym membership or diet program? Take over the duty of walking the family dog. Don't have one? Rescue one from the animal shelter. Here's why: walking your dog 20 minutes a day, five days a week produced an average weight-loss of 14 pounds for participants in a University of Missouri – Columbus study.

The study found that having a dog to walk can make a difference between getting out and walking daily or skipping a day. The commitment to your dog enforces faithfulness to a simple exercise program.



“ Dog owners were 34 percent more likely to get the exercise they needed to meet the federal guidelines for physical activity of 150 minutes per week. A University of Missouri – Columbus study found that walking your dog 20 minutes a day, five days a week produced an average weight-loss of 14 pounds. ”

Michigan State University researcher Mathew Reaves an epidemiologist, published a study in March of this year in the Journal of Physical Activity and Health, which found dog owners were 34 percent more likely to get the exercise they needed to meet the federal guidelines for physical activity of 150 minutes a week, guidelines that less than half of Americans currently achieve.

Walking at a moderate pace for 30-60 minutes burns stored fat and can build muscle to speed up your metabolism (although resistance training, such as hill climbing, is the best for muscle building). Walking an hour a day is also associated with cutting your risk of heart disease, breast cancer, colon cancer, diabetes and stroke.<sup>5</sup>

According to the Mayo Clinic, exercise and cutting calories helps lose weight and equally important, regular exercise is one of the most powerful habits not to regain weight. Brisk walking of 15 minutes burns approximately 100 calories, although sex, speed, terrain, stride and intensity can alter caloric expenditure.<sup>6</sup>

## Conclusion

Having a pet can be a wonderful and exciting way to increase the frequency of your exercise and have fun doing it! Don't have a dog? Adopt one. Because of the recession, there are more dogs than ever that need a loving home. According to the Humane Society of the United States, there are 4 million dogs and cats euthanized each year. If your lifestyle doesn't allow you to have a dog, you can volunteer at a local shelter to walk a dog for them.

So get your loyal furry friend and get going. To lose weight and keep it off, you need to get moving! Isn't it time to get healthier and happier? Then isn't it time to work an hour walk a day into your busy lifestyle? Ask your dog, I think he or she would agree. I know my girl Emily sure does.

### About the Author:

Tracy Martinez, RN, BSN, CBN, is a bariatric nurse and Program Director at Wittgrove Bariatric Center in Calif. She is the past-president of the Integrated Health section of the American Society for Metabolic Bariatric Surgery. Ms. Martinez is a member of the OAC National Board of Directors and animal lover and advocate.



"Emily"

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Policymakers would say, “Surely umbrella categories like ambulatory patient services and hospitalization would cover medical weight management and bariatric surgery. Surely, the prescription drug category would include coverage for FDA-approved obesity drugs. And if not those areas, surely treating obesity would fall under the ‘preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management’ section of the benefit package.”

Our response to these assurances has been, “not so fast.” For starters, the vast majority of individual and small health plans specifically exclude anything having to do with obesity or weight-loss programs. Second, there is still quite a great deal of debate, even within the healthcare community, as to whether or not obesity is really a disease. And lastly, many policymakers believe that prevention alone will solve the obesity epidemic.

While the OAC believes that prevention is critically important, there also needs to be a good balance between preventing more people from becoming affected by obesity and helping those who currently struggle with their weight. Focusing solely on prevention, without a corresponding push for the treatment side of the equation, writes off nearly two-thirds of our population already affected by excess weight or obesity.

### **FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES**

What is really needed is an approach similar to the one that was taken with mental health and substance abuse services, which by the way, ARE specifically mentioned as a covered category of services under the healthcare reform law. Why are these services carved out for special consideration? Shouldn't they also fall under hospitalization, ambulatory care, prescription drugs, or the wellness umbrellas? They're clearly enumerated because of the pervasive discrimination and stigma that was, and still continues, to be associated with mental illness and addiction.

How did the mental health community pull it off? I can assure you it didn't happen overnight. It took years, decades if you will, of tireless lobbying by the mental health community to educate not only policymakers, but more importantly, their peers in the medical community – some of which still scoff at those who struggle with mental illness or addiction as “defective” or “weak.”

Our approach before Congress, HHS and the White House is that obesity is deserving of the same

consideration as mental illness due to the same societal hurdles that face those seeking treatment for the disease of obesity.

Just as the mental health community was successful in their battle to protect access to, and coverage of, specific treatment services from health plan bias and discrimination, so will we in our campaign! However, if we are going to win the day, the swell of support for this cause must grow strong and must grow fast! When it comes to the EHB, either you're in or you're out. Let's all work together so we end up on the inside looking out for a change!

