

UNEXPLAINED WEIGHT LOSS OR LOW BODY WEIGHT

Maintaining a proper weight is an important part of your overall health. Unintended weight loss or low body weight is something that you should discuss with your health care provider. These conditions may indicate something as simple as poor diet or poor appetite or it may be a sign of a more serious medical or psychiatric problem. There may be changes in appetite related to medications or diseases. Swallowing problems can also lead to weight loss. Medical conditions such as diabetes or diseases that cause poor absorption of food into the body can result in weight loss or low body weight. Poor dietary habits or poor food choices can lead to weight loss. It is important that you discuss your dietary habits with your healthcare provider.

Your healthcare provider will determine your proper weight based upon a measurement called a BMI. This measurement is calculated using your weight and your height and does not require any specialized testing. If your BMI is low or if you are losing weight unintentionally, this may indicate a problem that your healthcare provider will need to look into further.

Proper nutrition and adequate caloric intake is important in maintaining your weight. A diet consisting of healthy food choices providing adequate calorie and nutrient intake is important in maintaining your weight. In some circumstances, your provider may recommend nutritional supplements in addition to a healthy diet in order to provide the calories that you need. It is also important that you have proper dental care so that you can adequately chew your food. Dental problems can lead to weight loss or low body weight. It is also important that you discuss any problems with swallowing with your provider.

Psychiatric causes including depression can also lead to poor appetite and weight loss. Eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa are disorders that cause weight loss and these conditions can be quite serious.

The treatment of low weight or unexplained weight loss varies for each different condition, so it is very important to follow-up with your provider about any unexplained weight loss.

Recommended Reading:

www.nutrition.gov

www.uptodate.com/patients