

Weight Matters

SUMMER 2025

FOR YOUR HEALTH



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Fun, Affordable Ways to Keep Kids Active this Summer

KID'S corner

OAC
Obesity Action Coalition

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FOR YOUR HEALTH
Obesity Action Coalition
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ARE YOU INTERESTED IN TAKING ACTION TO HELP THE OAC MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The OAC envisions a better world for people affected by obesity where many current challenges are reduced or eliminated. These issues include pervasive weight bias and stigma, limited access to obesity healthcare and science-based treatment options, and a general lack of understanding around obesity.

You can help! There are many ways you can support the OAC's cause and join us in our mission to make the world a better place for individuals affected by the disease of obesity.



Taking action doesn't have to be hard, intimidating or time consuming. With all the different opportunities available to you, making a difference can be as quick, and easy as you want it to be! OAC members can take action in many ways:



AWARENESS

Sharing quality, unbiased and science-based information to help others understand the disease of obesity and make informed health decisions.



EDUCATION

Raising awareness of obesity as a complex, chronic disease that is influenced by different factors and is not a character flaw or failure.



ADVOCACY

Standing up for the rights of individuals affected by obesity and ensuring that their voices are always heard and represented.



SUPPORT

Helping people affected by obesity by listening to, encouraging and empowering them in their health journeys.

ACT NOW!

Visit OAC's "Getting Started with Advocacy" page (ObesityAction.org/action-center/getting-started) and OAC's Action Center (ObesityAction.org/action) to learn more and take action!

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Weight Matters

FOR YOUR HEALTH

Summer 2025

Volume XX

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

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Message from the



Obesity Action Coalition

Chair of the Board

Happy Summer!

I'm a bit of an odd duck — summer has always been my favorite season. Yes, it's hot in many places, but I love how nature seems to come alive right before my eyes!

That said, there were many years when I didn't feel I could fully enjoy summer. I worried about bias and stigma — feeling nervous in a swimsuit or even a sleeveless shirt, anxious about participating in summer sports and dreading the challenges of traveling in a larger body. Even simple things like boarding a plane or fastening a seatbelt often felt unwelcoming.

If you've ever felt that way as summer approaches, this issue of *Weight Matters* is for you. We're sharing tips to help you meet summer on your own terms so you can enjoy all the season has to offer.

Speaking of summer highlights, I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at the *Your Weight Matters* National Convention this July! It's shaping up to be a fantastic weekend of education, advocacy and support — and we'll be celebrating 20 years of the OAC standing strong for our community. Will I see you there?

If so, be sure to stop and say hi. If not, I hope you'll stay connected with us online and follow the hashtag #YWM2025.

Wishing you a summer full of joy, rest, and lasting memories!

Lippia Nassir

OAC Board Chair

Treat and Reduce Obesity Act Reintroduced in Congress

The Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA) has been reintroduced in both the U.S. Senate (S. 1973) and House of Representatives (H.R. 4231), renewing a bipartisan effort to expand Medicare coverage for comprehensive obesity care. The legislation would allow Medicare to cover FDA-approved obesity medications and expand access to intensive behavioral therapy (IBT) through a wider range of qualified healthcare providers.

In 2024, TROA advanced farther than ever before — a sign of growing awareness and support for improving access to obesity care. That momentum carries into this new Congress and strengthens the path forward for this critical bill.

Help push TROA forward: Visit ObesityAction.org/TROA to urge your legislators to cosponsor the bill — or thank them if they already have!



YOURWEIGHTMATTERS REGIONAL

Your Weight Matters Events Bring Real Support to Communities Nationwide

OAC's *Your Weight Matters* Regional Events are delivering free, in-person education and support to cities across the country. These half-day events feature guidance from leading experts in weight management, nutrition and mental health — all in a safe, welcoming and judgment-free setting. Attendees also enjoy a free breakfast and walk away with credible information and practical tools to support their health journey.

Designed to meet you where you are, these events offer evidence-based strategies and resources to help you take control of your weight and health with confidence. Upcoming stops include: Sacramento, CA (8/9), Jackson, MS (8/23), Atlanta, GA (9/6), Charleston, WV (10/11) and Memphis, TN (12/6).

Find a city near you and register today at YourWeightMatters.com

Move with Purpose, Step with Power: OAC's 20 Million Step Challenge

Celebrate OAC's 20th Anniversary by doing something meaningful for your health and supporting a cause you care about! The 20 Million Step Challenge invites you to log intentional movement — walking, stretching, swimming, gardening and more — while helping us reach a collective goal of 20 million steps and \$20,000 raised to support OAC's mission.

With a one-time \$20 registration, you can create your own personal Step Challenge page to track your movement goals and invite friends and family to donate in support of your progress. No matter your fitness level or ability, this challenge is about progress, not perfection — and about moving in ways that feel good to YOU. Every activity counts, and every step brings you closer to your goals.

Get started and step with OAC at ObesityAction.org/StepChallenge



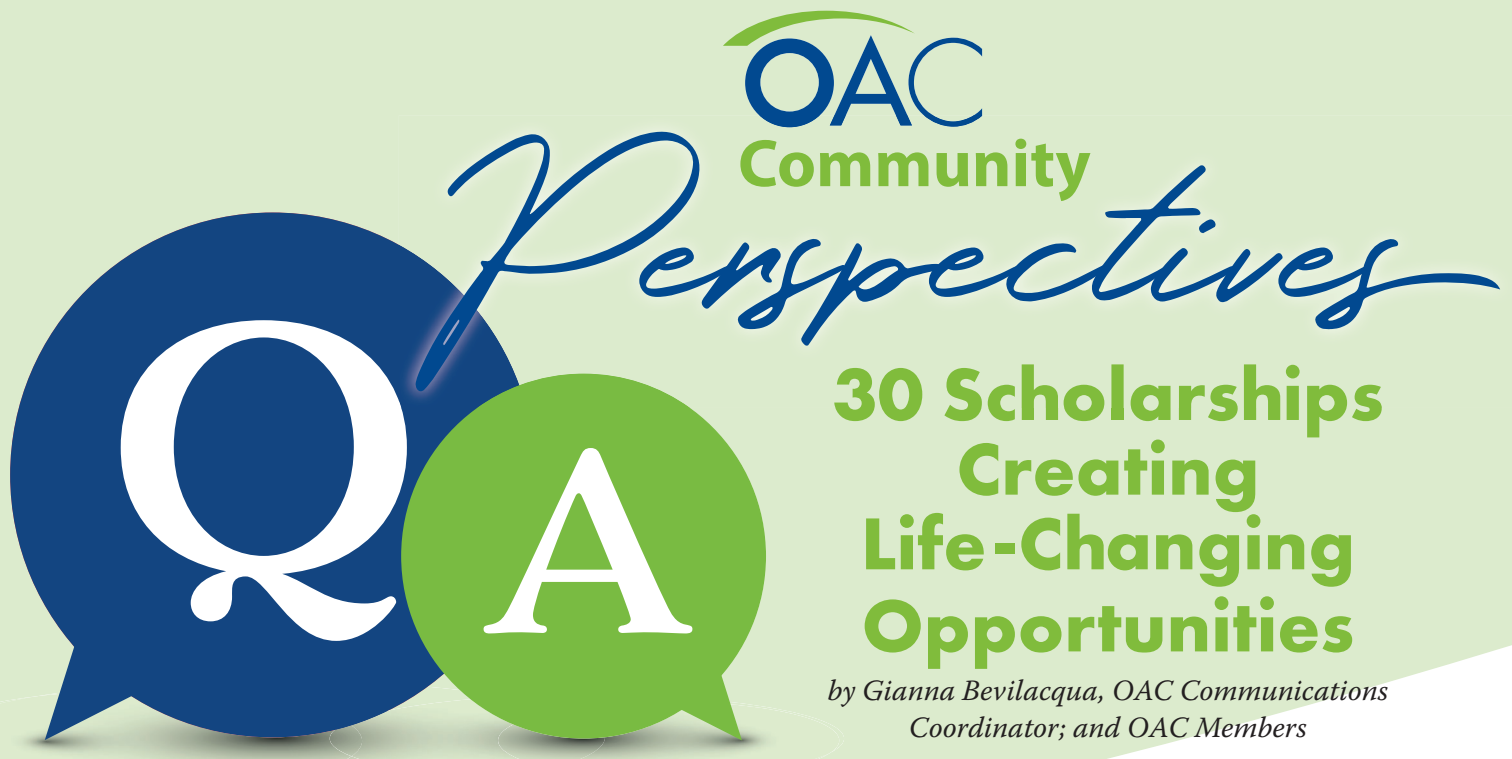
Discover Thrive Together, OAC's Youth and Families Program

Navigating weight and health can be challenging for adults, but it's an entirely different journey for youth. That's why earlier this year, OAC launched Thrive Together, an initiative dedicated to empowering youth and families on their journeys with weight and health. This program offers tailored resources, expert guidance and support to help tackle challenges like weight management, body image, healthy eating, physical activity, mental health and more.

As the program takes off, Thrive Together will be featured as part of our National Convention this summer, where we'll bring 20 youth and families to the event for an empowering experience.

Thrive Together also offers a quarterly newsletter filled with resources, tips and content specifically created for youth and families. Want to learn more? Sign up today to join our email list! Visit ObesityAction.org/thrivetogether.





This year, the OAC awarded **30 scholarships**—the most we've ever awarded—through the Rob Portinga Memorial Scholarship Fund, giving more individuals the chance to experience the *Your Weight Matters* National Convention.

Rob was a passionate and welcoming voice in the OAC Community—first attending the convention as a participant, then joining the Convention Welcoming Committee and ultimately serving on OAC's Board of Directors. His legacy lives on in this scholarship fund, which reflects his belief in making others feel seen and supported.

As part of OAC's 20th Anniversary, this year's Convention holds special meaning. Thanks to generous support from Geisinger Health System—2025 Matching Donor— we're making a greater impact by helping more people step into this life-changing event.

Applications were thoughtfully reviewed and scored by the Obesity Research Team at the Milken Institute School for Public Health at George Washington University and awarded by advocate Amber Huett-Garcia, BS, MPA.