## **ESSENTIAL HEALTH BENEFITS PACKAGE**

### **MANDATED CATEGORIES OF COVERED SERVICES:**

- ambulatory patient services
- emergency services
- hospitalization
- maternity and newborn care
- mental health and substance abuse disorder services, including behavioral health treatment
- prescription drugs
- rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices
- laboratory services
- preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management
- pediatric services, including oral and vision care

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**Tennie McCarty**  
LCDC, ADC III, CEDC, CAS  
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# Lessons

## of Long-term Successful Gastric Banding Patients

by Gloria Samuels, Sandi Henderson and Helmuth Billy, MD

“Laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding (LAGB) works. Learning how to use this tool properly is the challenge. Patients can be successful by working with their doctor and applying the lessons of successful LAGB patients to achieve their goals,” Helmuth Billy, MD.

### Helping Fellow LAGB Patients Succeed

#### 1. Eat good-quality meals, and don't graze.

The LAGB is not a magic bullet. It doesn't know the difference between grilled chicken and fried onion rings. Unlike gastric bypass patients, LAGB patients do not feel sick (dumping syndrome) from sweets or high-fat foods. With practice and planning, small meals can be easy, delicious, satisfying and nutritious.

Focus on eating for 20-30 minutes, not while driving or working. Stop when satisfied and push away from the table. Finished means finished. No tasting; no grazing.

#### Tips:

- Have a few repetitive meals that don't require thinking.
- Plate only what you plan to eat.
- Quick breakfast ideas:
  - Greek yogurt with vanilla, blueberries and Splenda
  - Smoked salmon with fruit
  - Hard boiled eggs
- Quick lunch ideas:
  - Salad with grilled chicken or seafood, and pre-measured dressing
  - Last night's leftovers in Ziploc bags.
- Leave the table when done; have leftovers wrapped; or do something radical like dumping the salt shaker on leftovers to avoid grazing.

#### 2. Get enough protein every day.

Protein is critical for good health, maintaining muscle mass and helping us feel satisfied and energetic. Discuss your individual protein requirements with your doctor.

#### Tips:

- Know your daily protein target.
- Eat protein first, then vegetables, fruits, starches and grains.
- Track protein grams.
- Sample high protein foods:
  - 3 oz cooked chicken - 26 grams
  - 3 oz canned tuna - 21 grams



#### 3. Don't drink with meals.

Drinking with meals defeats the tool! Why? A properly adjusted LAGB creates a small opening between the upper and lower portions of the stomach. Filling the upper portion with well chewed solid food helps with satiety (fullness), something new to many patients.

Picture a funnel in your head. Pour liquid through the funnel; it flows right through. Picture pouring oatmeal through the funnel; the funnel eventually becomes full. That's the effect you want. Imagine watering down the oatmeal. It flows much faster. That's what happens when drinking with meals.

*Lessons continued on page 28*

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Follow your doctor's guidelines for how long to avoid drinking before and after meals.

Tips:

- Remove your glass from the table.
- Set timers for when to stop and start drinking.

#### 4. Eat, don't drink, calories.

A properly adjusted band only restricts solid foods. Drinking calories prevents the band from doing its job and leads to failure.

Tips:

- Drink at least 64 oz of water daily; carry water everywhere.
- Check calories of your favorite drinks. Surprised?
- Artificially sweetened drinks may actually leave you hungrier. Beware!



#### 5. Take small bites; chew thoroughly.

The LAGB reminds you to slow down, take small bites and chew. Taking a big bite and wolfing it down can feel like an elephant sitting on your chest. Slowing down allows you to recognize when you've had enough. Small portions should be satisfying.

Tips:

- Use salad plates, not dinner plates; 4 ounce bowls, not 12 ounce bowls; teaspoons, not tablespoons.
- Put your fork down between every bite; chew at least 20 times.
- Save an empty Lean Cuisine "plate" to approximate correct portion size.

#### 6. Learn what foods are difficult and avoid them.

These foods commonly cause difficulties:

- Bread
- Rice
- Pasta
- Steaks and chops
- Raw, fibrous fruits and vegetables



Learn what foods are difficult by listening to your body. This is different for everyone. Avoiding difficult foods and building tasty band-friendly meals can keep you and your family happy and satisfied.

Tips:

- Introduce commonly difficult foods, one at a time.
- Enjoy cooking? Challenge yourself to find tasty foods that meet your dietary guidelines.

#### 7. Always have a plan.

Planning ahead eliminates excuses. Never get caught hungry without a plan.

Tips:

- Planning a day, week or meal ahead insures you are never caught without the right foods to work with your tool.
- A rough plan is better than no plan.
- Most restaurants have nutritional information available online; look before you go! Have a backup plan when you can't control what is served. Keep a stash of jerky, protein powder or other portable food in your office, car or backpack.

#### 8. Learn to journal.

Journaling helps you be accountable and get back to basics by tracking everything you eat and drink. Each day, track calories, protein and fluid. Use your journal to work with healthcare professionals and nutritionists to spot trends, identify triggers and refine choices. Studies show journaling leads to better weight-loss.

Tips:

- Journal - Just do it!
- Try an "app" or online tool; it's never been easier.



