

Weight Stigma & Sensitivity Awareness

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this module, the learner ...

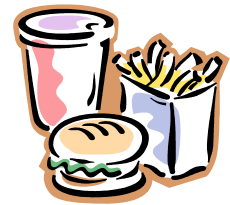
- Will have a better understanding of the physical and psychological limitations of people affected by morbid obesity
- Will be able to verbalize the causes of obesity
- Will have an increased awareness of verbal nonverbal gestures which may cause sensitivity issues with patients affected by morbid obesity

GOALS OF SENSITIVITY AWARENESS

- To make staff more aware of their own bias regarding obesity
- To recognize obesity as a disease
- To educate staff of some of the verbal and nonverbal cues that maybe insensitive to the patient affected by obesity
- To suggest ways to avoid inappropriate words or gestures

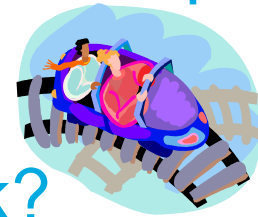
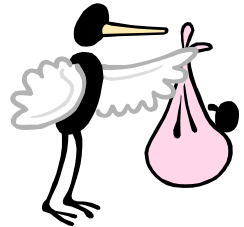
Have you ever...

- Sat in your plane seat looking away from a passenger affected by obesity—hoping he/s was not going to sit in the seat next to you?
- Thought: “why is that person getting a diet coke with the Big Mac and large fries?”
- Been bullied because of your weight...
 - In school
 - On the bus
 - Through social media



Or have you...

- Had difficulty with adoption proceedings?
- Been subjected to lower wages or denied a job or promotion?
- Been denied health care benefits?
- Had trouble fitting into an amusement park ride?
- Heard snickers behind your back?



PERSONS AFFECTED BY OBESITY ARE SUBJECTED TO:

- Lower college acceptance rates
- Lower wages and being denied jobs and promotions
- Difficulties with adoption proceedings
- Being denied health care benefits
- Difficulty in obtaining housing



OBESITY

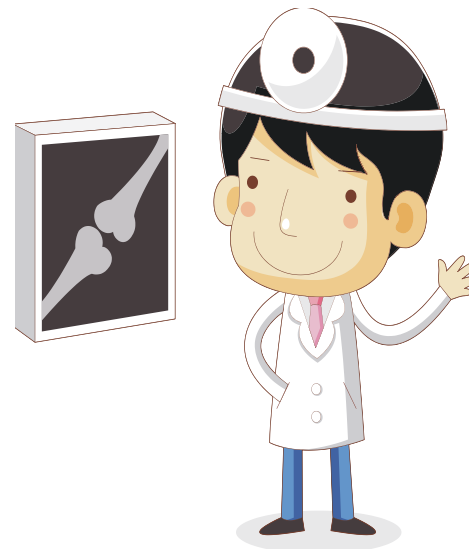
- These are just some of the experiences a person affected by obesity experiences every day from...
- Family
- Friends
- Teachers
- Strangers
- Health care professionals



OBESITY BIAS & DISCRIMINATION: VIEWS IN HEALTH CARE

Studies have shown that healthcare professionals have the following views of people affected by obesity:

- Unintelligent
- Non-compliant
- Hostile
- Dishonest
- Unsuccessful
- ...



OBESITY BIAS & DISCRIMINATION BY HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

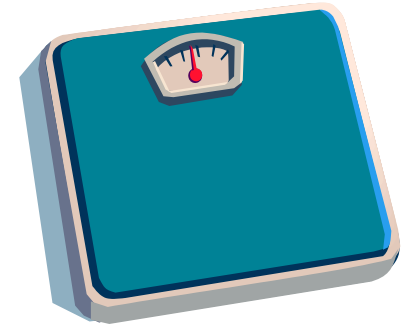
Other views of people affected by obesity by
healthcare professionals:

- Inactive
- Lazy
- Weak-willed
- Overindulgent
- Experience unresolved anger

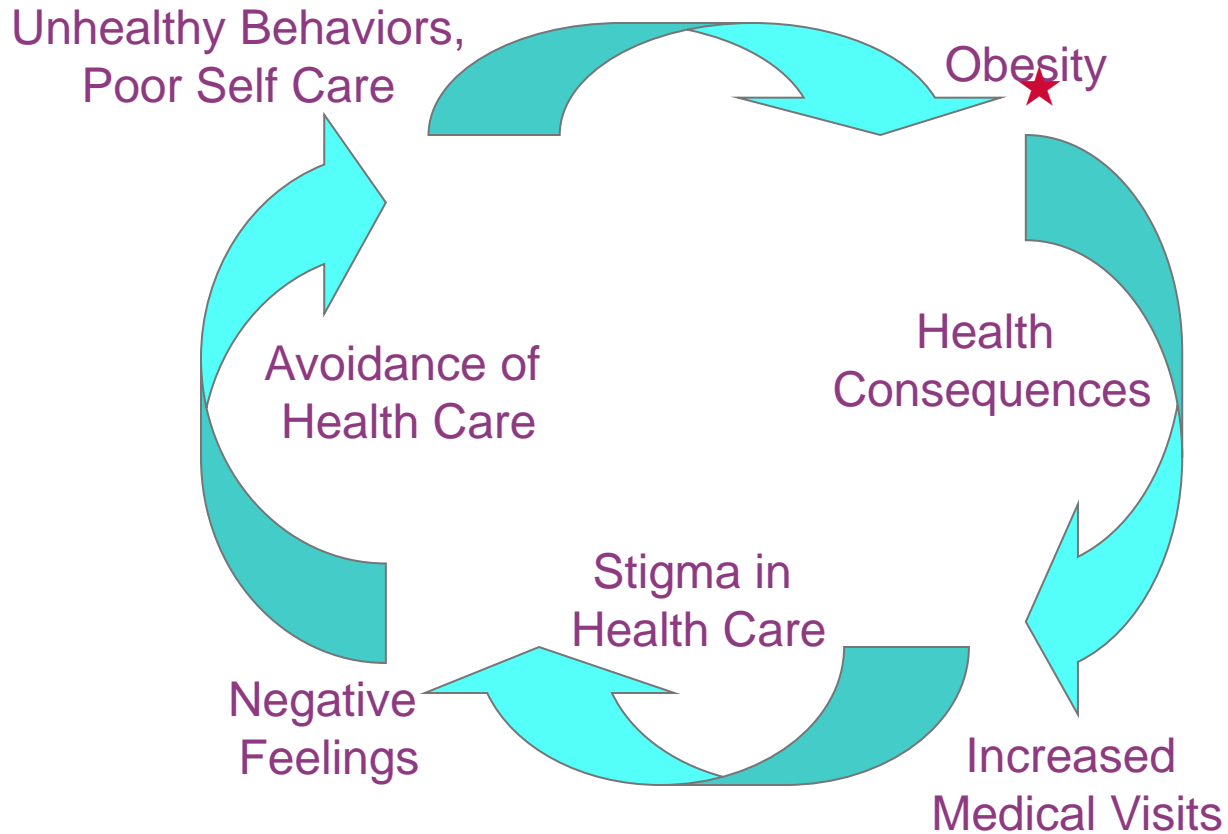


WEIGHT BIAS IN HEALTH CARE

- Heavier patients are more likely to avoid, cancel, or delay important preventative services because of...
 - disrespectful treatment
 - negative attitudes from providers,
 - unsolicited advice to lose weight,
 - embarrassment about being weighed,
 - bad experiences with medical equipment that is too small for them



CYCLE OF STIGMA AND OBESITY



WHAT IS OBESITY?

Definition:

- A life-long, progressive, life-threatening, costly, genetically-related, multi-factorial disease of excess fat storage with multiple co-morbidities
- Body Mass Index >30

OBESITY IS...

