The Hot Spot: Where Self-Care Meets Obesity and Healthy Living

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Disclosures

• Professional fees
  – 3D Communications
  – Eisai
  – EnteroMedics
  – Novo Nordisk
  – Nutrisystem

• Personal biases that favor:
  – Evidence-based interventions, both prevention and treatment
  – Respect for people living with obesity
  – Critical thinking about all evidence
  – Finding a balance between consumer insights and health science
Presentation Objectives

- Describe evolving views of obesity and health
- Discuss changing consumer needs and preferences
- Provide perspective on medical and self-care trends
Where Self-Care Meets Obesity and Healthy Living

Evolving Views of Obesity & Health
Obesity Science Is Rapidly Advancing

- Neuroscience tells us that the hypothalamus controls fat mass and blood sugar
- More therapies to manage obesity
- Bariatric surgery extends life and puts diabetes in remission
Obesity Is Primarily the Result of Bad Choices?

- 70% Environment • Choices • Genes
- 20%
- 10%
Obesity Is Primarily the Result of Bad Choices?

- Personal Choices 10%
- Environmental Triggers 20%
- Genetic Risk 70%

• Heredity plays a dominant role in obesity risk
• But environmental factors serve to activate it
• Then, people can choose what to do about it
Obesity: Well-Understood as a Highly Heritable Disease

Body Mass in Twins

Monozygotic Twins (Intrapair Correlation = 0.66)

Dizygotic Twins (Intrapair Correlation = 0.26)

Source: Borjeson M, The aetiology of obesity in children, 1976
“Obesity is, like essential hypertension, a complex multifactorial disease where genetic factors promote sensitivity or resistance to obesity in a toxic environment. This concept of a genetic resistance versus sensitivity to obesity helps explain why many people remain thin in a toxic environment whereas others develop profound obesity.”

– Allyn Mark, Dietary Therapy for Obesity, 2008
Consumers Are Playing Catch Up with the Science

- Even most health professionals don’t understand obesity physiology
- Body weight is an intensely personal subject
- Obesity is highly stigmatized
- Most consumers think they must deal with obesity on their own

Sources: Tsai et al, 2017.12; Kaplan et al, 2018.01
Four Narratives
Describe Different Views of Obesity

• **Irresponsibility**
  "Obesity is such a big problem because too many people don’t take personal responsibility for eating right and exercising. It’s disgusting."

• **Addiction**
  "Obesity is such a big problem because too many people get hooked on junk food and sugary drinks. They’ve become addicted and can’t help themselves."

• **Environment**
  "Obesity is such a big problem because the food industry sells so much unhealthy food while modern lifestyles make adequate exercise impossible."

• **Medical**
  "Obesity is such a big problem because too many people get blamed for this disease instead of getting the medical help they need."

Adapted from Thibodeau et al, Soc Sci Med, 2015
Americans Have Long Viewed Obesity as Failure of Personal Responsibility

“Which phrase comes closest to describing the type of problem that you think obesity is?” (Feb 2013)

- Bad personal choices was the dominant explanation in 2013
- Data from ongoing tracking
- Respondents asked to pick one

- Personal Problem, Bad Choices 44%
- Something Else 24%
- Community, Bad Food, Inactivity 24%
- Medical 18%

Source: ConscienHealth research 2013.02
In 2013 AMA Declared Obesity Is a Complex, Chronic Disease

Source: Kyle, Dhurandhar, and Allison, Endocrinol Metab Clin North Am, 2016.09
Public Views Began a Slow Shift

- Fewer people think of obesity as a problem of bad personal choices
- People are shifting toward more diverse views of obesity

Source: ConscienHealth/OAC weight bias tracking research, 2017.05
In 2015 Nicole Arbour Achieved 6 Minutes of Fat-Shaming Fame on YouTube

Dear Fat People - YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXFgNhyP4-A

ConscienHealth
Consumers · Science · Better Health

The Future of Consumer Self-Care: New OTC Solutions
Weight Bias Concerns Have Moved into Popular Culture, Labeled as Fat Shaming

- Multiple social movements
  - Body positivity
  - Feminism
  - Fat acceptance
  - Obesity activism

- Converged to make fat shaming unacceptable

Source: Google Trends data, 2017.07
We See Growing U.S. Public Acceptance for the Medical Narrative

- Addictive junk food is a popular explanation for obesity
- Significant trend favoring the medical narrative
- Continuous tracking since 2015

Source: ConscienHealth/OAC weight bias tracking research, 2017.06
Broad Acceptance
Around the World for the Addiction Narrative

Source: ConscienHealth/OAC global weight bias tracking research, 2016.12
Public Attitudes About Obesity Vary Around the World

- Harsh bias in the UK
- U.S. views slightly less harsh
- Much less harshness among French Canadians

An employment expert says obesity should be a legally protected characteristic, like race

DOMINIC LIPINSKI/PA
Why Do Bias and Stigma Matter?

- **Stigma leads to denial and inaction**
  - Blame directed at people with obesity
  - Assumptions of
    - Laziness
    - Poor discipline
  - Social rejection

- **Discourages people from seeking care, compromises health**

- **Leads to ineffective policies**
Where Self-Care Meets Obesity and Healthy Living

Changing Consumer Needs and Preferences
Diets Are Out, Healthy Eating Is In

- Weight Watchers escaped a death spiral by repositioning as a healthy lifestyle brand
  - A record 4.6 million members, up 29% this year
- Lean Cuisine recovering
- Coke Zero Sugar thriving
  - Diet Coke diving
- Unilever wrote off Slim Fast in 2014
Healthy Eating Is the Aspiration
Sugar Is Poison (Supposedly)

Sugar Is Definitely Toxic, a New Study Says


Sources: USDA Economic Research Service, CDC NHANES surveys
Prepared by Stephan J. Guyenet
Clean Labels Are the Holy Grail

Free from:
• Added sugar
• Gluten
• GMOs
• Preservatives
• Artificial flavoring & sweeteners
• Excessive or unfamiliar ingredients
The Outlook for Obesity Medicine, Self-Care, and Healthy Living
Is Obesity Becoming a New Normal?

