

2021 RECOMMENDATION UPDATE SUMMARY

Preventing Obesity in Midlife Women

JANUARY 2022

WHAT DOES THE WPSI RECOMMEND?

For all adult women, age 40–60:

Counseling to maintain weight or limit weight gain to prevent obesity

TO WHOM DOES THIS RECOMMENDATION APPLY?

Adult women with normal to overweight BMI (18.4–29.9 kg/m²)

WHAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHEN IMPLEMENTING THIS RECOMMENDATION?

The WPSI suggests clinicians offer or refer women to individualized counseling based on an assessment of a patient's BMI and diet and exercise habits. Patients with normal weight and healthy habits can receive positive reinforcement. Women with overweight BMI and with unhealthy diet and exercise habits should receive at least brief counseling. Periodicity and intensity of reinforcement and counseling can be individualized based on the patient's BMI, previously established habits, and acceptance.

Clinicians should individualize counseling considering contributing factors associated with obesity, including chronic stress, trauma, and socioeconomic conditions. Counseling should be sensitive to weight stigma, the influence of culture on body image, individual variability in body composition, accessibility to safe spaces for physical activity, financial resources, childcare, leisure time, and availability of healthy foods.

WHAT ARE OTHER RELEVANT RECOMMENDATIONS?

The USPSTF has issued recommendations on screening for obesity, including

- [Screening for Obesity in Children and Adolescents](#)
- [Behavioral Weight Loss Interventions to Prevent Obesity-Related Morbidity and Mortality in Adults](#)
- [Behavioral Counseling Interventions for Healthy Weight and Weight Gain in Pregnancy](#)

WHERE TO READ THE FULL RECOMMENDATION STATEMENT?

Visit the WPSI website to read the [full recommendation](#). This includes more details on implementation considerations, research recommendations, and the full evidence summary.

WHAT WPSI RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

- [Well-Woman Chart](#)
- [Clinical Summary Tables](#)
- [Coding Guide](#)
- [Patient Education Materials](#)

ABBREVIATIONS:

WPSI = Women's Preventive Services Initiative
BMI = body mass index

WPSI recommends and encourages access to and provision of respectful, gender-affirming, high-quality, and safe health care. Please see our [gender inclusivity statement](#) for more information.

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