These scholarships represent more than financial support—they represent opportunity, providing access to OAC's unmatched education and community for people who might not have otherwise had the chance to experience it in person.

More than a Scholarship— A Seat at the Table

Our Convention is unlike any other. It blends science-based education with a warm, welcoming atmosphere where people affected by obesity can gather without judgement and with the assurance that they are never alone.

Past recipients share just how life changing the experience can be.



"Being a recipient of the Rob Portinga Memorial Scholarship was one of the biggest blessings I could have ever received. Attending the 2023 *Your Weight Matters* National Convention allowed me to meet new people and make new friends. I loved the fact that this is a no-judgement zone where you can be yourself and accept others for who they are. Through informative sessions, interactive classes and fun-filled events, I was able to see that I am truly not alone and that there are people with knowledge and expertise in the area of obesity fighting for us." — Deborah



"Without a scholarship, I would not have been able to attend the *Your Weight Matters* National Convention. Gaining access to this program and receiving financial assistance is something I haven't taken for granted. I am forever grateful for the OAC and the Rob Portinga Memorial Scholarship Fund. The scholarship allowed me to attend the Convention, where I was able to learn more about myself and understand the complexity of obesity as well as the stigma attached. It doesn't hurt that it's allowed me to meet some pretty fantastic people, too!" — Anita



"I returned home from the OAC's *Your Weight Matters* National Convention fortified with knowledge and the strength that comes from sharing similar lived experiences with fellow attendees. The convention gave me a desire to make circumstances better for people experiencing obesity." — Yolanda



"My receipt of the Rob Portinga Memorial Scholarship to the *Your Weight Matters* National Convention allowed me to reconnect with my heart for advocacy and with my friends. Attending also opened the door to tell my story to a pharmaceutical company which my obesity medication is supplied through. I would not have had that chance had I not been in Las Vegas for the Convention, where another attendee could provide the introduction." — Donna

Broadening Reach, Deepening Impact

Every scholarship opens a door. For some, it's a first step into a community that sees and values them. For others, it's a deeper dive into advocacy, a chance to gain new tools for navigating care—or simply the freedom to breathe in a space free from judgment.

This year's scholarship program stands out not just for the record number of scholarships awarded, but for whom we're reaching. In our 20th Anniversary year, we're proud to welcome a group that reflects greater diversity than ever before.

We know attending the *Your Weight Matters* National Convention isn't always possible for everyone, especially when financial challenges stand in the way. That's why the Rob Portinga Memorial Scholarship Fund exists: to remove barriers and make sure more people can experience the education, connection and support they deserve. If you believe in the power of that opportunity, we invite you to donate. Donate today to the Rob Portinga Memorial Scholarship Fund and help someone take the next step into the OAC Community: ObesityAction.org/donate/general-support/convention-scholarship-program



Rewriting the Narrative on Obesity:



YEARS of Changing Minds and Lives

by OAC Staff

"Obesity stigma is deeply rooted, but the OAC has led the charge in changing how society views and responds to it."

The OAC was born out of a critical gap in representation. In 2005, during a meeting with U.S. legislators, a Congressperson stood up and asked a pivotal question: Who represents people living with obesity? While national advocacy existed for other chronic conditions, no one was standing up for those affected by obesity — until OAC. There was a national voice for people with other chronic conditions, but obesity had never been considered.

That spring, the OAC was founded with a singular purpose: to elevate and empower people affected by obesity through education, awareness, advocacy and support. What began as a powerful idea has since grown into a national coalition of more than 85,000 Members — and a resounding voice for change in how obesity is understood and treated.

As we celebrate our 20th Anniversary, this milestone is a moment to reflect. For two decades, we've worked tirelessly to rewrite the narrative around obesity — a narrative that shapes not only public perception but also policy, education, access to healthcare, support and more. Our journey hasn't been easy. Obesity stigma is deeply rooted, but the OAC has led the charge in changing how society views and responds to it.

Breaking Through a Culture of Blame, Shame and Stigma

Before OAC existed, weight stigma was rarely acknowledged, let alone challenged. Yet it touches every part of life for people with obesity, fueling discrimination, isolation and poor health outcomes. These biases still show up in:

- **Media:** Portraying people with obesity as lazy or lacking willpower, often for comedic effect or cautionary tales.
- **Employment:** Unfair assumptions about motivation or intelligence that impact hiring and promotion.
- **Healthcare:** Dismissive attitudes and outdated beliefs that weight loss is “just about willpower,” limiting access to meaningful and effective care.
- **Education:** Bullying and discrimination that reinforce the false idea that larger bodies reflect lower intelligence or worth.

Despite the persistence of these issues, the OAC has made significant strides through:

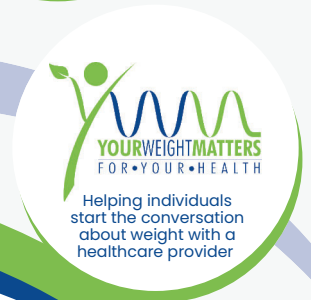
- The Stop Weight Bias Campaign and Image Gallery
- *Your Weight Matters* Campaign and In-Person and Virtual Events
- Obesity Care Week
- Expansive digital education and support resources
- State and federal advocacy
- Thrive Together: Our youth and families program
- The OAC Action Center for advocacy mobilization

And this is just the tip of the iceberg!

Rewriting the Narrative continued on page 10

PUTTING OUR MISSION INTO MOTION

Every initiative we lead is rooted in our commitment to uplift and support individuals affected by obesity.



... And that's not all.
Explore more at
ObesityAction.org



Advancing Obesity as a Chronic Disease

In 2013, the American Medical Association officially recognized obesity as a chronic disease—with the OAC playing a key role in that historic shift. Before this recognition, obesity was widely misunderstood, and stigma often went unchecked. Since then, the OAC has championed a medical, science-based understanding of obesity that has paved the way for:

- Smarter health policy and legislation
- Better healthcare provider training and education
- Evidence-based treatments and innovations
- Cross-specialty understanding in nutrition, mental health, physical activity and other key areas

We incorporate this perspective into everything we do — from public messaging and educational content to the quality of our events and the strength of our advocacy. Obesity is still not universally seen the same way as heart disease or diabetes. But public understanding is improving, thanks to the work of researchers, healthcare providers, advocates and organizations like the OAC.

The Power of the OAC Community

The OAC has driven change, but it's our Community that powers it. Throughout the years, we've built a passionate and diverse network that includes:

- People living with obesity
- Patient advocates
- Healthcare professionals
- Researchers
- Policymakers
- Partnerships organizations and stakeholders

Together, we've raised awareness, educated millions, advocated for equitable care and created spaces rooted in empowerment rather than judgement. When people come together, narratives change. From doctor's offices and HR departments to social media, newsrooms and living rooms, the OAC Community is shifting the conversation and building a better future for people affected by obesity. It is an honor to be the only organization of our kind with such a unique but important focus.

"When people come together with purpose and passion, there's no limit to what we can achieve."

The Narrative is Still Being Written

Twenty years in, our work is far from over. But this Anniversary is more than a reflection; it's a turning point. Obesity has never been more visible in public conversation, and there has never been more opportunity to create meaningful change. When people come together with purpose and passion, there's no limit to what we can achieve. The next chapter of OAC depends on all of us! Whether you lend your voice, your story or your support, you have the power to make a difference.

Join the OAC Community and/or make a gift today to fuel our mission as we look to the next 20 years and beyond: **ObesityAction.org/20years**

The OAC won't stop fighting until everyone affected by obesity has the support, education and care they deserve.



20 Years of Empowering Change





20 Years of Empowering Change Together

In 2025, the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) commemorates two decades of providing education, advocacy and support for individuals affected by obesity. Join us as we celebrate our 20th Anniversary, reflect on our journey and look ahead to the future!

Help Us Grow Our Community by 20,000 Members!

The OAC Community is more than 85,000 Members strong, but we're just getting started!

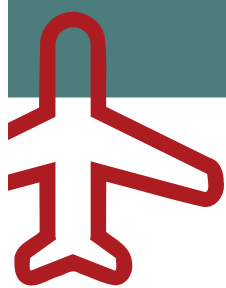
If you're not yet part of our Community, join today and help us reach 20,000 new Members. Already a Member?

Upgrade to Community+ for just \$20 in honor of our 20th Anniversary and unlock exclusive benefits!

Donate \$20 for 20 Years

For two decades, the OAC has been fighting weight stigma, advocating for better care and providing life-changing resources. A \$20 donation today in honor of our Anniversary fuels our mission for the next 20 years and beyond. Every donation powers vital programs, resources and advocacy efforts!

Visit ObesityAction.org/20years



Flying the Friendly Skies with Confidence and Comfort



by Sarah
Bramblette, MSHL;
Terri Cullen, PhD;
and Kenlie Fite,
DrPH, MPH,
CPCLC

16A
SEAT

Growing up, the extent of my travel experience occurred in the “way back” of the family station wagon, then we upgraded to a minivan. I was the youngest of five children so I was used to being crammed into tight spaces with others. That family trip from Ohio to Florida made many memories, both good and hilarious.

It wasn't until I was in college that I had the opportunity to fly to a student leadership conference. I weighed over 400 lbs but this was in the mid-90s before 911, before social media and when airplanes were still built for the average human being and flights weren't regularly oversold. I do not remember being worried about flying. I was traveling with people who knew me, people who didn't judge me. We lucked out and our seats were spread across the entire row with empty middle seats on the way to our destination and on the way back I had an entire row to myself.

A couple years later I didn't have as friendly of an experience. I again was traveling with a fellow student leader and he was seated next to me. When the flight attendant brought me a seat belt extender, she leaned over and asked him if he'd prefer to move to another seat for “his comfort.” He declined. She didn't seem concerned with my comfort. While I wouldn't have minded if he moved, I appreciated that he did not.

Many years and many frequent flier miles later, I've learned to navigate the friendly skies quite well. In the past decade I've traveled for work, advocacy, personal vacations and healthcare. Flying is a necessary part of life for many, one that should not be limited based on our body size. After all, more than 40% of Americans are living with obesity. Despite what the news and social media portray, my flying experience has been more positive than negative.