- Concern from public health
- Growing prevalence
- Most adults are overweight

Source: Gallup well-being research, 2016.11
Is Obesity Becoming a New Normal?

- Concern from public health
- Growing prevalence
- Overweight is now average
- Obesity is a less urgent problem

Percent of U.S. Adults Naming Obesity as “the Most Urgent Health Problem”

Source: Gallup health concerns research
Is Obesity Becoming a New Normal?

- Concern from public health
- Growing prevalence
- Overweight is now average
- Obesity is a less urgent problem
- Some signs that people are less focused on weight loss

Source: Gallup well-being research, 2016.11
Health at Every Size® (HAES) Has a Small, Devoted Following

RATING
In your opinion, is describing someone as "fat" an objective description of their weight or an offensive insult?
Results for respondents with demographics. Weighted by Age, Gender.
Winner statistically significant. (378 responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>An objective description</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.7% (+4.1 / -3.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.8% (+3.9 / -2.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23.3% (+4.8 / -4.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17.5% (+4.6 / -3.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>An offensive insult</td>
<td></td>
<td>34.6% (+5.1 / -4.8)</td>
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Lisa Du Breuil @lisajdubreuil · Twitter
Repeating to @ZaherToumi @ConscienHealth and 9 others
My body size is not a disease, it does not require treatment.

Lisa Du Breuil @lisajdubreuil · Jun 14
Replying to @_phillipa @UConnRuddCenter
Unfortunately Rudd Center folks continue to support and encourage “obesity” framework (i.e. fat people are sick) and so continue to contribute to #weightstigma. Encouraging compassion so the fatties will come get treatment is not good enough. #AM8 #HAES
People Are Viewing Weight Differently, Not Indifferently

- In 3 years, concern about obesity and health has not declined
- Perhaps less indifference
- Qualitatively, we see more interest in weight and health
- Less emphasis on weight loss alone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obesity an important health concern</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness, not obesity matters for health</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ConscienHealth survey research, 2017.07
## Obesity Medicine Is Growing Robustly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Diplomates in Obesity Medicine</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>587</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>1,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2,073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2,656</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Board certification of knowledge and competence in obesity care
- 74% are primary care providers
  - IM, FP, OBG, Ped
  - Others include Endo, Surg, Psych, EM, Card
- Among the fastest growing medical specialties
Many Options for Obesity Care, but . . .

- Most people with obesity don’t consult HCPs
  - 10% consult any HCP
  - 4% consult a physician
  - ~1% who could benefit have surgery
Healthy Living and Self-Care Still Dominate

• Most people with obesity don’t consult HCPs
  – 10% consult any HCP
  – 4% consult a physician
  – ~1% who could benefit have surgery

• Scams and self-directed diets do more harm than good

• But evidence-based programs can help
Nutrition Concerns Are Shifting Toward Healthy Eating

- Consumers are hyper-focused on healthy eating
- Consumers believe they understand what it means
- Concede they don’t always do it
- Weight loss is secondary

Source: Pew Research, The New Food Fights
People Have Grown Skeptical About Dietary Guidelines

- Reversals on cholesterol and fat
- Controversies on saturated fat
- Equivocation about red meat
- Cynicism about food and agribusiness industries
Women Are Seeking Personalized Nutrition Strategies

“Healthy eating might be different for different people depending upon their genes and health needs”

- Men:
  - Strongly Disagree: 13%
  - Disagree: 9%
  - Neutral: 28%
  - Agree: 25%
  - Strongly Agree: 24%

- Women:
  - Strongly Disagree: 7%
  - Disagree: 11%
  - Neutral: 28%
  - Agree: 25%
  - Strongly Agree: 29%

“Healthy eating is simply a matter of following basic guidelines, pretty much the same for everyone”

- Men:
  - Strongly Disagree: 11%
  - Disagree: 10%
  - Neutral: 24%
  - Agree: 29%
  - Strongly Agree: 26%

- Women:
  - Strongly Disagree: 12%
  - Disagree: 17%
  - Neutral: 29%
  - Agree: 23%
  - Strongly Agree: 19%

Source: ConscienHealth survey research, 2017.07
Different People Have Very Different Needs

- **Motivated Planners**
  - Healthy Foods
- **Successful Health Seekers**
  - Exercise
  - Support Programs
- **On The Go**
  - Meal Replacements
- **Ready For Help**
  - Supplements
  - Prescriptions & Surgery

- **Convenient Food Replacement**
- **Healthy Life Change**
- **Safety**

- **Desperate For Control**
  - Passive Miracle Seekers

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The Future of Consumer Self-Care: New OTC Solutions
Key Insights

- Scientific insight into obesity is challenging old stereotypes
- Medical obesity care is offering many new options
- Consumer beliefs and needs are shifting dramatically
- From weight* to health & fitness

*Though weight is hardly irrelevant

Visualization of Opioid Receptors in Obesity, Aalto University
Key Insights

• Fat shaming is verboten
• Healthy eating is hot, dieting not
• Sugar is out, clean labels are in
• Guidelines meet w skepticism
• Personalized health strategies rule
Innovation Opportunities

- Personalized nutrition
- Claims related to health outcomes
- Weight maintenance and longer-term outcomes
- Building longer-term solutions

Zeevi et al. 2015, Cell
More Information

- [www.conscienhealth.org/news](http://www.conscienhealth.org/news)
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