



Obesity - Policy & Procedure

Policy:

The Keep Canada Slim program for obese clients follows the recommendations listed in the **CMAJ 2006 Canadian Clinical Practice Guidelines on the Management and Prevention of Obesity in Adults and Children** (see referred document).

The treatment of obesity is best addressed by utilizing all aspects of the Keep Canada Slim program – education, monitoring and supplementation – and the involvement of a licensed medical practitioner to assess for associated health risks (*Blood pressure, heart rate, fasting glucose, lipid profile [total cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL and HDL cholesterol, and ratio of total cholesterol to HDL cholesterol]*).

Obesity is currently not considered a medical disease, but rather a lifestyle condition. It is however implicated in the development of many diseases, including diabetes, heart disease and some forms of cancer. People are termed obese based on the percentage of fat in their body, more than 25% for men, and above 30% for women.

Obesity is the result of several different factors, and is exacerbated by many others. The study of obesity is relatively new as a medical concern. Consensus has not been reached as to which factors are causative and which are effects. These factors include eating habits (and disorders), stress, sleep, genetics, hormones and medications. Treatment therefore is best addressed by multiple approaches.

Keep Canada Slim is a member of the Canadian Obesity Network, a federal government supported association of more than 1,000 professionals working in the obesity field.

Procedure:

The Keep Canada Slim program begins with a body fat assessment, using electronic impedance and callipers. These means are not 100% effective, but do give a useful starting point, and reinforce the message that it is about fat, not overall weight. An analysis of current eating habits allows us to identify specific areas of concern. Contrary to common public perception, obese people are generally not over-eating on a consistent basis, but rather cycling from one extreme to another – starvation dieting followed by binge eating. This cycling results in a disturbed metabolism which results in extraordinary fat storage.

Clients are then counselled on specific strategies to control these habits. Our consultants establish a daily range of calorie intake that will result in steady fat loss while allowing sufficient calories to prevent the starvation response. And finally, we recommend specific foods that can help to adjust taste buds to lower the attractiveness of high-fat and high-sugar foods. These strategies include:

1. Dividing total calories evenly into smaller meals (3-500 calories)
2. Spreading meals evenly throughout the day
3. Increasing the intake of complex carbohydrates which contain fibre
4. Reducing total fat to less than 20% of the total calories consumed
5. Avoiding saturated and hydrogenated fats
6. Increasing the intake of Omega 3 fats (from tuna, salmon, almonds, walnuts and flax seed)

Keep Canada Slim also recommends a specific supplement program that feature several proven nutrients which help to control appetite swings and cravings. These benefits significantly help obese patients to make the necessary lifestyle changes to take control of their shopping, cooking and eating habits.

Sources: CMAJ 2006 Canadian Clinical Practice Guidelines on the Management and Prevention of Obesity in Adults and Children, David C.W. Lau, James D. Douketis, Katherine M. Morrison, Irene M. Hramiak, Arya M. Sharma, Ehud Ur, for members of the Obesity Canada Clinical Practice Guidelines Expert Panel.