Since summer is the season for travel, I wanted to share some tips with you to lessen the fear and anxiety of flying.

“ Flying is a necessary part of life for many, one that should not be limited based on our body size. ”



Extra Seat - Will I fit? Will I be forced to buy two seats? This may depend on body size, shape and preference. Airline policies on requiring additional seats vary, as does the price and process for booking.

- **See the chart*** for the policies for purchasing an additional seat for many of the major airlines.
- **Check first class** - occasionally a first class ticket is less expensive than two coach tickets and first class includes other perks, such as checked luggage.
- **Traveling with others** - traveling with others may save you worrying about sitting next to a stranger; be certain you purchase a ticket that allows you to select your seats.



At the Airport

- If you have trouble walking long distances, request wheelchair assistance. An attendant will escort you to the gate, with stops if needed. Airlines will note your reservation for layovers and arrival. The service is free; tipping is appreciated.
- When traveling with a mobility device you should check with the airline policy prior to your travel date.
- TSA PreCheck helps get through security with ease. The PreCheck lane doesn't require taking off shoes or removing items from carry-on. If you don't have PreCheck, wear shoes that are easy to slip on and off.
- Medications should be kept in their original bottles. Liquid medications can be over 3 ozs, but need to be screened separately. Medical devices do not count as part of your carry-on limit; however, be sure to label them as medical equipment.
- You can request to pre-board or board when they call for passengers that need extra time to be able to get to your seat without having to pass by others.

Seat Belt Extenders

- Do not judge your self worth by the length of a seatbelt. The only purpose of a seatbelt is to keep you safe.
- Seat belt lengths can vary. Airlines trim frayed belts and reattach buckles during maintenance so even belts on the same plane can be different lengths.
- Do NOT buy your own extender online, they're not FAA-approved and may not fit the aircraft. To ensure you have the proper and safe extender, use the ones provided on board your flight.
- Ask the flight attendant for one as you board the flight, and give it back as you exit the plane so it's available for passengers on the next flight.
- Note - Extenders are not permitted to be used in certain seats onboard - exit row, etc. Check the airline website for additional information.



TSA Tips

- Label medical devices (ex. CPAP)
- Shoes that are easy to take off and put back on
- Call ahead for any questions or special requests - [TSA.gov/travel/tsa-cares/passenger-support](https://www.tsa.gov/travel/tsa-cares/passenger-support) or TSA Cares at (855) 787-2227

Selecting a Seat

- Seat selection might depend on personal preferences.
- A window seat allows me to get seated and not worry about having to let others in and out. Also; sitting by the window my arms won't get in the way of others walking down the aisle or the service carts.
- The aisle seat allows the ability to get out of your seat when needed, however, you might get bumped as others pass by.
- The aisle armrest goes up to make it easier to get in and out of the row, but will have to be lowered before take off.
- Note: some extra-legroom or bulkhead seats may be narrower or have fixed armrests.

Flying continued on page 14

Take Care While in the Air - higher altitude can impact our bodies

- Stay hydrated (you can bring an empty water bottle to fill after security)
- Healthy snacks to avoid expensive temptation purchases
- Pack all medications in carry-on
- Move your feet - do ankle flex to help circulation
- Check if your doctor recommends compression socks



Terri Cullen, PhD

Being able to book an extra seat allowed me to maintain professional dignity when interviewing. I worried that my obesity would restrict my ability to get a new job, so when I had an on site interview, my ability to book a second seat outside of the potential employer was key to me getting the job. My interview started at the moment I arrived at the airport, so being able to schedule a second seat myself was key to me performing well on the interview.

As a professional who travels a lot, I often get asked by younger professionals how I deal with the stress of travel at my size. I recently had a conversation with a junior colleague who told me that she was more willing to attend professional conferences and advance her career now that she knew that she could request a second seat.

Don't let anxiety about flying keep you from traveling. You deserve to advance your career, and see the world whatever your size.

It has always struck me that I don't see many people like me when I travel internationally. It's not that we don't exist, it is that we let the anxiety of negative travel experiences keep us from seeing the world. The more of us that assert our right to see the world, the more people that can see they can do it too.

More and more people are requesting a seat belt extender. Remember it is not about embarrassment, it's about safety. You deserve to be safe if there is ever an in air emergency and everyone's safety depends on everyone being restrained if there is an emergency.

Kenlie Fite, DrPH, MPH, CPCLC

When I accepted a position at a global nonprofit organization in public health, I anticipated frequent travel and the opportunity to support laboratory scientists in becoming more effective leaders. My work involves training highly skilled public health laboratory scientists in leadership areas like building trust, communicating clearly, and navigating team dynamics. It's meaningful work, and it requires me to be on the move often.

Travel, however, hasn't always felt this seamless. Over a decade ago, I experienced firsthand the challenges of flying in coach as a person living in a larger body. At that time, a flight-related incident turned into a viral news story when I spoke out about being called "too fat to fly." The experience was painful and dehumanizing, and while it brought national attention to the issue of size-based discrimination, it also revealed how few systems were designed with human bodies in mind. Since then, I've carried those lessons with me, navigating travel policies and often paying out of pocket for the extra space I needed just to travel with basic comfort and dignity.

When I started this position, I expected to do the same. During a conversation with our HR director about travel logistics, I shared that I typically purchase a second seat to ensure a safe and respectful travel experience. I wasn't requesting reimbursement—just clarity on how best to coordinate through our travel system. But to my surprise, their response was immediate and sincere, and they expressed that I shouldn't have to pay extra to be safe and comfortable while I work. I provided a letter of accommodation, which was described as a medical necessity by my doctor, and now simply attach it to my travel requests. Each time, the accommodation is honored without hesitation. There's no embarrassment, no awkwardness—just respect and support.

My organization has never made me feel like my size is a limitation. Instead, I've been promoted, entrusted with large-scale leadership initiatives, and encouraged to pursue projects aligned with my passions. Most recently, I completed my Doctor of Public Health at Tulane University's Celia Scott Weatherhead School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. My dissertation—"Weight stigma leads to implicit bias, which, in turn, is associated with a lower health-related quality of life for people living in larger bodies"—grew directly from my lived experiences, including those early days of flying.

The difference between then and now is striking. Over a decade ago, I was forced to defend my right to exist in public space. Today, I'm part of an organization that proactively ensures I can do my job with comfort and dignity. I hope more workplaces follow suit—not because it makes headlines, but because it makes a real difference in the lives of those they employ.



Airline	Charge for Extra Seat	Book Extra Seat Online/App
Southwest	Refund after Travel	Yes
Alaska	Refund after travel if flight not sold out	No, must contact customer service
JetBlue	Yes	Yes
United	Yes	Yes
Delta	Yes	No, must contact customer service
American	Yes	No, must contact customer service
Spirit	Yes or Go Big Seats	Yes
Allegiant	Yes	Yes
Frontier	Yes	No, must contact customer service

Airline policies can change so always check the website to check the policy for purchasing an extra seat. The policy can be referred to as Passenger or Customer of Size, Extra Seat, Extra Space or Special Needs.

About the Authors:
Sarah Bramblette, MSHL, is the OAC Senior Advocacy Manager and a longtime health advocate who uses her personal experiences to raise awareness about obesity, access to care and weight bias. Her travels have provided the opportunity to meet people all across the country which in turns has allowed her to build connections and relationships that help her advocacy efforts.

Terri Cullen, PhD, is a professional educator and frequent traveler who champions dignity and inclusion for people with obesity. She is proud that she has learned to advocate for herself and others and has successfully brought about change and access.

Kenlie Fite, DrPH, MPH, CPCLC, is a population scientist whose background and lived experience shapes her work in developing strong leaders in public health laboratories across the US and Canada.

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Warmer Weather Fuels Body Image Anxiety

by Robyn Pashby, PhD

"I dread the summer months. In the winter, baggier clothes help me hide, but summer feels like everything about my body is suddenly on display. Wearing shorts or a bathing suit makes me feel exposed and self-conscious. I speak so mean to myself, telling myself I need to change my body before I can go out and have fun like everyone else. I turn down invites to pool parties and beach days, claiming I'm busy just to avoid situations where I'd have to show more of my body. Most summers, I stay indoors, reading alone and pretending that's my choice." — OAC Community Member

As temperatures rise and spring break and summer vacations approach, so does the pressure to change our bodies to fit seasonal expectations. Social media, advertisements and even well-meaning friends and family can amplify the idea that we need to slim down or tone up to feel confident in warm-weather clothing. This push not only affects physical health but also takes a toll on mental well-being, fueling anxiety, self-doubt and unhealthy dieting behaviors.



The Seasonal Shift in Body Image Pressure

During colder months, our bodies are often hidden under layers of clothing, making body image concerns less front of mind. However, as the days get longer, the narrative slowly shifts. Swimsuit season can bring increased scrutiny, both from within and from societal expectations. A 2024 Forbes Health survey found that 62% of Americans feel pressure to lose weight before summer, with many turning to restrictive diets or intense exercise regimens to meet an idealized standard. Social media often exacerbates this pressure, with influencers promoting rapid weight-loss plans, detoxes and "summer shred" programs. These messages can be particularly harmful, reinforcing the idea that thin is best at all costs.



Mental Health Impacts of the "Summer Body" Mindset

The expectation to look a certain way for summer can lead to increased body dissatisfaction, lower self-esteem and even disordered eating patterns. When people feel they must change their bodies to fit a seasonal mold, they may experience:

- **Increased anxiety and stress** – The fear of judgment at the beach or pool can make social activities feel overwhelming and cause people to avoid enjoying warm-weather activities.
- **Negative self-talk** – Comparing oneself to curated images online can lead to a cycle of self-criticism and self-doubt. It is impossible to meet impossible standards.
- **Unhealthy behaviors** – Extreme dieting, over-exercising and supplement use may become coping mechanisms to conform to societal beauty standards.

Body Image Anxiety continued on page 18



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“Speak to yourself with kindness. If you wouldn’t say it to a friend or your child, don’t say it to yourself.”

Shifting the Narrative: Take Care of Your Mind First

Rather than succumbing to seasonal body pressures, we can take a healthier approach to self-image and well-being. Here are some ways to embrace your self-confidence this summer and find more joy and self-acceptance by taking care of your mental health.