#### 9. Stay close to your surgical practice and surround yourself with successful patients.

LAGB patients require significant aftercare especially during the first 12 months. Getting great results requires working closely with the surgical practice. It's imperative not to compare band patients with bypass patients during the first 6-12 months. Band patients lose weight at a slower pace; the weight-loss phase really begins with a properly

adjusted gastric band. Working closely with the surgical practice and knowing what to expect are critical.

Tips:

- Make appointments ahead of time and keep them.
- Take advantage of ALL your practice has to offer.
- Find a LAGB-only support group.
- Use online support resources.

**10.** Make yourself a priority.

Those who struggle with serious weight issues often have trouble prioritizing themselves. You cannot get the most from this tool without making yourself a priority!

Tips:

- Have a plan to work with your tool daily.
- Fit exercise into your busy schedule.
- Take vitamins just like you brush your teeth.
- Live life; get out and participate instead of watching life go by.

**About the Authors:**

*Helmuth Billy, MD, is currently the director of Bariatric Surgery at St. John's Regional Medical Center located in Oxnard, Calif, a recognized bariatric Center of Excellence. Dr. Billy obtained his undergraduate degree in Molecular Biology at the University of California, Berkeley. He subsequently received his medical degree at the University of California, Davis, School of Medicine.*

*Gloria Samuels and Sandi Henderson are the founders of **bandedliving.com**, the community for gastric banding patients, by patients, and the authors of the book, Is Lap Band Surgery for Me? Gloria Samuels is a highly successful LAGB patient and mentor to bariatric surgery patients. Sandi Henderson is extraordinary in the world of LAGB, having lost 250 pounds since her surgery in May 2004. She has maintained her weight-loss since 2006. Gloria Samuels and Sandi Henderson are both members of the OAC Advisory Board.*

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## “MyPlate” Becomes the New “Food Pyramid”

by Holly F. Lofton, MD



### Food Guide

#### Balancing Calories

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.

#### Foods to Increase

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.

#### Foods to Reduce

- Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread and frozen meals – and choose the foods with lower numbers.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

Out with the old; in with the new. The USDA seems to have recently taken this old adage to heart. In June 2011, “MyPlate” was introduced as a simple, colorful alternative to the Food Pyramid. MyPlate (pictured left) uses a schematic of, you guessed it, a plate divided into four sections (two larger ones designated for vegetable and grains and two smaller sections for fruits and proteins). A “cup” to the side of the plate reminds you to include a dairy product with your meals.

This model is useful for you to educate your children about the components of a balanced meal. It also serves as a healthy reminder to adults about proper portion sizes. The food guide that accompanies MyPlate succinctly emphasizes bare-bones nutrition guidelines that we could all recite as a mantra for avoiding weight gain (see left).

Simply put, these guidelines remind us all to control portions, eat more nutrient-rich foods and to avoid salty, sugary foods.

MyPlate is a good tool to encourage your children and others to eat from all food groups at any given meal. The guidelines that accompany MyPlate provide a good base, especially for children who need direct rules to follow. I recommend visiting [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) and selecting a few of the available links to further broaden the knowledge provided by MyPlate. You must read a little deeper in order to distinguish which grains are whole grains versus simple carbohydrates. Also, it would be preferred if the guidelines stated “Switch to fat-free or 1 percent dairy” instead of just “milk.” Too many of us consider full-fat cheese as their dairy of choice, and a portion size of cheese is definitely less than “a cup.”

Always remember, all fruits are not created equal; therefore, we should be cautioned to choose fewer high glycemic load fruits, such as bananas, and to choose more super-foods, like blueberries. Finally, MyPlate portions are estimates. Therefore, it is wise to follow the food plate guidelines and limit calorie-dense foods, such as bacon, as portions of these should be smaller to avoid weight gain. Enjoy making “MyPlate” YOUR plate!

#### About the Author:

Holly F. Lofton, MD, is currently an Associate Physician at the Geisinger Center for Nutrition and Weight Management in Danville, PA. Her specialty is geared toward adapting life-long lifestyle changes that lead to successful weight-loss as well as caring for patients undergoing bariatric surgery. Dr. Lofton is a member of the OAC Advisory Board.

# Eating Healthy by Sarah Muntel, RD on Summer Break

You and your parents are both happy it's the summer! School is out, homework is finished and life slows down. As you are home during the long, hot summer, it's a great time to get interested in health and **NUTRITION**. It takes work from both your parents and you, but can be a fun experience.

First, you need to know what to eat and how to make a **BALANCED MEAL**. Meals should consist of a variety of all food groups.

**Protein:** **PROTEIN** provides your body what it needs to keep your muscles strong and healthy. Protein sources include lean beef, chicken, fish, cheese, cottage cheese, beans and eggs. Make sure you have a protein source at each meal.

**Fruit and Vegetables:** These foods fill you up with **VITAMINS, MINERALS** and **FIBER**. They are all low calorie food choices. These can be served cooked, fresh or frozen. Fruit is a great alternative when you are craving something sweet.