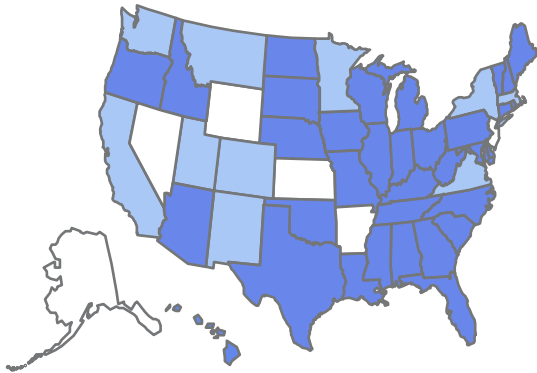
- Common
- Serious
- Costly
- Deadly

OBESITY IS COMMON

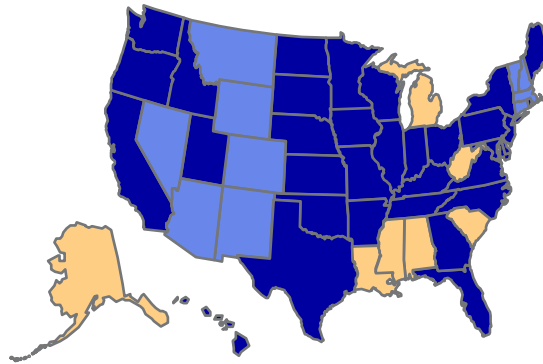
- Major public health problem worldwide
- Affects 25% of industrialized world
- American statistics:
 - More than 1/3 of adults are afflicted with obesity (35.7%)
 - 17% of children are afflicted with obesity (ages 2-19)
 - Since 1980 obesity prevalence among children & adolescents has almost tripled
 - 5-11 million are afflicted with morbid obesity