- **Challenge the "Beach Body" Mentality** – You’ve heard it before, but it is TRUE. All bodies are beach bodies. Remind yourself regularly that there is no singular way to look in order to enjoy summer activities or summer clothing. Pressure to hide parts of your body robs you of opportunities for comfort and fun.
- **Curate Your Social Media Feed** – Social media is nearly synonymous with marketing—the more you see it, the more you want it. Follow accounts that promote body diversity, self-acceptance and mental wellness rather than unrealistic transformation narratives. By diversifying your feed, you can create content that encourages your self-esteem, self-empowerment and self-worth with every scroll.
- **Prioritize Enjoyment Over Appearance** – Instead of focusing on how your body looks, remember to practice gratitude for what your body can do! Playing frisbee at the park? Walking your dog in the spring? Building a sandcastle with your kid at the beach? All of these activities are wonderful opportunities to thank your body for its abilities.
- **Practice Self-Compassion** – Speak to yourself with kindness. If you wouldn’t say it to a friend or your child, don’t say it to yourself. Some examples of how self-talk can change your feelings are in the next point.
- **Wear What Makes You Comfortable** – Confidence comes from feeling good in what you wear, not from meeting an arbitrary standard. Buy clothes that fit, all the way down to your underwear! Old, outdated or ill-fitting clothes can trigger thoughts like “I am so frumpy!” or “I am just so lazy.” These sorts of thoughts cause lots of negative feelings that you simply don’t need.
- **Bonus Challenge: Change Your Focus** – One of my clients came up with this great tip and gave us permission to share: If part of what drives your anxiety is seeing old friends or family and worrying about what they will think or say about how you look, challenge yourself to think differently about the occasion. Instead of asking yourself, “What will they think about my weight?” consciously plan ahead and shift your self-talk to, “What would I like to talk about with this person when I see him/her/they?” Having a plan in place can reduce your anxiety significantly.

The pressure to lose weight before summer is deeply ingrained in our culture, but it doesn’t have to define our relationship with our bodies. By shifting the focus from appearance to self-care, enjoyment and well-being, we can move toward a healthier mindset—not just for summer, but all year long. If you are struggling with body image concerns, please reach out to a mental health professional.

About the Author:

Robyn Pashby, PhD, is a clinical health psychologist who is deeply committed to the mission of the OAC. She has personal experience with obesity and comes from a family with a history of obesity. Over the past 15 years, Dr. Pashby has dedicated her work to integrating mental healthcare into obesity treatment. She has done this in various multidisciplinary settings and, most recently, through her own behavioral health group practice.





OAC
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Staying Healthy During Summer Adventures

by Leslie Sedon, MS, RDN, LDN, CDCES

Summer travel season is here and with it comes new experiences, memories—and the challenge of maintaining health goals while on the go. Whether you're taking a road trip, flying far away from home or opting for a staycation, you can stay connected to your health goals.

As you start packing, here are some tips to get you on your way. It's about being prepared, not perfect.



“When in doubt, build your plate like you build your day and keep it balanced and satisfying with as much color as possible.”



Planning Ahead Without Over-planning: Tips for Snacks, Meals and Hydration

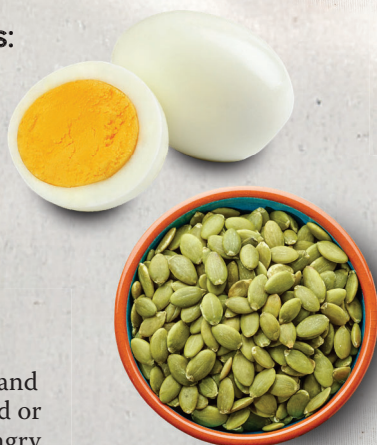
Healthy travel starts at home, so be sure to pack a plan and not extra pressure. Taking time to consider your destination, access to local grocery stores and familiar foods, and whether you'll be on the go or lounging around are all great starting points. Food is part of the joy of traveling, so give yourself permission to enjoy all that your destination has to offer. Try eating at least one food you know each day to help you feel more comfortable trying new local foods and flavors. Call ahead to check if the hotel has a mini fridge, microwave or free breakfast to help you eat well.

It also is beneficial to pack nutrient dense snacks before leaving the house. Foods with protein and fruits or vegetables will keep you satisfied and full. These foods typically have less fat and salt and more fiber.

Great Snack Options:

- Yogurt
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Pumpkin seeds
- Unsalted nuts
- Nut butters
- Edamame

These will provide energy and help you avoid getting tired or cranky from being too hungry.



Water is also vital to make any travel itinerary a success. Did you know that consuming water not only keeps you hydrated but may also help to prevent overheating and constipation?

For these reasons and more, a reusable water bottle is your road trip MVP. Start each day by drinking at least eight ounces of water. With the warmer weather typical of the summer season, you may need more than usual because you sweat more. Many hotels have filtered water machines in the fitness area, while airports and rest areas have installed water bottle refill stations to make it easy to stay hydrated.

Eating foods with high water content like tomatoes, watermelon, cucumbers or celery can also help you meet your needs. Look for these and other fresh options before ordering a meal.



Navigating Restaurants, Hotels, Airports and Unfamiliar Foods

Every menu offers balanced options and you can order what works for you. To be prepared, explore the food options in the concourse where your flight will be departing in advance.

Not traveling by plane? Map out your eating adventures along the road. Be sure to prioritize protein and aim for fruits and vegetables as often as possible. Many convenience stores and gas stations now offer expanded refrigerated food options as part of their selection. These foods will keep you full and satisfied as you travel to your final destination.

Are there unfamiliar foods in your future? When in doubt, build your plate like you build your day and keep it balanced and satisfying with as much color as possible. Look for a mix of animal and plant-based protein options that are grilled rather than fried and request sauces on the side.

Staying Healthy continued on page 25

Discover the Power of Wegovy®



Actor portrayals

What is Wegovy®?

WEGOVY® (semaglutide) injection 2.4 mg is an injectable prescription medicine used with a reduced calorie diet and increased physical activity:

- to reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events such as death, heart attack, or stroke in adults with known heart disease and with either obesity or overweight
- that may help adults with obesity or overweight with weight-related medical problems, lose excess body weight and keep the weight off

Wegovy® contains semaglutide and should not be used with other semaglutide-containing products or other GLP-1 receptor agonist medicines.

It is not known if Wegovy® is safe and effective for use in children under 12 years of age.

Important Safety Information

What is the most important information I should know about Wegovy®?

Wegovy® may cause serious side effects, including:

- **Possible thyroid tumors, including cancer.** Tell your healthcare provider if you get a lump or swelling in your neck, hoarseness, trouble swallowing, or shortness of breath. These may be symptoms of thyroid cancer. In studies with rodents, Wegovy® and medicines that work like Wegovy® caused thyroid tumors, including thyroid cancer. It is not known if Wegovy® will cause thyroid tumors or a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) in people
- Do not use Wegovy® if you or any of your family have ever had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2)

Do not use Wegovy® if:

- you or any of your family have ever had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2)
- you have had a serious allergic reaction to semaglutide or any of the ingredients in Wegovy®

Before using Wegovy®, tell your healthcare provider if you have any other medical conditions, including if you:

- have or have had problems with your pancreas or kidneys
- have type 2 diabetes and a history of diabetic retinopathy
- have or have had depression, suicidal thoughts, or mental health issues
- are scheduled to have surgery or other procedures that use anesthesia or deep sleepiness (deep sedation)
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. Wegovy® may harm your unborn baby. You should stop using Wegovy® 2 months before you plan to become pregnant
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if Wegovy® passes into your breast milk

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Wegovy® may affect the way some medicines work and some medicines may affect the way Wegovy® works. Tell your healthcare provider if you are taking other medicines to treat diabetes, including sulfonylureas or insulin. Wegovy® slows stomach emptying and can affect medicines that need to pass through the stomach quickly.



Lose weight

For adults with obesity or overweight who also have weight-related medical problems, along with a reduced calorie diet and increased physical activity



Keep it off



Lower the risk of major cardiovascular (CV) events

Such as death, heart attack, or stroke in adults with known heart disease and obesity or overweight, along with a reduced calorie diet and increased physical activity

Wegovy® is the only FDA-approved weight-management medicine that is also approved to reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events such as death, heart attack, or stroke.

In medical studies, people who stopped taking Wegovy® generally regained weight.

ONCE -WEEKLY

wegovy®

semaglutide injection **2.4 mg**



Check your cost and coverage at **Wegovy.com** before asking your health care professional about **Wegovy®**.

Important Safety Information (cont'd)

What are the possible side effects of Wegovy®?

Wegovy® may cause serious side effects, including:

- **inflammation of your pancreas (pancreatitis).** Stop using Wegovy® and call your healthcare provider right away if you have severe pain in your stomach area (abdomen) that will not go away, with or without vomiting. You may feel the pain from your abdomen to your back
- **gallbladder problems.** Wegovy® may cause gallbladder problems, including gallstones. Some gallstones may need surgery. Call your healthcare provider if you have symptoms, such as pain in your upper stomach (abdomen), fever, yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice), or clay-colored stools
- **increased risk of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), especially those who also take medicines for diabetes such as insulin or sulfonylureas.** This can be a serious side effect. Talk to your healthcare provider about how to recognize and treat low blood sugar and check your blood sugar before you start and while you take Wegovy®. Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar may include dizziness or light-headedness, blurred vision, anxiety, irritability or mood changes, sweating, slurred speech, hunger, confusion or drowsiness, shakiness, weakness, headache, fast heartbeat, or feeling jittery
- **kidney problems (kidney failure).** In people who have kidney problems, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting may cause a loss of fluids (dehydration), which may cause kidney problems to get worse. It is important for you to drink fluids to help reduce your chance of dehydration
- **severe stomach problems.** Stomach problems, sometimes severe, have been reported in people who use Wegovy®. Tell your healthcare provider if you have stomach problems that are severe or will not go away.
- **serious allergic reactions.** Stop using Wegovy® and get medical help right away, if you have any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction, including swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat; problems breathing or swallowing; severe rash or itching; fainting or feeling dizzy; or very rapid heartbeat

- **change in vision in people with type 2 diabetes.** Tell your healthcare provider if you have changes in vision during treatment with Wegovy®
- **increased heart rate.** Wegovy® can increase your heart rate while you are at rest. Tell your healthcare provider if you feel your heart racing or pounding in your chest and it lasts for several minutes
- **depression or thoughts of suicide.** You should pay attention to any mental changes, especially sudden changes in your mood, behaviors, thoughts, or feelings. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any mental changes that are new, worse, or worry you
- **food or liquid getting into the lungs during surgery or other procedures that use anesthesia or deep sleepiness (deep sedation).** Wegovy® may increase the chance of food getting into your lungs during surgery or other procedures. Tell all your healthcare providers that you are taking Wegovy® before you are scheduled to have surgery or other procedures

The most common side effects of Wegovy® may include:

nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, constipation, stomach (abdomen) pain, headache, tiredness (fatigue), upset stomach, dizziness, feeling bloated, belching, low blood sugar in people with type 2 diabetes, gas, stomach flu, heartburn, and runny nose or sore throat.