**Grains:** Aim for **WHOLE GRAINS**. These foods, such as whole grain rice, pasta and bread, fill you up and provide your body with the nutrition it needs, as well as fiber.

**Dairy:** Milk and yogurt will provide you with protein as well as the **CALCIUM** you need for strong bones. Aim for 2-3 servings per day.

**Sugar and Fats:** Have these foods only sporadically. Limit sweets by using fresh fruit to satisfy your sweet tooth and low-fat options such as low-fat salad dressing and dips.

Sometimes during the summer, we struggle with ideas for food choices. Check the list below to find some quick ideas that can work well for your picnic, pool lunch or breakfast.

## Breakfast

This summer, get rid of the Pop-tarts®, sweetened cereals and donuts. They provide your body with so much sugar that you will feel yourself getting sluggish a few hours after eating. Instead, try these:

- Whole grain oatmeal with blueberries and a glass of milk
- Whole grain waffle with low-fat cream cheese topped with banana
- Scrambled eggs, cheese & strawberries
- Tortilla wrap with **EGGS**, turkey sausage and veggies, with a glass of juice

## Lunch

Avoid the fast food this summer. Pack your lunches ahead of time to give your body the nutrition it deserves.

- Turkey and cheese roll-up on a tortilla, fresh chopped fruit and yogurt
- Chicken salad on whole grain bread, veggies and dip and baked chips
- Ham roll-ups (ham, cheese, wrapped around a pickle), pasta salad and fresh fruit



**Turkey and cheese roll-up on a tortilla**

## Snacks

These can be a big part of your summer. Eat three meals per day with a snack or two, if you need it. Avoid

*Eating Healthy continued on page 32*

# KID'S Corner

## Stay Healthy Together

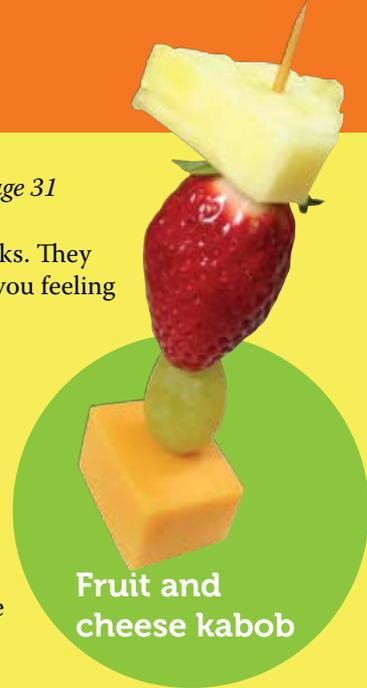
Now that you know what choices are out there, it's time for you and your parents to help each other stay healthy! Here are some nutritious activities that you can do together to add to your **SUMMER** list. Choose a few and you'll be well on your way to a summer of healthy eating:

- 1. Help your parents in the kitchen.** Take some time to help them find some easy recipes so everyone gets involved. Search online and pick the menu for your parents. You can do the mixing, spreading and stirring, while your parents do the cutting, chopping and heating. This can be a fun activity and a welcomed change from quick, processed fast food meals that sometimes creep their way into your diet.
- 2. Shop together.** Summer is filled with fresh fruits and **VEGETABLES** which taste great and are packed with vitamins, minerals and fiber. Visit your local grocery store or farmer's market with your parents. Make it your goal to try one new fruit or vegetable each time you go and pick it out yourself! If you aren't so sure about a new fruit or veggie, try to pair it with a low fat dip.
- 3. Grow a garden.** Get a variety of seeds or small plants and make a **GARDEN**. You can help with planting, watering, picking and eating and then watch your vegetables grow all summer long. If you don't have room for a garden, think about growing them in pots. It works just as well.
- 4. Visit the library.** Find **COOKBOOKS** and pick out a meal to make together. This is a fun way for you to learn how to cook as well as try new foods.
- 5. Balance your nutrition with your activity.** Move as much as you can. Get outside to **SWIM, JUMP, RUN** and **PLAY**, and enjoy the summer weather.

*Eating Healthy continued from page 31*

chips, cookies and candy for snacks. They will not fill you up and will leave you feeling hungry. Instead try these:

- **Make a smoothie.** Add 1 cup skim milk, ½ cup fresh fruit and a handful of ice and blend.
- **Fruit and cheese kabob:** Alternate **FRUIT** and **CHEESE** on a skewer. You can help your parents make these.
- **Veggies and hummus:** Have your parents chop up fresh veggies (carrots, peppers and cucumbers) and dip in hummus or low calorie dip.
- **Apple and peanut butter:** Have your parents slice **APPLES** and add some protein by smearing natural peanut butter on the slices.
- **Whole grain crackers and cheese:** Give your body the fiber it needs through crackers and add calcium by topping them with sliced cheese.



