



Department of Health Care Policy and Financing

Nutrition and Fitness: Focus on Obesity

Tool Kit for Primary Care Providers

The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing is committed to improving the health of our clients through improved **screening, diagnosis, treatment, and referral**.

This tool kit is intended provide guidance on how to document and address issues of overweight and obesity in Medicaid/CHP+ clients.

For clinical guidelines on obesity prevention and treatment, visit:

[The HealthTeamWorks clinical guidelines for addressing obesity in children](#)

[The HealthTeamWorks clinical guidelines for addressing obesity in adults](#)

How you can help:

- ✓ REVIEW clinical guidelines
- ✓ SCREEN for BMI
- ✓ DIAGNOSE, recording specific ICD codes
- ✓ TREAT / REFER, in the context of an E & M visit
- ✓ REFER to community resources
- ✓ TRACK health outcomes

PREVENTION:

Obesity is preventable. Primary care providers can help adults and caregivers of infants and children to select healthy lifestyles by providing patient centered information, counseling, and goal setting:

- Promote and support exclusive breastfeeding beginning with a [Breastfeeding Friendly Practice](#) as described by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Promote [healthy weight gain during pregnancy](#) based on pre-pregnancy BMI and Institute of Medicine (IOM) prenatal weight gain recommendations.
- Implement [Five Things You Can Do in your Practice](#).

SCREENING:

Weight assessment is recommended for all clients at every visit.

Children:

- For children birth to 18 years, refer to the World Health Organization [Child Growth Standards](#)
- BMI assessment is a standard part of the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) periodicity schedule.
- Health Team Works recommends a [Healthy Lifestyle Screening tool](#) for assessing the risk of obesity in children
- Colorado Medicaid/ CHP+ use HEDIS quality measures that track BMI assessment, nutrition counseling, and physical activity counseling for children ages 3-17.

Adults:

- For adults over age 18, refer to a standard BMI calculator at [Body Mass Index](#)
- Colorado Medicaid uses a HEDIS quality measure that records how many adult clients receive weight assessment and counseling.



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DIAGNOSIS:

The prevalence of obesity in the Medicaid population will be documented by tracking the following ICD-9-CM codes.

Children:

The following codes are recommended when applicable for children 3-17:

ICD-9-CM Diagnosis Codes

278.00: Overweight

278.01: Morbid obesity (BMI between 30.0 and 39.9)

278.02: Overweight (BMI between 25 and 29.9)

Use additional code to identify Body Mass Index (BMI)

V85.51: Body Mass Index, pediatric, less than 5th percentile for age

V85.52: Body Mass Index, pediatric, 5th percentile to less than 85th percentile for age

V85.53: Body Mass Index, pediatric, 85th percentile to less than 95th percentile for age

V85.54: Body Mass Index, pediatric, greater than or equal to 95th percentile for age

Adults:

ICD-9-CM Diagnosis Codes

278.00: Overweight

278.01: Morbid obesity (BMI between 30.0 and 39.9)

278.02: Overweight (BMI between 25 and 29.9)

Use additional code to identify Body Mass Index (BMI)

V85.2: Body Mass Index between 25-29, adult

V85.3: Body Mass Index between 30-39, adult

V85.4: Body Mass Index 40 and over, adult

For all clients, please document overweight and obesity (when present) by using the **ICD-9-CM code 278.0X** as a secondary or tertiary diagnosis code in association with the standard reason for the patient visit.

TREATMENT: (Reimbursement codes)

Within the context of an annual physical or any provider visit, it is appropriate to address issues of obesity, and this is compensated as part of the standard Evaluation and Management (E&M) visit. The [HealthTeamWorks](#) clinical guidelines provide use friendly recommendations for incorporating information and consistent messages during annual exams for children and adults.

Do not bill E&M codes for the sole purpose of nutritional counseling.

Breastfeeding as a strategy for obesity prevention:

Researchers have documented that the risk of childhood obesity is 32% higher among children never breastfed than children who have ever been breastfed. (Arenz, S, Ruckerl R, Koletzko, B, von Kries R. *Breastfeeding and childhood obesity – a systematic review*. Int J Obes Relat Metab Disord 2004;28:1247-1256.)

- Breastfeeding/lactation office visits are covered using Evaluation and Management (E&M) procedure codes for problem-specific care. Most E&M require services to be rendered by a physician, physician





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assistant, or advanced practice nurse. There are a small number of E&M codes that allow services to be provided by a registered nurse. Lactation consultants are not currently able to enroll as Colorado Medicaid providers.

- Rented electric breast pumps are a covered benefit only for use with premature infants and infants in critical care, and only during period of anticipated infant hospitalization of 54 days or more using HCPCS code E0603 with modifier KR submitted under the mother's Medicaid ID.
- Manual breast pumps (HCPCS code E0602) are a covered benefit for use with premature infants and infants in critical care and do not require prior authorization.

PROVIDER RESOURCES:

[HealthTeamWorks video](#) outlines clinical guidance for obesity counseling.

[Eat Smart Brochures](#) provides free, effective educational tools for clients.

[Let's Move in the Clinic](#) is an initiative to encourage health care providers to make a clinical commitment to measuring BMI and counseling patients about optimal nutrition and physical activity.

[AAP: The White House Obesity Initiative](#) outlines the American Academy of Pediatrics' mission statement regarding obesity in children.

[Healthy Baby Campaign](#) is a Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment project to promote appropriate weight gain during pregnancy.

[Surgeon General Call To Action](#) To Support Breastfeeding summarizes the actions needed to improve the health of our nation through breastfeeding. Describes excess health risks (such as obesity) associated with not breastfeeding.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

To talk to someone about weight loss and developing a healthier lifestyle, clients can call the Medicaid/ CHP+ Nurse Advice Line: **1-800-283-3221**

For information about healthy eating and how to plan, shop and cook healthy meals: [Nutrition Information](#)

For information about different ways to exercise and control weight: [LiveWell Colorado](#)

[Small Step](#)

[Weight Watchers](#)

[Overeaters Anonymous](#)

To understand more about the Body Mass Index: [Body Mass Index](#)





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Appendix A

The Department is committed to improving the health outcomes of our clients. Performance measures used by the Department for tracking obesity in Medicaid/ CHP+ clients are outlined in Appendix A. Appropriate coding will give us the information we need to track changes in health outcomes. Our Healthy Living measures are consistent with those associated with Meaningful Use for electronic medical record incentives, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA), and those associated with the Colorado Accountable Care Collaborative Program.

The data is updated annually, and is available for review at [Healthy Living Performance Measures](#). For more information, please link to the [Healthy Living Initiatives](#).

Performance Measures for tracking Overweight and Obesity in Medicaid/ CHP+:

The Department will document, track, and evaluate the diagnosis and treatment of obesity based on the following measures.

Goal: Reduce overweight and obesity rates among clients on Medicaid/ CHP+

Outcome Measures:

- Percent of children (0-14) on Medicaid/ CHP+ who are overweight or obese *CO Child Health Survey*
- Percent low income adults overweight/ obese *BRFSS*

Process Measures:

- Percent of children and adolescents (3-17) on Medicaid/ CHP+ receiving weight assessment and counseling
 - Documented assessment *HEDIS*
 - Nutrition counseling *HEDIS*
 - Physical activity counseling *HEDIS*
- Percent of adults (18-74) on Medicaid receiving Body Mass Index (BMI) assessment *HEDIS*

CO Child Health Survey: Sponsored by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)

BRFSS: Colorado Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, sponsored by CDPHE

HEDIS: Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set