Wegovy® is a prescription medication. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

FDA, US Food and Drug Administration.

Please see Brief Summary of Information about Wegovy® on the following page.

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Brief Summary of Information about WEGOVY® (semaglutide) injection																					
 semaglutide injection 2.4 mg	Rx Only This information is not comprehensive. How to get more information: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist• Visit www.novo-pi.com/wegovy.pdf to obtain the FDA-approved product labeling• Call 1-833-Wegovy-1																				
What is the most important information I should know about WEGOVY®? WEGOVY® may cause serious side effects, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possible thyroid tumors, including cancer. Tell your healthcare provider if you get a lump or swelling in your neck, hoarseness, trouble swallowing, or shortness of breath. These may be symptoms of thyroid cancer. In studies with rodents, WEGOVY® and medicines that work like WEGOVY® caused thyroid tumors, including thyroid cancer. It is not known if WEGOVY® will cause thyroid tumors or a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) in people.• Do not use WEGOVY® if you or any of your family have ever had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC), or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2).	How should I use WEGOVY®? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WEGOVY® is injected under the skin (subcutaneously) of your stomach (abdomen), thigh, or upper arm. Do not inject WEGOVY® into a muscle (intramuscularly) or vein (intravenously).• Change (rotate) your injection site with each injection. Do not use the same site for each injection.• Use WEGOVY® 1 time each week, on the same day each week, at any time of the day.• If you take too much WEGOVY®, call your healthcare provider or Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away. Advice is also available online at poisonhelp.org.																				
What is WEGOVY®? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WEGOVY® is an injectable prescription medicine used with a reduced calorie diet and increased physical activity:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events such as death, heart attack, or stroke in adults with known heart disease and with either obesity or overweight.• that may help adults and children aged 12 years and older with obesity, or some adults with excess weight (overweight) who also have weight-related medical problems to lose weight and keep the weight off.• WEGOVY® contains semaglutide and should not be used with other semaglutide-containing products or other GLP-1 receptor agonist medicines.• It is not known if WEGOVY® is safe and effective for use in children under 12 years of age.	What are the possible side effects of WEGOVY®? WEGOVY® may cause serious side effects, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• See “What is the most important information I should know about WEGOVY®?”• inflammation of your pancreas (pancreatitis). Stop using WEGOVY® and call your healthcare provider right away if you have severe pain in your stomach area (abdomen) that will not go away, with or without vomiting. You may feel the pain from your abdomen to your back.• gallbladder problems. WEGOVY® may cause gallbladder problems including gallstones. Some gallbladder problems need surgery. Call your healthcare provider if you have any of the following symptoms:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ pain in your upper stomach (abdomen)◦ fever◦ yellowing of skin or eyes (jaundice)◦ clay-colored stools• increased risk of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), especially those who also take medicines to treat type 2 diabetes mellitus such as an insulin or a sulfonylureas. Low blood sugar in patients with type 2 diabetes who receive WEGOVY® can be both a serious and common side effect. Talk to your healthcare provider about how to recognize and treat low blood sugar. You should check your blood sugar before you start taking WEGOVY® and while you take WEGOVY®. Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar may include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ dizziness or light-headedness◦ blurred vision◦ anxiety◦ irritability or mood changes◦ sweating◦ slurred speech◦ hunger◦ confusion or drowsiness◦ shakiness◦ weakness◦ headache◦ fast heartbeat◦ feeling jittery• kidney problems (kidney failure). In people who have kidney problems, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting may cause a loss of fluids (dehydration) which may cause kidney problems to get worse. It is important for you to drink fluids to help reduce your chance of dehydration.• severe stomach problems. Stomach problems, sometimes severe, have been reported in people who use WEGOVY®. Tell your healthcare provider if you have stomach problems that are severe or will not go away.• serious allergic reactions. Stop using WEGOVY® and get medical help right away, if you have any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ swelling of your face, lips, tongue or throat◦ severe rash or itching◦ problems breathing or swallowing◦ very rapid heartbeat◦ fainting or feeling dizzy• change in vision in people with type 2 diabetes. Tell your healthcare provider if you have changes in vision during treatment with WEGOVY®.• increased heart rate. WEGOVY® can increase your heart rate while you are at rest. Your healthcare provider should check your heart rate while you take WEGOVY®. Tell your healthcare provider if you feel your heart racing or pounding in your chest and it lasts for several minutes.• depression or thoughts of suicide. You should pay attention to any mental changes, especially sudden changes in your mood, behaviors, thoughts, or feelings. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any mental changes that are new, worse, or worry you.• food or liquid getting into the lungs during surgery or other procedures that use anesthesia or deep sleepiness (deep sedation). WEGOVY® may increase the chance of food getting into your lungs during surgery or other procedures. Tell all your healthcare providers that you are taking WEGOVY® before you are scheduled to have surgery or other procedures.																				
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Before using WEGOVY®, tell your healthcare provider if you have any other medical conditions, including if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have or have had problems with your pancreas or kidneys.• have type 2 diabetes and a history of diabetic retinopathy.• have or have had depression or suicidal thoughts, or mental health issues.• are scheduled to have surgery or other procedures that use anesthesia or deep sleepiness (deep sedation).• are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. WEGOVY® may harm your unborn baby. You should stop using WEGOVY® 2 months before you plan to become pregnant.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Pregnancy Exposure Registry: There is a pregnancy exposure registry for women who use WEGOVY® during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk to your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry or you may contact Novo Nordisk at 1-877-390-2760.• are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if WEGOVY® passes into your breast milk. You should talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby while using WEGOVY®. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. WEGOVY® may affect the way some medicines work and some medicines may affect the way WEGOVY® works. Tell your healthcare provider if you are taking other medicines to treat diabetes, including sulfonylureas or insulin. WEGOVY® slows stomach emptying and can affect medicines that need to pass through the stomach quickly. Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.	<p>Talk to your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of WEGOVY®.</p> <p>Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.</p>																				

Manufactured by: Novo Nordisk A/S, DK-2880 Bagsvaerd, Denmark
More detailed information is available upon request.
Available by prescription only.
WEGOVY® is a registered trademark of Novo Nordisk A/S.
For more information, go to startWegovy.com or call 1-833-Wegovy-1.

PATENT Information: <http://novonordisk-us.com/products/product-patents.html>

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US24SEM001815 December 2024



Making Movement Part of the Fun—Not a Punishment

Once you get to your destination, seek out how the locals travel. Are bikes or scooters available to rent? Are there any scenic trails or perhaps a farmer's market nearby?

The summer season brings extended daylight hours in many parts of the world, so in addition to packing sunscreen, pack your walking shoes. You can move in ways that make you smile, not feel guilty. It could be as simple as taking the stairs halfway to your room and then catching an elevator the rest of the way. If taking stairs doesn't work for you, remember that dancing in your room or at the beach counts. Joyful movement is still movement. According to the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, health can be improved by physical activity. Adults should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity per week.

Find ways to stay active while away from home. Hiking, biking, strolling, swimming—it's all movement and it's all valid.



Embracing Flexibility While Still Honoring Your Goals

Vacation is a time to refresh and reset. Staying on track doesn't always mean staying on schedule.

What makes travel great are the unexpected moments you didn't plan for—like enjoying a meal and conversation late into the evening, discovering an unmarked path or simply staying up late to stargaze.

Staying hydrated, finding joyful movement and getting good sleep can all be part of the plan, even when they look different than they do at home. If you stay up late exploring, consider sleeping in the next morning or taking an afternoon rest.

In general, it is recommended that adults get 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night. Children typically need more and the amount varies depending on their age. While your bedtime might shift during vacation, quality rest remains important for energy, mood and enjoying your adventures. Balance means room for both structure and spontaneity.

Perhaps you packed healthy snacks, but then you discover an amazing local café that becomes your new favorite breakfast spot. This flexibility isn't derailing your goals—it's part of the journey.

Honor your body's signals. If you feel tired, rest. If you're genuinely hungry, eat something nourishing. If you feel energized, embrace an active adventure. Your body is your best guide, even when you're far from home.



Mindset Shifts: Letting Go of Guilt and Embracing Progress, Not Perfection

Each day is a new opportunity to embrace a healthy mindset. There is tremendous value in small actions along the road to long-term health success. Look out the window and consider what healthy looks like for you today. It is ok if it looks different than yesterday. Maybe yesterday "healthy" meant a long hike, but today it means choosing water over soda or taking the stairs at the museum. Both matter equally.

Progress isn't a straight line and detours are part of the journey. Sometimes these detours lead to discovering a new favorite restaurant or engaging in a conversation you never would have planned. These unexpected moments often become the memories we talk about for years to come. Try starting the day with gratitude. Including something as simple as, "I'm thankful for this day," may help put the day into perspective. You might also appreciate your body's ability to carry you to new places or feel grateful for the energy to explore somewhere new.

Staying connected to your health goals while away from home can be challenging. But with a little planning and flexibility, you can embrace the joy of eating and movement wherever your travels take you. Remember, showing yourself compassion during travel supports long-term success far more than harsh self-criticism ever could. Health isn't all-or-nothing—it's always something, and it enjoys a change of scenery too. Your body is your travel companion, so treat it with care. Enjoy every moment of your summer adventures while honoring the amazing person you are, right now.

