

Finding Help for Your Overweight Child

Overweight children are at higher risk of developing serious health issues.

There are many risks and complications with obesity.

Physical consequences include:

- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Breathing problems
- Trouble sleeping

Obesity is one of the easiest medical conditions to recognize, but the most difficult to treat.

If you receive Medical Assistance and you were sent a note from your school identifying your child as possibly overweight, the resources listed in this brochure will provide information to help find:

- A primary care doctor
- Weight management specialist
- Local recreational activities
- Self-help materials
- Local farmers market

Steps to help manage your overweight child:

- Start slowly to change eating habits
- Plan meals and make healthier food selections
- Control portions to consume less calories
- Turn off the television
- Limit time spent playing video or computer games
- Increase physical activity and get active
- Know what your child eats at school
- Eat meals as a family instead of while watching television
- Do not use food as a reward
- Limit snacking

Here's what parents are saying.

Results from an American Obesity Association survey show that:

- 27 percent of parents believe that their children eat less nutritiously than they did as kids.
- Almost 30 percent of parents said that they are "somewhat" or "very" concerned about their children's weight. 12 percent of parents considered their child overweight.
- Among six choices of what they believed to be the greatest risk to their children's long-term health and quality of life, 5.6 percent of parents chose "being overweight or obese."

Other resources for parents:

- Max's Magical Delivery DVD (Fit for Kids): is an interactive game to help teach parents and children 10 steps for healthy living, exercise and nutrition.
<http://www.ahrq.gov/child/dvdobesity.htm>
- My Pyramid: is the revised food pyramid to help assist consumers with recommended food choices. **www.mypyramid.gov**
- Center for Nutrition Policy & Promotion: this site helps to define and coordinate nutrition education policy within the United States Department of Agriculture, and provides materials for consumers, policymakers and professionals in health, education, industry and media
www.usda.gov/cnpp
- Weight Control Information Network: provides the general public, health professionals, the media and Congress with up-to-date, science-based information on weight control, obesity, physical activity and related nutritional issues. **<http://win.niddk.nih.gov>**
- Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture: provides information regarding farmers' market locations, growing seasons for fruits and vegetables and other agricultural information.
www.agriculture.state.pa.us
- Pennsylvania Department of Health: Resources to promote health and well being.
www.dsf.health.state.pa.us

If you are enrolled in HealthChoices and live in Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, or Perry Counties), please call:

- Gateway Health Plan Member Services, 1-800-392-1147 (TTD/TTY 1-800-654-5988)
- Unison Health Plan/MedPlus+ Member Services, 1-800-414-9025 (TTD/TTY 1-888-616-0021)
- AmeriHealth Mercy Plan Member Services, 1-888-991-7200 (TTD/TTY 1-888-987-5704)

If you need an interpreter, please contact your health plan.

The brochure Finding Help for your Overweight Child is a resource for parents to help overweight children. It is produced by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. You can obtain a copy by writing to:

Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
Office of Medical Assistance Programs
P.O. Box 2675 • Harrisburg, PA 17105-2675