Fruit and cheese kabob

## Fluids

When it's hot outside, we know you want to grab a juice box, sweetened Kool-Aid® or other sugary drinks. You could be getting too much sugar from your drinks without even knowing it. Even juice, which seems so healthy, can have a lot of calories. Fruit juice does have some vitamins and minerals, but is loaded with calories. Limit to less than one cup per day. Try to get your servings of fruit through fresh fruit and keep your drinks low calorie. Try some of these:

- Crystal Light
- Sugar-free Kool-Aid®
- Bottled **WATER**
- Any low calorie beverage



Bottled Water

Have a great summer and focus on eating **HEALTHY**, staying fit and starting a lifetime of healthy nutritious food choices!

### *About the Author:*

*Sarah Muntel, RD, is a registered dietitian with IU Health Bariatric & Medical Weight Loss. She has worked in bariatrics for the past 12 years and enjoys helping people get to a healthy weight so they can improve their health, feel better about themselves and become more active.*

# WORDSearch!

In the story you just read you may have noticed certain words in all caps and bolded. These words are important terms for eating healthy this summer. Below, you'll see a word search with all of these words hidden. See if you can find each word!

Q D S I E L Q J V M N U J N P U V G S R  
 P I A R F N G K L P F E O L H D E M L E  
 B A L A N C E D M E A L A H E A G S A B  
 Q T A D D T Z D L W V Y N A P N E W R I  
 W J H K X L P H R E H U H P L T T M E F  
 S K O O B K O O C A T O L N I S A B N M  
 C A L C I U M G K R G E L U J M B S I Z  
 B O I S N L N W I C S T R E N E L Z M U  
 M G Z M T I Y T U H N F K X G H E X W A  
 U W A T E R I G L E J T S H P R S Y Q L  
 R N Z T H O J R U E G S K T M A A K D I  
 R H O L N U R G I S R E M M U S U I X Q  
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 P H U A Z N R P Q S F Y C N W M G G L S  
 Q L X Y L F I V N W D O A J J S O I C W  
 D M F J N T Y M D I N H G S X F K Q Z P  
 V Y R A C Y H E A M Q H Z E H R E Y L H  
 N N A W F M D Y G T Q V H H P P A Z Z I  
 P J W Z Z H E C V G I P Y X H R Q G C C  
 B F X U A M U E V P S V H S N P D U T A

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APPLES  
 BALANCED MEAL  
 CALCIUM  
 CHEESE  
 COOKBOOKS  
 EGGS  
 FIBER

FRUIT  
 GARDEN  
 HEALTHY  
 MINERALS  
 NUTRITION  
 PLAY  
 PROTEIN

RUN  
 SUMMER  
 SWIM  
 VEGETABLES  
 VITAMINS  
 WATER  
 WHOLE GRAINS



# Weight and Intimacy

by Jessie Mae Estrada, LPC, NCC

## *What is Intimacy?*

Intimacy is the feeling of belonging with someone and having a deep personal connection with them. To be truly intimate, you experience a transparency in the relationship, a feeling of knowing and being known.

The depth to which a person allows him/herself to experience intimacy in relationships can be affected by trust issues, a lack of self-confidence, a history of abuse or various other issues. In this article, we're going to focus on how self-confidence and body image, in relation to weight, can keep people from experiencing a deeper, more fulfilling intimacy in their personal relationships.

## *The Link between Self-confidence and Intimacy*

I work in a bariatric clinic, so I see a lot of people transition from being morbidly obese, or obese, to reaching a healthier, more active weight. One of the areas of life I tell people to think about prior to surgery is how their relationships will be affected by experiencing a dramatic weight-loss.

A lot of people give me a blank stare, because they haven't really thought about the connection between the two. And while there are lots of people who are in healthy relationships, there are those that realize they may have settled. They felt no one else would ever love them or want them, so they chose to be with the one person they felt would. Maybe they chose to stay in an abusive relationship because they didn't feel they deserved better.

Some love the person they are with, but wonder how their partner could love them back on the same level or find them attractive due to their weight. These relationships miss out on experiencing that deeper level of intimacy; the mutual feeling of transparency, where you can be yourself and comfortable in your own skin. This stems from a lack of self-confidence.

*“Many overweight people have reached a point where they look at themselves in the mirror only from the chest up. They have stopped seeing their bodies and appreciating the beauty within them.”*

## *Body Image*

Various issues can affect a person's self-confidence, one of which is their body image. While there are lots of overweight people who have confidence and feel beautiful in their bodies, this is not true for everyone. Body image can be affected by mainstream society's belief system surrounding what is thought to be sexy, beautiful and attractive. It is also affected by our own thoughts, beliefs and by our family and friends.

Body image is what a person thinks of when they picture themselves in their mind or what they see when they look in the mirror. It is what you believe about your appearance, how you feel about your body and how you feel in your body.

Many overweight people scrutinize their bodies and feel ashamed of how they look in comparison to what they believe is “ideal.” As most of us know, the media is not kind to those affected by obesity. Every channel you watch on television and page you flip to in a magazine shows the perfectly airbrushed body. This “ideal” body is hard to achieve, even for those with the genetic structure to be naturally thin. While this has been a common struggle

for women for several decades, men are now joining the struggle to obtain the “ideal” body as well.