About the Author:

Leslie Sedon, MS, RDN, LDN, CDCES, is a Central Florida based Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and Board-Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist. Her passion is helping adults find a dose of balance in their busy lives. She is active in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Weight Management Dietetic Practice Group. Connect with her at Leslie@doseofbalance.com.

A young boy with dark skin and curly hair is standing on a grassy lawn. He is wearing a light green t-shirt, blue shorts, and red sneakers. He is smiling at the camera. A black and white soccer ball is on the grass in front of him. The background is a blurred view of trees and a house.

Fun, Affordable Ways to Keep Kids Active this Summer

by Lindsay Noelle, Make It Fun Mom

Summer is the perfect time to get outside, stay active, and make unforgettable memories with your kids. The long days and warm weather provide an ideal backdrop for fun, physical activities that can benefit the whole family. Best of all, many of these ideas require little to no cost and can be done right in your backyard or local park. Let's dive into some creative ways to keep your kids moving and laughing this summer!



1. Sprinkler Obstacle Course

When temperatures soar, nothing beats the refreshing fun of water play. Why not take it up a notch by creating a sprinkler obstacle course? Gather a few household items like hula hoops, pool noodles, and cones. Arrange them in a course around your yard with a sprinkler in the center. Kids can jump, crawl, and zigzag their way through the obstacles while dodging sprays of water. You can even add challenges like balancing a ball on a spoon or hopping on one foot. The best part? Everyone stays cool while getting in some exercise.

2. Sponge Dodgeball

Transform a classic game into a summer favorite with sponge dodgeball! Instead of traditional balls, use large, soft sponges soaked in water. The rules are simple: just like regular dodgeball, players throw the sponges to tag each other out. This version is safe, fun, and a great way to cool off. You can make it even more exciting by adding a “splash zone” where players can refill their sponges in a bucket of water. This game is sure to become a backyard hit and guarantees lots of laughter.



3. Create an Adventure Map

Turn your neighborhood or downtown area into a thrilling adventure with a homemade map. Encourage your kids to design their own map featuring local parks, walking trails, historical landmarks, or even a favorite ice cream shop. Use fun themes like pirates searching for treasure or explorers discovering new lands. Once the map is ready, set out on a family expedition to check off each spot. Not only does this activity promote walking and exploring, but it also fosters creativity and planning skills.

4. Backyard Camping with Flashlight Tag

You don't need to travel far to experience the joys of camping. Set up a tent in your backyard, gather some sleeping bags, and roast marshmallows over a portable fire pit or grill. Once the sun sets, bring out the flashlights for an exhilarating game of flashlight tag. This classic game encourages running, hiding, and sneaky moves, all under the cover of darkness. Plus, the whole family can bond while sharing stories and stargazing after the game.



Kid's Corner continued on page 28

5. Daily Step Challenges

A little friendly competition can go a long way in motivating kids to stay active. Affordable step counters designed for children are widely available and make it easy to track daily movement. Set a daily step goal and let the games begin! Kids can compete against each other or even challenge you to see who can take the most steps in a day. You can mix it up by adding themed challenges, like “Who can walk like a robot the longest?” or “Let’s see who can march around the house without stopping.” This activity not only encourages physical fitness but also teaches goal-setting and perseverance.



6. Nature Scavenger Hunt

Take advantage of local parks, trails, or even your backyard with a nature scavenger hunt. Create a list of items to find, such as a bird’s feather, a uniquely shaped rock, or a specific type of flower. Equip the kids with small buckets or bags for their treasures and head out to explore. For an added twist, include movement-based challenges like hopping to the next tree or doing five jumping jacks after finding each item. This activity combines physical activity with an appreciation for nature.



7. DIY Sports Tournaments

Organize a mini sports tournament featuring activities like kickball, soccer, or relay races. Use what you have at home: a beach ball can substitute for a soccer ball, and pool noodles make excellent bats. Divide into teams and keep score, or simply play for fun. You can even create a makeshift “medal ceremony” with homemade trophies or ribbons to celebrate everyone’s efforts. This activity promotes teamwork, sportsmanship, and plenty of physical activity.



8. Dance Party!

Sometimes, all you need to get moving is a great playlist. Clear some space in the living room or head outside for a family dance party. Let each family member pick their favorite song and take turns showing off their best moves. You can also turn it into a dance-off or freeze dance competition. Dancing is not only a fantastic cardio workout but also a great way to express creativity and let loose.



9. Balloon Tennis

Balloon tennis is a simple yet highly entertaining activity that requires only a few materials. Use paper plates and popsicle sticks to create rackets, and blow up a balloon as the ball. Set up a “net” using a piece of string or tape, and let the games begin! Kids can play one-on-one or team up for doubles. The lightweight balloon makes it easy for kids of all ages to join in the fun while improving hand-eye coordination.

10. Sidewalk Chalk Fitness Circuit

Transform your driveway or sidewalk into a colorful fitness circuit using chalk. Draw stations with simple instructions like “Do 10 jumping jacks,” “Hop on one foot,” or “Spin around three times.” Kids can follow the circuit at their own pace or race against each other. Let them come up with their own ideas for stations to keep things fresh and exciting. This activity provides a great mix of creativity and exercise.



Keeping It Fun and Flexible

The key to keeping kids active is making movement feel like play, not a chore. Let them take the lead in choosing or modifying activities to suit their interests. Celebrate their efforts and join in the fun whenever possible. By incorporating physical activity into everyday play, you’re not only helping them stay healthy but also creating cherished family memories. So, grab your sprinklers, sponges, and flashlights, and get ready for a summer full of smiles, laughter and plenty of movement!

About the Author:

Lindsay Noelle is a marketer, storyteller, and mom passionate about helping families create joyful, active, and healthy lives together. As the founder of Make It Fun Mom, she shares creative ideas and inspiration for parents looking to make the most of family time. Her work has been featured on Good Morning America, CBS News, and Fox News, reaching families across the country. Discover more tips and activities for a fun and healthy family life at MakeItFunMom.com.

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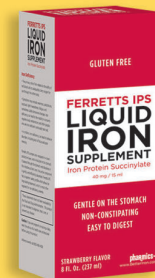
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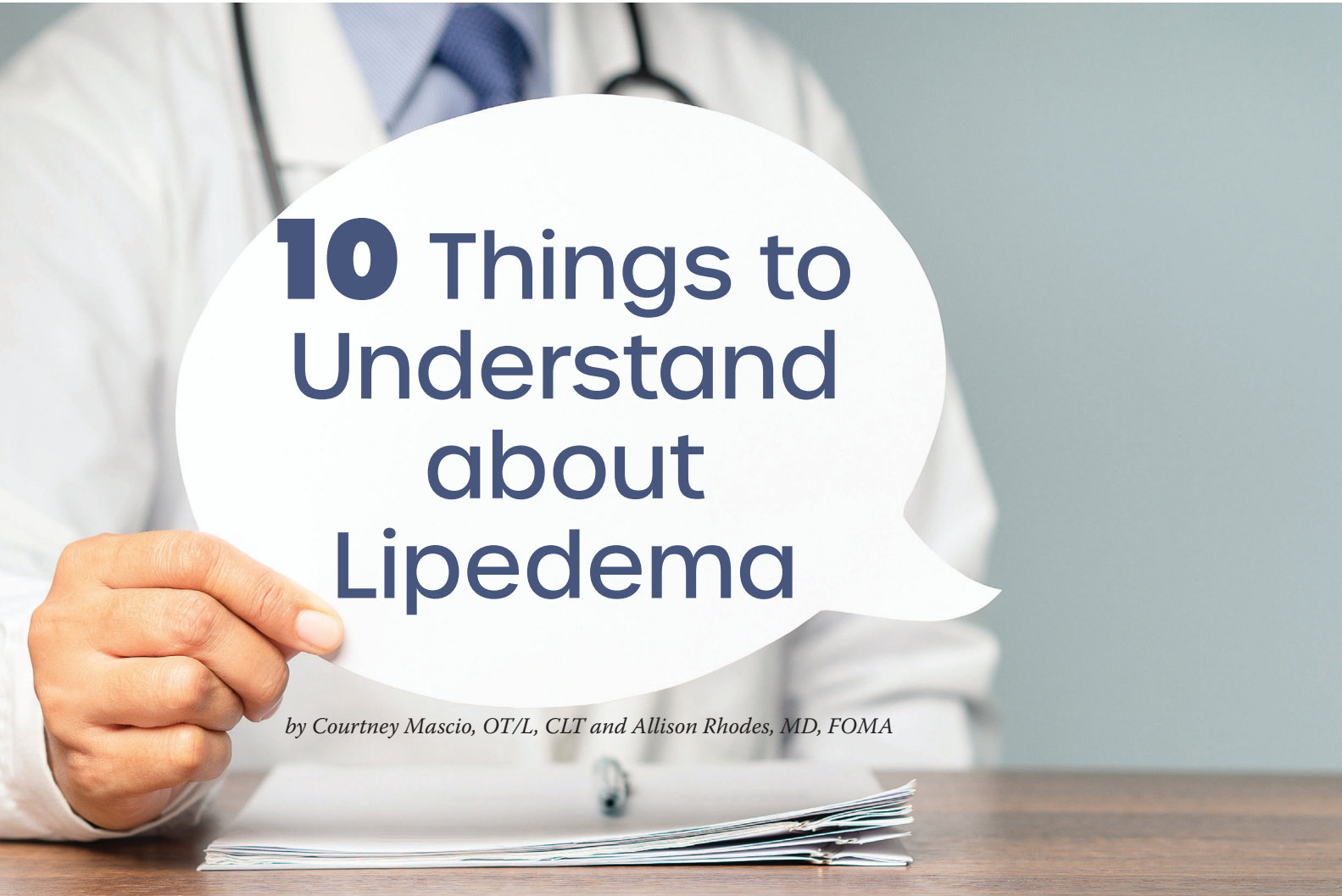
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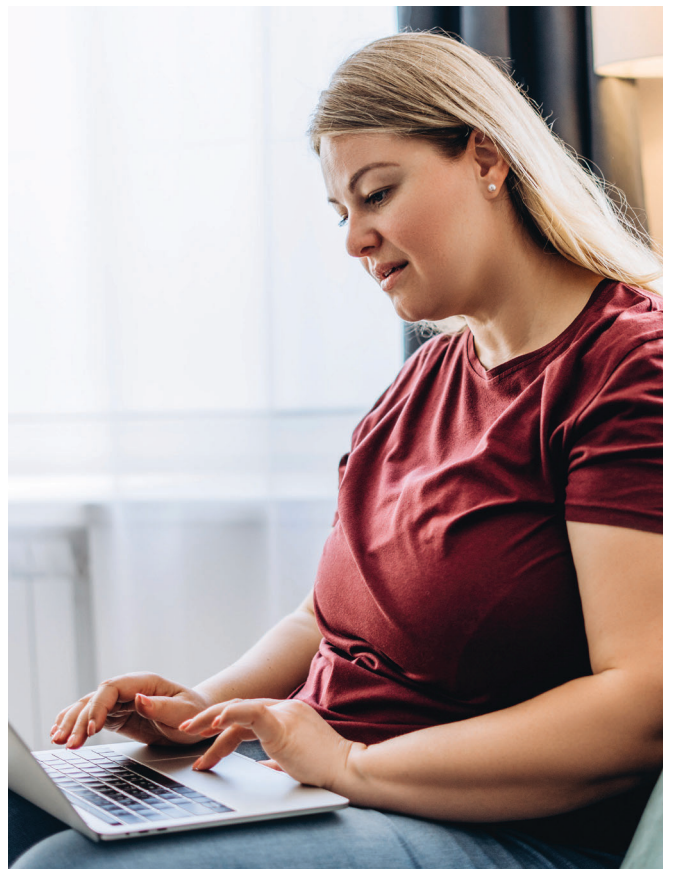
10 Things to Understand about Lipedema