OBESITY TRENDS FOR U.S. ADULTS

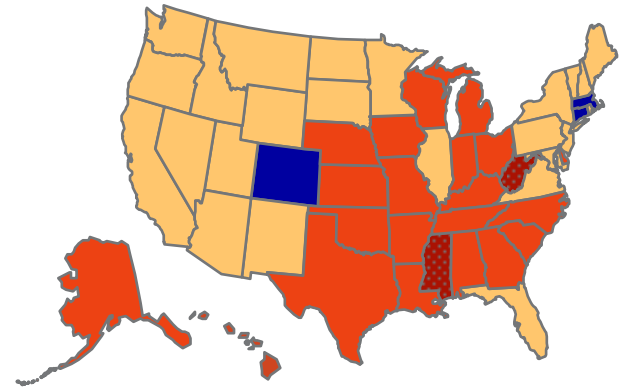
1990



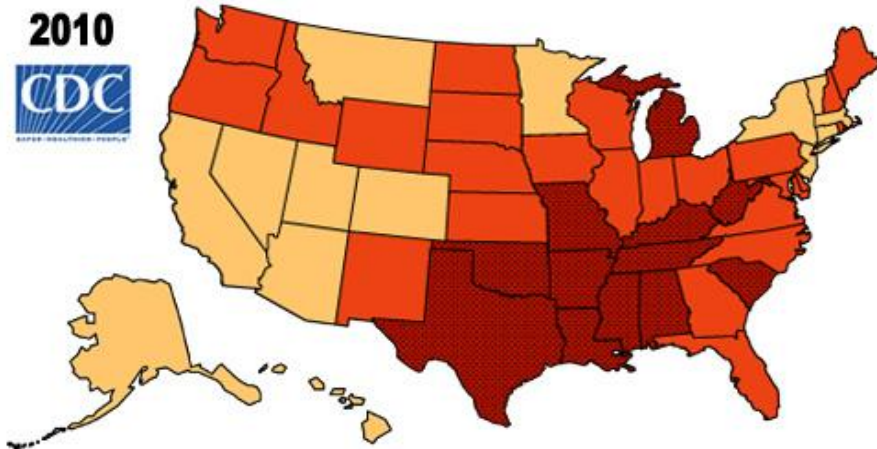
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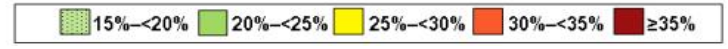
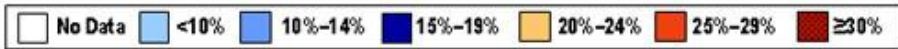
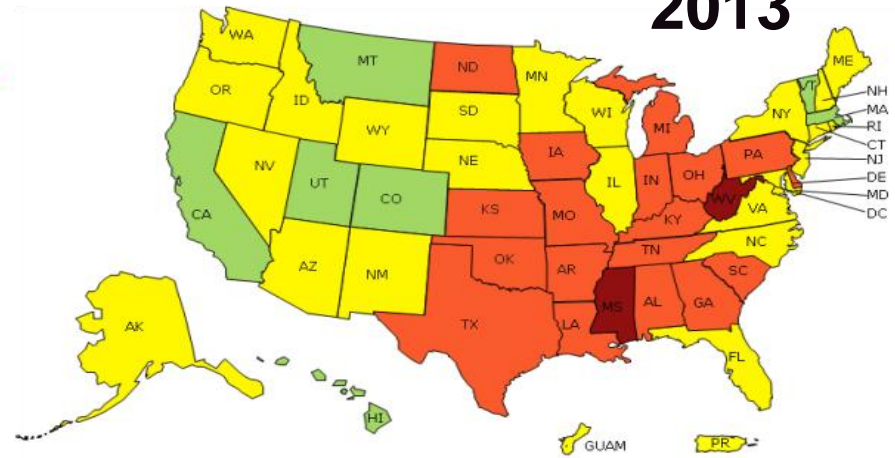
2006



2010



2013



OBESITY IS SERIOUS

- Many obesity-related conditions (co-morbidities)

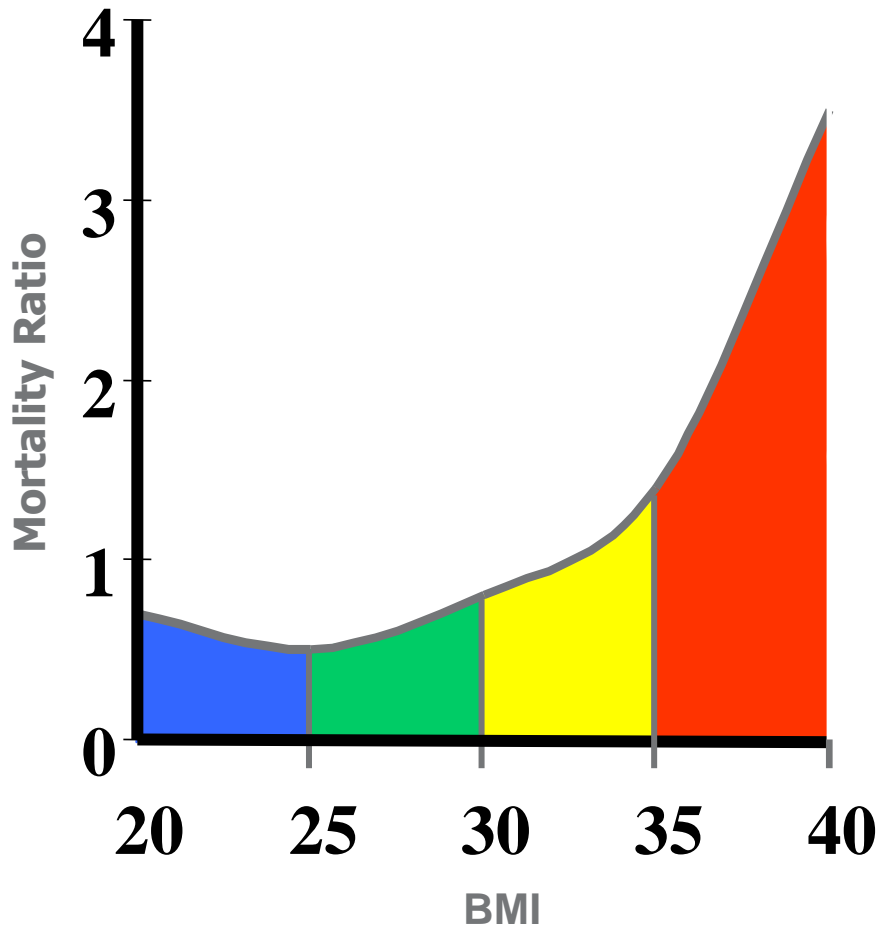
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD)
- Obstructive sleep apnea
- Osteoarthritis
- Depression
- Stress urinary incontinence
- Certain types of cancers



