Obesity

Obesity is defined as having a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or more. To calculate your BMI divide your weight in pounds by your height in inches squared and multiply that product by 703. Major illnesses resulting from long-term obesity include:

- Stroke.
- Heart disease.
- Diabetes.
- Many cancers.
- Arthritis.

Obesity also complicates recovery from many other medical problems.

CAUSES

- A history of obesity in your parents.
- Thyroid hormone imbalance.
- Environmental factors such as excess calorie intake and physical inactivity.

TREATMENT

A **healthy** weight loss program includes:

- A calorie restricted diet based on individual calorie needs.
- Increased physical activity (*exercise*).

An exercise program is just as important as the right low calorie diet.

Weight-loss medicines should be used only under the supervision of your physician. These medicines help, but only if they are used **with** diet and exercise programs. Medicines can have side effects including nervousness, nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhea, headache, drowsiness, and depression.

An **unhealthy** weight loss program includes:

- Fasting.
- Fad diets.
- Supplements and drugs.

These choices do not succeed in long-term weight control.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

To help you make the needed dietary changes:

- Keep a daily record of everything you eat. There are many free websites to help you with this. It may be helpful to measure your foods so you can determine if you are eating the correct portion sizes.
- Use low-calorie cookbooks or take special cooking classes.
- Avoid alcohol. Drink more water and drinks with no calories.
- Take vitamins and supplements only as recommended by your caregiver.
- Weight-loss support groups, Registered Dieticians, counselors, and stress reduction education can also be very helpful.

PREVENTION

Losing weight and keeping it off takes time, discipline, a healthy diet and regular exercise.

Document Released: 01/25/2006 Document Re-Released: 01/06/2009
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