by Courtney Mascio, OT/L, CLT and Allison Rhodes, MD, FOMA

Lipedema is a misunderstood and often overlooked condition that affects millions of women, yet many have never heard of it. It causes a painful buildup of fat in the legs, arms and other areas, and doesn't respond to typical weight loss methods like dieting or exercise.

Lipedema is often confused with obesity, and while the two conditions can exist together, they are not the same. Because it's not widely known even by healthcare providers, it's often misdiagnosed or dismissed, leaving many women confused, frustrated and without answers for years. If you've ever felt like your body isn't responding the way it "should," this might help you understand what might be going on and what to do next.

Lipedema continued on page 32



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¹ *Phentermine HCl is the active ingredient in Lomaira™

*Body Mass Index (BMI) measures the amount of fat in the body based on height and weight. BMI is measured in kg/m².

Lomaira™ (phentermine hydrochloride USP) 8mg tablets, CIV

Taking phentermine with other drugs for weight loss is not recommended. Primary pulmonary hypertension (PPH), a rare fatal lung disease, has been reported in patients who had taken a combination of phentermine and fenfluramine or dexfenfluramine for weight loss. The possible association between phentermine use alone and PPH cannot be ruled out. Patients should report immediately if they experience any decrease in the amount of exercise that they can normally tolerate, shortness of breath, chest or heart pain, fainting or swelling in the lower legs.

Serious heart valve problems or disease have been reported in patients taking a combination of phentermine and fenfluramine or dexfenfluramine for weight loss. The possible role of phentermine has not been established, therefore the possibility of an association between heart valve disease and the use of phentermine alone cannot be ruled out.

If your body becomes adjusted to the maximum dose of phentermine so that its effects are experienced less strongly, the maximum dose should not be exceeded in an attempt to increase the effect.

Caution is advised when engaging in potentially hazardous activity such as driving or operating machinery while taking phentermine. Phentermine has the potential to be abused. Keep Lomaira in a safe place to prevent theft, accidental overdose, misuse or abuse. Using alcohol with phentermine may result in an adverse drug reaction.

Phentermine can cause an increase in blood pressure. Tell your doctor if you have high blood pressure, even if it's mild. If you are taking medicines for type 2 diabetes, your doctor may have to adjust these medicines while taking phentermine.

Some side effects of phentermine that have been reported include pulmonary hypertension, valvular heart disease, palpitations, increased heart rate or blood pressure, insomnia, restlessness, dry mouth, diarrhea, constipation and changes in sexual drive. These are not all of the potential side effects of phentermine. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

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For Full Prescribing Information, visit www.lomaira.com.

*Body Mass Index (BMI) measures the amount of fat in the body based on height and weight. BMI is measured in kg/m².

¹Lomaira Package Insert

Lipedema continued from page 30

1. Lipedema is under-recognized but not rare

First described in the 1940s by Allen & Hines at the Mayo Clinic, Lipedema (pronounced lip-uh-DEE-muh) is a painful* fat disorder that occurs almost exclusively in females and makes losing weight in the legs and sometimes arms, buttocks and hips difficult. (The abdomen can also be affected but this is less common.) Lipedema can cause the torso to appear disproportionately smaller than the limbs. Many women report sentiments like: “I can lose weight in my face, chest or upper abdomen, but my legs and arms never change.” Though it is estimated to affect millions of women, it is often under-recognized and confused with obesity or lymphedema (a condition that causes chronic swelling due to problems with the lymphatic system.) Lipedema is diagnosed clinically, meaning there are no blood or imaging tests. Due to a lack of provider education and awareness, it takes an average of a decade after entering the medical system for a woman to receive a proper diagnosis.

*Note on pain: Some clinicians consider reported pain essential for diagnosis and may not diagnose Lipedema without it. Pain is subjective and may become harder to recognize over time. Patients should describe sensations in affected areas compared to unaffected ones—like discomfort, tenderness or heaviness—to help their provider understand symptoms and impact.

2. Lipedema is not caused by eating too much or a lack of exercise

Lipedema-related fat is “stubborn” and doesn’t respond like typical fat tissue to caloric reduction or increased exercise. Many women report weight loss in some areas but little or none in the legs or arms. Obesity is a common comorbidity, and difficulty losing fat in certain areas may indicate Lipedema. Like obesity, Lipedema is not caused by laziness or a lack of willpower. It is a real chronic condition that deserves individualized care and a comprehensive treatment approach.

3. Lipedema often starts or worsens during hormonal changes

Many women first notice symptoms at puberty, reporting things like: “Even though I ate the same foods as my friends, my legs got much bigger and felt heavy and painful.” Others notice onset or worsening during pregnancy or menopause.

4. Lipedema isn’t just fat in the limbs

Lipedema tissue can come with symptoms like painful lumps or nodules, skin thickening (fibrosis), pain when touched, bruising without trauma, heaviness in the limbs, brain fog or fatigue. These symptoms can impact mobility and quality of life.

5. Lipedema looks different for everyone

Lipedema presents differently based on the type and stage of the condition. Some women have minimal fat buildup, while others experience severe fibrosis, pain, limited mobility or fatigue. A Lipedema specialist can help determine if you have the condition and start treatment.

6. There are no blood or imaging tests to confirm Lipedema

While research on biomarkers is ongoing, Lipedema is currently diagnosed clinically. A provider will take a detailed history and perform a physical exam.

7. Lipedema can seriously affect mental health

Many women with Lipedema have been told their pain is imagined or that they're not trying hard enough to lose weight. Combined with the burden of chronic pain, this can lead to depression, anxiety, isolation and body image struggles. Mental health care is a vital part of managing Lipedema. Support from mental health professionals and personal networks can make a meaningful difference.

8. Managing Lipedema may require multiple providers

Because Lipedema affects many systems, care may involve:

- Primary care provider: rules out other conditions and refers to specialists
- Obesity medicine specialist: helps if obesity is also present
- Vascular medicine specialist: evaluates for venous disease if symptoms overlap
- Rehabilitation professionals: includes occupational, physical or massage therapists trained in Lipedema
- Mental health professional: helps address emotional and mental health challenges

9. There are treatment options

Though there's no cure, treatments can reduce pain, inflammation and improve mobility and quality of life. Options include compression garments, manual lymphatic drainage (MLD), pumps, anti-inflammatory nutrition, aquatic exercise, fibrosis treatment tools, medications, supplements and mental health support. Surgery to remove Lipedema fat is also an option for some.



10. You are your best advocate

Many providers aren't familiar with Lipedema, and misdiagnosis is common. Advocating for yourself is key to receiving proper care. Try these strategies:

- Track symptoms: log pain, swelling, fatigue or mobility issues
- Take photos: show changes over time
- Bring support: a trusted person can help at appointments
- Write down questions: ensure you don't forget concerns
- Educate your provider
- Find a support group
- Download the Lipedema Foundation's Patient Self-Advocacy Guide at [Lipedema.org/guide](https://www.lipedema.org/guide) for more tools.

Lipedema may be under-recognized, but awareness is growing. Understanding the signs can lead to better care, a timely diagnosis, treatment and support. To learn more, watch our OAC Fresh Perspective episode on Lipedema at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q6m5uuQ3OSA>

About the Authors:

Courtney Mascio, OT/L, CLT, is the Professional Education Manager at the Lipedema Foundation and a certified lymphedema therapist.

Allison Rhodes, MD, FOMA, is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine in the Department of Internal Medicine at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, where she practices in the Comprehensive Weight Management Program.

Salsa All Day:

Fresh Ways to Spice Up Every Summer Meal

The sun is shining, the birds are chirping and the grills are making their debut for the summer season. As the weather gets warmer, there's nothing better than a vibrant salsa to cool things down. Whether you're eating it straight out of the bowl or adding it to your favorite dishes, salsa is a fresh and nutritious way to brighten up your meals this summer.

Salsa is a Spanish word that means "sauce," so technically it can be any sauce your creative mind can conjure up. Traditionally salsas use a tomato base, but that doesn't mean we have to stick to the basics. Salsas can contain a variety of different ingredients, not just the standard tomatoes and onions, and they can be served hot, cold, chunky, smooth or anything in between. It can even satisfy a sweet tooth! The best part? They're not just tasty, they're also nutrient-dense, full of vitamins and usually low in calories. Delicious and good for you? Yes please!