OBESITY IS COSTLY

- Medical costs associated with obesity were estimated @ \$147 billion
- Medical costs paid by third-party payors for people who are obese were \$1429 higher than those of normal weight

OBESITY IS DEADLY



- 2nd leading cause of preventable death
- Approximately 400,000 deaths/year
- Those afflicted with morbid obesity die 10 to 15 years earlier

WHAT CAUSES OBESITY?

Obesity is multifactorial:

- ✓ Energy In > Energy Out
- ✓ Genetic: 25–30%
- ✓ Endocrine related
- ✓ Environmental
- ✓ Metabolic

ENVIRONMENTAL CAUSES OF OBESITY

- Elevator
- Moving Sidewalk
- Escalator
- Computer Games
- Television
- Automobiles
- Riding Lawnmowers



OTHER CAUSES OF OBESITY

- Low Cost Easy Available Foods
- High Fat-Energy Dense Foods
- Larger Food Servings
- High Snack consumption



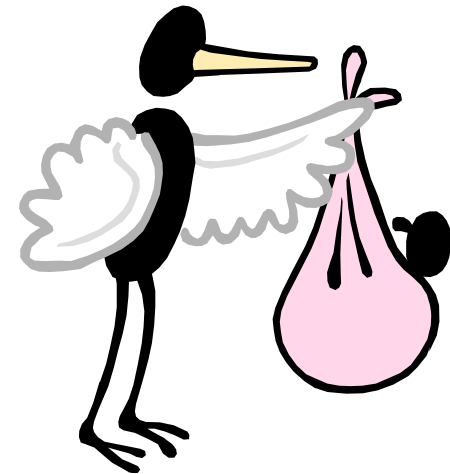
OBESITY @ WINCHESTER HOSPITAL

- Inpatients
- Outpatients
- Visitors
- Staff
- Adults
- Children



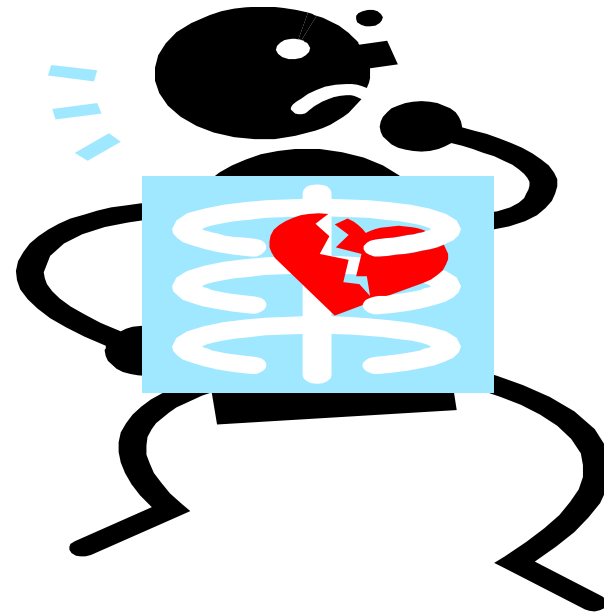
PATIENTS AFFECTED BY OBESITY @ Winchester Hospital Are-

- Admitted for...
 - Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery
 - Orthopedic surgery
 - Other surgery
 - Medical issues
 - Labor and delivery
 - Emergency Room



PATIENTS AFFECTED BY OBESITY @ Winchester Hospital Have-

- Testing...
 - Radiology
 - Phlebotomy
 - Cardiology testing
 - Pulmonary testing
 - Preadmission testing
 - Other



PERSONS AFFECTED BY OBESITY @ Winchester Hospital Come-

- Visiting...
- Family
- Friends
- Cafeteria
- Gift shop



CULTURE of SENSITIVITY: WORDS

Comments by staff can be hurtful, such as...