When the majority of people stop to think about their body, they focus on how different it is from the “ideal.” A thin person can point out a variety of things they dislike and want to change about their body, because to them, it does not compare to the “ideal.” So imagine the struggle for those that are overweight and obese. Many overweight people have reached a point where they look at themselves in the mirror only from the chest up. They have stopped seeing their bodies and appreciating the beauty within them.

When we start ignoring our bodies, we cannot continue to care for them and nurture them. Even those that lose weight through diet and exercise or bariatric surgery can still struggle with seeing the “old” them in their minds or their focus can shift to the excess skin or how they feel they look older. Many hide in the dark or in another room if their clothes are coming off and their partners are near.

### *Body Image and Intimacy*

So what does our body image have to do with the level of intimacy we experience in our relationships? When we don't feel confident in ourselves and take the time to

know, appreciate, respect and love our bodies, we take that opportunity away from our partners as well. We stop being transparent; we stop communicating honestly and start building walls of shame to hide. We start to feel we are not worth loving, not attractive and definitely not sexy. We question our relationships and wonder why they stay with us. This way of thinking and feeling does not encompass the definition of intimacy. In fact, it can make you feel alone, misunderstood and unwanted, even when surrounded by those that love you.

Some people have a more realistic body image by seeing themselves for how they truly are. They see their flaws, but embrace their bodies because they can also see the good their bodies have to offer. I have weight-loss surgery patients that instead of focusing on their loose skin, they see it as a reminder of where they came from and what they have accomplished. They see their body as healthier and stronger.

Being able to see the good in your body and in yourself, regardless of weight, allows your self-confidence to grow. Self-confidence allows you to embrace your body and appreciate yourself as a whole person. This confidence can be seen in the way you carry yourself and how you interact with others. When we reach a level of knowing and

*Weight and Intimacy continued on page 38*

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Open Letter urges Congress to increase attention to obesity and support legislation that provides access to effective obesity treatments.

We've shown our support, now we're asking YOU to show yours. Together we can make a difference in the lives of those affected by obesity.

## OAC and Ethicon Endo-Surgery, Inc. Host Q&A Session Answering Questions on Weight-loss Surgery

In June, the OAC and Ethicon Endo-Surgery, Inc. hosted an online Q&A session to offer individuals with questions about bariatric surgery, the opportunity to ask an actual bariatric surgeon. The online Q&A session was moderated by OAC President and CEO Joe Nadglowski, and OAC Board Member, Dr. Lloyd Stegemann, was the bariatric surgeon on hand to answer questions.

A wide variety of topics, such as nutrition, weight-loss surgery options, insurance and much more were discussed in the Q&A. To view the full transcript from the Q&A, please visit the OAC's Web site at [www.obesityaction.org](http://www.obesityaction.org) and click on the "Missed the OAC's Q&A?" link on the top-left corner.

## Ceatus Media Group's Consumer Guide to Bariatric Surgery (CGBS) Supports the OAC

CGBS will spotlight the OAC's accomplishments in a full-length feature article and provide a simple platform for its 1 million yearly visitors to donate to this worthy organization. "As a company, Ceatus Media Group is proud to support the OAC's worthwhile programs. We will use our portal to further educate consumers about obesity and to encourage donations to the OAC," said David Evans, PhD, CEO of Ceatus Media Group.

CGBS offers up-to-date information on life before, during and after bariatric surgery, including gastric bypass surgery, gastric sleeve surgery and adjustable gastric banding. All of the content is medically reviewed by leading bariatric surgeons.

For more information, please visit [www.yourbariatricsurgeryguide.com/obesity-action-coalition](http://www.yourbariatricsurgeryguide.com/obesity-action-coalition).



### Platinum

Allergan, Inc.  
ASMBS Foundation  
Ethicon Endo-Surgery  
Vivus, Inc.

### Gold

Bariatric Advantage  
Boehringer Ingelheim  
Orexigen Therapeutics, Inc.  
Potomac Currents

### Silver

American Society for Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery  
New Life Center for Bariatric Surgery

### Bronze

New Dimensions Weight Loss Surgery  
Rocky Mountain Associated Physicians  
The Davis Clinic  
The Wellborn Clinic

### Patron

Advanced Specialty Care  
Advanced Weight Loss Surgery  
Alaska Bariatric Center  
ALSA Bariatrics  
Baptist Metabolic Surgery Center  
BMI Surgical & Medical Weight Loss Solutions  
Bariatric Support Centers International  
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List as of 6/29/2011

# OAC

## MEMBERSHIP



## Building a Coalition of those Affected

The OAC is the **ONLY** non profit organization whose sole focus is helping those affected by obesity. The OAC is a great place to turn if you are looking for a way to get involved and give back to the cause of obesity.

There are a variety of ways that you can make a difference, but the first-step is to become an OAC Member. The great thing about OAC Membership is that you can be as involved as you would like. Simply being a member contributes to the cause of obesity.