Depending on what ingredients you use, there are plenty of benefits packed into a simple bowl of salsa!





Super Salsa Benefits!

- Traditional salsa typically contains tomatoes, onions and lime which are all good sources of Vitamin C – this helps with collagen production, supports the immune system and can even help with the appearance of wrinkles thanks to its antioxidant properties which help protect against sun damage.
- Most salsas are primarily made of fruits and veggies, making them fiber rich. Fiber is helpful for controlling blood sugars and making us feel full and satisfied after eating, which can help us control cravings and prevent overeating.
- Salsa is also a sneaky source of potassium, a mineral that helps contribute to bone strength and may help reduce blood pressure and stroke risk.
- Need another good reason to add salsa to your shopping list? A standard serving, just 2 tablespoons, contains only 10 calories, allowing you to boost the flavor of your meals without compromising on your nutrition goals.

Feeling hungry now? Let's scoop into some fun ways to salsa things up this summer!

Breakfast Ideas

Want a simple breakfast with a little bit of flair? Stir a little salsa into your omelet mix or use it as a zesty topping for scrambled eggs. Need something with a bit more substance? Try adding this sweet potato salsa (courtesy of healingtomato.com) to a tortilla alongside your choice of protein to make a great balanced breakfast taco!

Sweet Potato Salsa Recipe

- 1 cooked sweet potato, cubed
- ½ cup red onions, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. sweet relish
- 1 Tbsp. taco seasoning
- 1 tsp. ginger, grated or chopped
- 1 tsp. garlic, grated or chopped
- 1 can (15 oz.) fire roasted sweet corn
- 4 small mint leaves, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. curly parsley, chopped
- 1 can fire roasted tomatoes
- 2 tsp. lime juice
- 1 tsp. cumin powder
- 1 tsp. cayenne pepper or pepper of your choice
- ½ tsp. salt (optional)
- ¼ cup avocado, chopped

Directions: Mix all ingredients together



Salsa All Day continued on page 36

Lunch Ideas

Ever heard of salsa verde? It's a green salsa made with tomatillos instead of tomatoes. It often tastes tangier and has more of a kick, though the spice level can be adjusted to your preference. It's easy to find in jars or cans for a quick option. Add it to tacos, spoon it over enchiladas or get creative—try it as a salad dressing, swap it for mayo in potato salad or mix with Greek yogurt and lime for a high protein veggie dip. Looking for something warm and cozy? Try this white chicken chili dip (courtesy of heartbeetkitchen.com).

Skillet White Chicken Chili Dip

- 1 (14.5 oz.) can white beans, drained
- ½ cup sour cream
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- Juice of half a lime
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 cup shredded cooked chicken
- ½ cup sweet corn
- 2 Tbsp. minced cilantro
- 2 cups mozzarella/cheddar blend, divided
- ½ cup diced red pepper
- ½ cup salsa verde, divided



Directions:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Brush olive oil on a 10-inch skillet. Reserve ¼ cup beans. In a food processor, blend remaining beans, sour cream, ¼ cup salsa verde, garlic, lime juice, red pepper flakes, cumin and salt. Stir in chicken, corn, cilantro and 1 cup cheese. Spread mixture in skillet. Top with reserved beans, red peppers and salsa verde. Cover with remaining cheese. Bake 20 minutes until bubbly. Broil to brown top. Serve warm.

Dinner Ideas

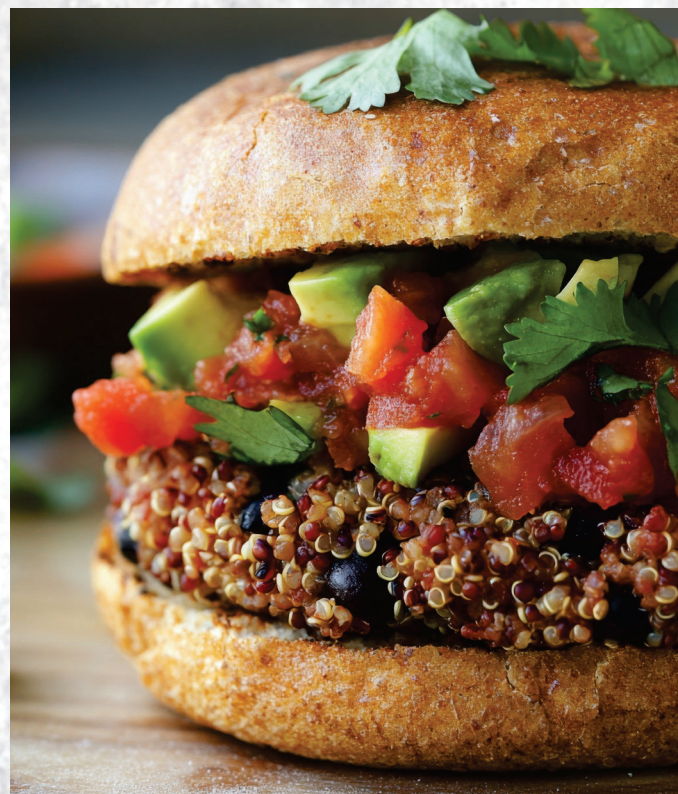
Quick dinners can still be exciting. Toss a jar of salsa into crockpot soup or use it as pasta sauce for a fresh twist on spaghetti. Build fish taco bowls and top with salsa for a low carb, protein-packed meal. Got extra time? Try these black bean chip and dip burgers (courtesy of tasteofhome.com).

Black Bean Chip and Dip Burgers

- ¾ cup water
- ½ cup quinoa, rinsed
- 1 can (15 oz.) black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 jar (16 oz.) salsa, divided
- 1 cup crushed baked tortilla chip scoops
- 2 Tbsp. reduced-sodium taco seasoning
- 8 whole wheat hamburger buns
- 8 lettuce leaves
- 8 slices tomato
- 8 slices red onion

Directions:

Boil water and add quinoa. Simmer 12-15 minutes until absorbed. Fluff with fork. Mash black beans in a bowl. Add 1 cup salsa, chips, taco seasoning and quinoa. Mix well and shape into 8 patties. Grill over medium heat for 5-6 minutes per side. Serve on buns with lettuce, tomato, onion and remaining salsa.



Dessert Ideas

Salsa for dessert? Absolutely. Fruit salsas are fresh, fun and flexible. Brush tortilla chips with oil, sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar, then bake for churro chips. Or serve with mini waffles for a breakfast-dessert mashup. Try topping frozen yogurt with salsa or just enjoy it with whipped cream. Here are two to try:



Peach Salsa

(courtesy of loveandlemons.com)

- 2 to 3 ripe peaches, diced
- ½ red bell pepper, diced
- ¼ cup red onion, diced
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- Juice and zest of 1 lime
- 1 garlic clove, grated
- ½ jalapeño pepper, minced
- ¼ tsp. sea salt, plus more to taste

Directions: Mix all ingredients together

Salsa All Day continued on page 38

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Eli Lilly and Company
Novo Nordisk

Gold

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Amgen
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Salsa All Day continued from page 37



Strawberry Salsa

(courtesy of theviewfromgreatisland.com)

- 20 strawberries, finely diced
- ½ medium red onion, minced
- Handful of cilantro, chopped
- 1 jalapeño, minced (remove seeds for less heat)
- Juice of 1 lime
- Fresh cracked black pepper

Directions: Mix all ingredients together

Whether you're spooning it over eggs, stirring it into soup or eating it straight from the jar, salsa is more than a sidekick. It's a flavor-packed, nutrient-rich staple that's easy to customize and fun to eat. So grab your chips (or waffles!) and scoop your way into a delicious, nutritious summer.

About the Author:

Beth Heise, RD, LDN, is a registered dietitian specializing in bariatric and weight management nutrition. She is passionate about connecting nutrition and movement and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Exercise Science and Integrated Wellness at Bastyr University. With a strong science background and a client-focused approach, Beth empowers individuals to make sustainable lifestyle changes that support long-term health and well-being.

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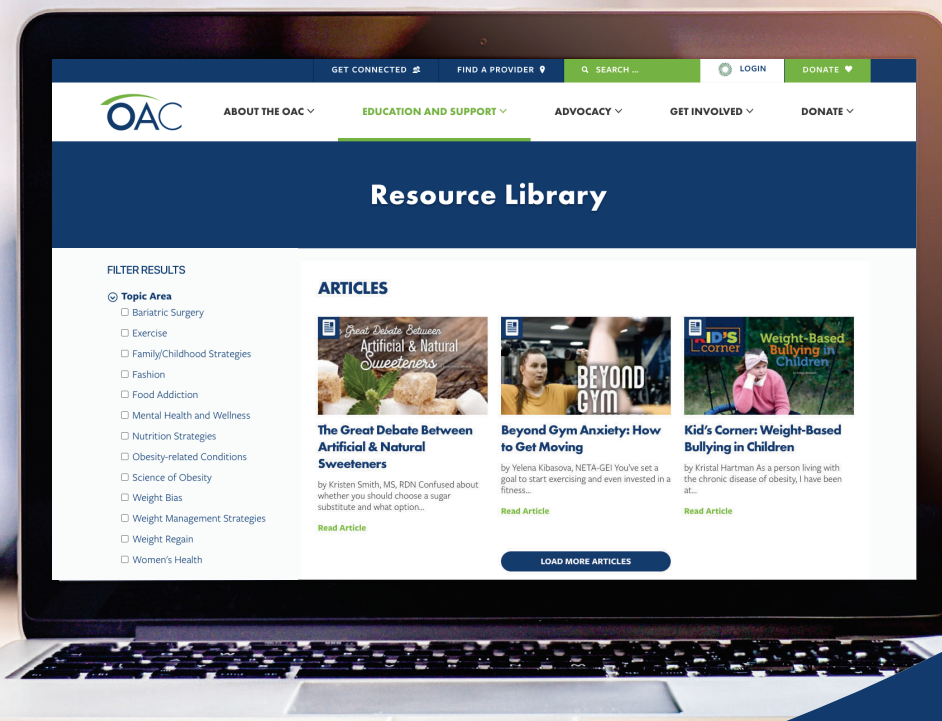
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