“You carry your weight well”

Or, for patients having weight loss surgery:

“You don’t look like you need this surgery”

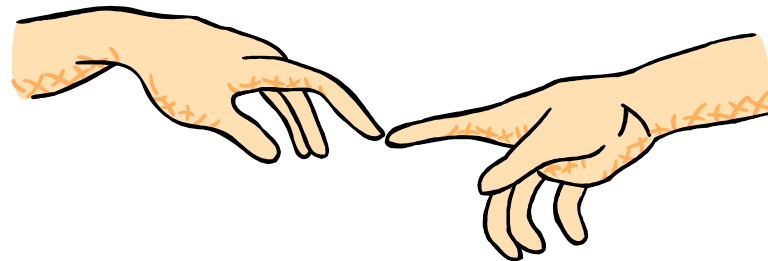
“You took the easy way out”

CULTURE of SENSITIVITY: GESTURES

Nonverbal gestures can be hurtful
as well, such as...

- rolling of the eyes when caring for obese patients, or

- lack of touch



How to be more sensitive to patients affected by obesity...

- Do not be judgmental—you do not know the patient's history
- Avoid language that places blame on patients
- Use respectful language
 - “Unhealthy weight”
 - “Excess weight”
- Use neutral terms such as *weight* and *BMI*
- Use people first language:
 - Instead of obese → “has obesity” or “with obesity” or “affected by obesity”



Other ways to be more sensitive to patients affected by obesity ...

- Maintain the patient's privacy
- Be careful in what you say
- Provide care in a positive manner
- Treat patients affected by obesity as you would want to be treated with:
 - Compassion
 - Empathy
 - Understanding
 - Genuine care



Other ways to be more sensitive to patients affected by obesity ...

- Involve significant others in care
- Support efforts that empower and support, rather than shame or stigmatize
- Assess coping patterns and explore strengths and resources
- Consult Social Services/ Pastoral Care/ Psychiatry if needed

RESPECT

PATIENT CARE MODEL

- R** = Rapport (establish a foundation of trust, confidence & collaboration)
- E** = Environment/Equipment (appropriate size equipment, gowns, lifting devices, etc...)
- S** = Safety (build a culture of safety & security)
- P** = Privacy (protect patient privacy & dignity)
- E** = Encouragement (offer support & reassurance)
- C** = Caring/Comparison (avoid blaming the victim)
- T** = Tact (be aware of nonverbal signs, body language, tone of voice, etc...)

REMEMBER...

- Obesity is a disease
- People affected by obesity experience discrimination everyday
- People affected by obesity are not:
 - Lazy
 - Unintelligent

SUMMARY

As health care providers we need to...

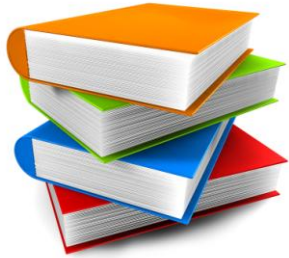
- Have appropriate size equipment available to accommodate all patients, including those affected by morbid obesity
- Be respectful to patients
- Treat patients as we would like to be treated

QUESTIONS

- For more information about obesity, weight loss surgery and/or sensitivity awareness, please contact:
 - Karen Flanders, MSN, CBN, NP-C
Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Coordinator/Nurse Practitioner
Winchester Hospital
Ext: 7167
e-mail: kflanders@winhosp.org

Confirmation

- By completing this HealthStream Module I fully understand it is my responsibility to comply with this information as it is taught.



References

- Addressing Obesity Stigma in Health Care: Challenges, Remedies, and Implications for Bariatric Care (R. Puhl, 2014)
- American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery, Obesity Compendium
- Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program, 2014
- National Association of Bariatric Nurses
- Obesity Action Coalition, 2014
- Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity, 2014