### Why YOU Should Become an OAC Member

Quite simply, because the voice of those affected needs to be built! The OAC not only provides valuable public education on obesity, but we also conduct a variety of advocacy efforts. With advocacy, our voice must be strong. And, membership is what gives the OAC its strong voice.



## JOIN NOW

Complete the membership application now!  
Or, Just Scan the Code to the left Using Your Barcode Scanner App on Your SmartPhone!  
For more information, visit the OAC Web site at [www.obesityaction.org](http://www.obesityaction.org).

### Membership Categories and Benefits

The OAC wants YOU to be a part of what we do. No matter how you're impacted, having individuals join our efforts who believe in making a difference is essential. That's why the OAC offers various member categories, so you can get involved at your desired level.

Several valuable benefits also accompany your OAC membership. Each membership category offers something different. Here are some of the core benefits to membership:

- Official welcome letter and membership card
- Annual subscription to the OAC's magazine
- Subscription to the OAC's members-only monthly electronic newsletter
- Periodic member alerts informing you of issues that need action/attention
- Ability to lend your voice to the cause
- Representation through advocacy

## Membership Application

**Yes!** I would like to join the OAC's efforts. I would like to join as a/an:

- Individual Member: \$20/year
- Professional Member: \$50/year
- Physician Member: \$150/year
- Institutional Member: \$500/year
- Chairman's Council: \$1,000 and up/year

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State: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please indicate areas where you would like to serve the OAC:

- Serve on an OAC committee
- Help fundraise
- Advocacy
- Educational outreach

### Payment Information

Enclosed is my check (payable to the OAC) for \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Please charge my credit card for my membership fee:

- Discover®
- MasterCard®
- Visa®
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- Please sign me up for auto-renewal so my membership will automatically renew each year (only for credit card transactions).

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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4511 North Himes Ave., Ste. 250  
Tampa, FL 33614

**Or Fax to:** (813) 873-7838

appreciating ourselves, we are then able to open up to others and let them into our world, experiencing a deeper level of intimacy.

Society has seen some evolution in how we view beauty. We are slowly starting to see more curvaceous models and actresses that refuse to shrink down to the Hollywood standard. Many have come out to show their cellulite, wrinkles and saggy skin, to show us that they are real people and real people come in all shapes and sizes. Organizations such as the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) are helping to educate people on obesity and offer support for those who struggle with it.

## Quick Tips for Your Body Image

So what can you as an individual do to start making changes in your body image? Here are some quick pointers for creating a new, healthier and more realistic body image:

- **Surround yourself with positive people** – people who make fun of or consistently criticize others give off a negative energy that can easily rub off on you and make you more critical, not only of others, but of yourself as well.
- **Take new pictures of yourself and take down the old ones** – while it is good to keep old pictures to remind yourself of how far you have come, putting up new ones helps you see what you look like now.
- **Replace any negative thoughts with positive ones** – starting now, any time you start to think negative, “I hate my thighs,” replace it with something you love about yourself such as, “I really look good in this skirt,” or “I love that I have strong legs.”
- **Wear clothes that fit you and that you are comfortable with** – get rid of the old baggy clothes that hide your entire body; instead, find things that accentuate your favorite body parts and flatter your overall figure.
- **Take notice of the things your body can do** – as you lose weight, notice how much easier it is to do things or how strong your body feels.
- **Do nice things for your body and mind** – get a massage, take a warm bath and wear nice lotions or colognes.
- **Participate in activities you enjoy and love** – you deserve to live life to the fullest.
- **Make a list of the things you love about your body and yourself** – add to this list when needed and read it when you’re feeling down.
- **Stop comparing yourself to others** – love and appreciate your body for what it is and what it is becoming as you live a healthier life.

## Conclusion

Once your confidence grows, it will shine through in the things you do. Keep those you love involved in your weight-loss journey and keep communication open and honest with your partner. If other underlying issues need to be addressed either in your life or in your relationship, seek support. Therapy can be a great tool to help you reach your potential in your personal goals as well as achieve a deeper level of intimacy in your relationships.

### About the Author:

*Jessie Mae Estrada, LPC, NCC, is a licensed professional counselor at Methodist Healthcare Health for Life Center, a bariatric clinic in San Antonio, Texas. She sees people seeking weight-loss surgery, pre and post-surgery, and facilitates support groups.*

## Important LAP-BAND® System Safety Information

**INDICATIONS:** The LAP-BAND® System is indicated for weight reduction for patients with obesity, with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of at least 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or a BMI of at least 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> with one or more obesity related comorbid conditions.

It is indicated for use in adult patients who have failed more conservative weight reduction alternatives, such as supervised diet, exercise and behavior modification programs. Patients who elect to have this surgery must make the commitment to accept significant changes in their eating habits for the rest of their lives.

