

# Information for Physicians

## Effective Exam Room Communication

2/11/2019



As a healthcare provider, you are in an ideal position to talk to your patients about weight control since excess weight can lead to diabetes, heart disease, and other medical problems. At Medical Metabolic Specialists, we understand that this conversation is not always easy to have but is certainly important.

### Quickly Addressing Weight Problems in Clinic

**Rule #1: You don't have to talk about diet, exercise, or life circumstances. Certainly, don't start there.**

**Rule #2: Focus on readiness! When the topic of weight arises, think about stages of change.**

**When they say:** "I can't," "I won't," make an excuse, or tell you how great their diet is.

**What it means:** Pre-contemplation stage of change. They can't see it or don't want to look at it.

**What you do:** Connect their weight or their behaviors to something they care about.

**When they say:** "I might."

**What it means:** Contemplation stage of change. They are on the edge.

**What you do:** Give a nudge. "Weight loss would really help."

**When they say:** "I will."

**What it means:** Preparation stage of change.

**What you do:** Ask for a plan and commitment: "How will you do that? When will you start?"

**When they say:** "I am."

**What it means:** Action stage of change. They are doing something.

**What you do:** Be encouraging. Say something positive. Let them know help is available.

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### **Rule #3: Use the right words, or they may not hear what you say.**

Talk about “weight,” “excess weight,” or “weight problem.”  
Some will not listen when you say “obese,” “fat,” “heavy,” and other similar words.

### **Rule #4: Patients and doctors are more effective when thinking of obesity as a disease that afflicts.**

Use patient-centric language “This is a disease.” “Attack the disease and not yourself.” “It is not your fault, but it is your responsibility.” (Draw an analogy to asthma.)

This is an important conversation. When they are ready for action, be ready to help. Medical Metabolic Specialists can help you create solutions that work for you, your clinic, and your patients. Give us a call at (970) 980-6024 or send us an email.

## **MMS**

Medical Metabolic Specialists, located in Fort Collins, Colorado, is dedicated to using the latest scientific techniques to create a comprehensive, individualized, lifelong weight management program to improve your overall health.