



WEBCAST VIDEO COMMENTARY HEALTH PROVIDERS' EDITION

Health at EVERY Size

THE SURPRISING TRUTH ABOUT YOUR WEIGHT

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Your clients present with BMIs in the overweight or obese range. Given the presumed health imperative, you encourage weight loss, suggesting calorie restriction and/or exercise. You counsel your thinner clients to adopt weight management strategies.

Your client's desperation around weight, however, never goes away.

Face the facts. We're losing the war on obesity. The "common sense" approach just isn't working. When you consider the science, a new paradigm emerges.

Challenge your assumptions.

For example, weight has been greatly exaggerated as a health risk.

Consider mortality. Most studies indicate people in the overweight category live at least as long—or longer—than people in the normal weight category.¹⁻⁴

Consider morbidity. Epidemiological studies rarely acknowledge factors like fitness, activity, nutrient intake, weight cycling or socioeconomic status when considering connections between weight and disease, yet all play a role. When studies do control for these factors, increased risk of disease disappears or is significantly reduced.⁵

Sustained weight loss isn't a practical goal anyway. Most people regain lost weight, regardless of whether they maintain their diets or exercise programs.^{6,7} Biological safeguards often underlie the resistance to weight loss.^{8,9}

Trumpeting obesity fears and hounding people to lose weight is not just misguided, it's downright damaging. Weight cycling, unhealthy weight loss behaviors, poor body image, eating disorders and weight bias are collateral damage in the war against fat.

But there is hope: health can be improved through changing health behaviors, regardless of whether weight is lost.¹⁰

For example, lifestyle changes can reduce blood pressure and improve blood lipids, largely or completely independent of changes in body weight.¹⁰⁻¹⁴ Improvements in insulin sensitivity and blood lipids as a result of aerobic exercise training have been documented even in persons who actually gained body fat while participating in the intervention.^{14,15}

There is an alternative to the war. The new peace movement is called Health at Every Size and it acknowledges that health habits are more important than the scale.

Participation is simple:

- Quit hassling patients about their weight.
- Stop prescribing weight loss.
- Show compassion for how difficult it is to live in a culturally stigmatized body.
- Encourage people of all sizes in appreciating their bodies, valuing who they are, and incorporating healthier lifestyle habits.

Help end the War on Obesity.
Join the Peace Movement: Health at Every Size

I'm Dr. Linda Bacon, Nutrition Professor and Researcher,
and author of *Health at Every Size: The Surprising Truth About Your Weight*.



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Additional references can be found in *Health at Every Size: The Surprising Truth About Your Weight*.

☞ This is a text version of a webcast. To view or download the webcast—or another webcast for health providers—go to www.HAESbook.com and follow the Downloads link. ☞ Additional information and educational materials can be found in *Health at Every Size: The Surprising Truth About Your Weight* (BenBella Books) and on the Web at www.HAESbook.com.