**CONTRAINDICATIONS:** The LAP-BAND® System is not recommended for non-adult patients, patients with conditions that may make them poor surgical candidates or increase the risk of poor results (e.g., inflammatory or cardiopulmonary diseases, GI conditions, symptoms or family history of autoimmune disease, cirrhosis), who are unwilling or unable to comply with the required dietary restrictions, who have alcohol or drug addictions, or who currently are or may be pregnant.

**WARNINGS:** The LAP-BAND® System is a long-term implant. Explant and replacement surgery may be required. Patients who become pregnant or severely ill, or who require more extensive nutrition may require deflation of their bands. Anti-inflammatory agents, such as aspirin, should be used with caution and may contribute to an increased risk of band erosion.

**ADVERSE EVENTS:** Placement of the LAP-BAND® System is major surgery and, as with any surgery, death can occur. Possible complications include the risks associated with the medications and methods used during surgery, the risks associated with any surgical procedure, and the patient’s ability to tolerate a foreign object implanted in the body.

Band slippage, erosion and deflation, reflux, obstruction of the stomach, dilation of the esophagus, infection, or nausea and vomiting may occur. Reoperation may be required.

Rapid weight loss may result in complications that may require additional surgery. Deflation of the band may alleviate excessively rapid weight loss or esophageal dilation.

**IMPORTANT:** For full safety information please visit [www.lapband.com](http://www.lapband.com), talk with your doctor, or call Allergan Product Support at 1-800-624-4261.

**CAUTION:** Rx only.

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**The LAP-BAND<sup>®</sup> System can finally help you achieve long-term weight loss! Get a free info kit to learn how.**

You've been let down by countless diets and weight-loss programs, so now it's time for a tool that can work! The LAP-BAND<sup>®</sup> Adjustable Gastric Banding System is proven to help you finally achieve long-term weight loss.<sup>1</sup> And significant, sustained weight loss can help improve health and may help you lead a more active lifestyle.<sup>2-5</sup>

**What you may not know is the LAP-BAND<sup>®</sup> System is:**

- Minimally invasive — no stomach stapling like gastric bypass.<sup>6,7</sup>
- Often performed as an outpatient procedure.
- Covered by insurance (in many cases).

**PLEASE SEE IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION ON ADJACENT PAGE.**

LAP-BAND<sup>®</sup> is not for those who are pregnant or who have autoimmune or organ diseases. Reoperation, removal and fatalities are rare. Band slippage, stomach injury, vomiting and heartburn may occur.

1. O'Brien PE, et al. *Obes Surg.* 2006;16:1032-1040. 2. Dixon JB, et al. *Obes Surg.* 1999;9:385-389. 3. Dixon JB, et al. *Diabetes Care.* 2002;25:358-363. 4. Dixon JB, et al. *Arch Intern Med.* 2001;161:102-106. 5. Dixon JB, et al. *Obes Surg.* 1999;9:527-531. 6. Directions For Use (DFU). LAP-BAND AP<sup>®</sup> Adjustable Gastric Banding System with OMNIFORM<sup>®</sup> Design. Allergan, Inc. Irvine, CA. 09/10. 7. Fisher BL, et al. *Am J Surg.* 2002;184:9S-16S.

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## About the OAC

The Obesity Action Coalition is an IRS registered 501(c)3 National non profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to those affected by obesity. The OAC was formed to build a nationwide coalition of individuals affected by obesity to become active advocates and spread the important message of the need for obesity education.

To increase obesity education, the OAC offers a wide variety of free educational resources on obesity, morbid obesity and childhood obesity, in addition to consequences and treatments of these diseases. The OAC also conducts a variety of advocacy efforts throughout the U.S. on both the National and state levels and encourages individuals to become proactive advocates. To learn more about the OAC, visit [www.obesityaction.org](http://www.obesityaction.org) or contact us at (800) 717-3117.



## How YOU Can Support the OAC

As a non profit organization, the OAC is always looking for individuals and organizations to support the OAC through a variety of ways. There are many ways that **YOU** can give back to the OAC and our efforts, and there are many ways that **YOU** can get involved in leading the fight against obesity. Here are ways that **YOU** can help make a difference through the OAC.

- **Become an OAC Member** - membership is available at a variety of levels. Any individual impacted by obesity **NEEDS** to be a member of the OAC.
- **Make a Donation** - as a 501(c)3 charity, donations to the OAC are tax-deductible. Every dollar makes a difference!
- **Advertise in Your Weight Matters Magazine** - our magazine is made possible through the generous support of advertisers. If you have a product that you want our readers to know about, consider advertising today!
- **Write to Your Elected Officials** - help spread the OAC's message to key decision makers and write to your elected officials through the OAC Legislative Action Center. Let them know that these issues matter to you!
- **Help Spread the Word by Encouraging Others to Join** - the OAC relies on our supporters to spread our message and encourage others to become members of the OAC. You can also distribute our educational resources!
- **Join a Local Walk from Obesity** - as a proud partner in the Annual *Walk from Obesity*, the OAC encourages you to get involved at the local level through this important fundraising event.