

Medical Nutrition Therapy

MNTWorks

MNT Providing Return on Investment

Data show that medical nutrition therapy (MNT), involving in-depth individualized nutrition assessment and a duration and frequency of care using the Nutrition Care Process to manage disease, yields positive results. MNT is linked to improved clinical outcomes and reduced costs related to physician time, medication use and hospital admissions for people with obesity, diabetes and disorders of lipid metabolism, as well as other chronic diseases.¹

University of Virginia School of Medicine² reported that an RD case management approach to lifestyle care can improve diverse indicators of health, including weight, waist circumference, health-related quality of life, and use of prescription medications, among obese persons with type 2 diabetes. These results were seen with a minimal cost of \$350 per year per patient.

Diabetes and obesity are associated with elevated rates of lost productivity and disability. In 2007, people with diabetes lost 15 million days of work due to diabetes, costing the U.S. economy approximately \$2.6 billion.³

A modest-cost, registered dietitian-led lifestyle intervention provided to people with diabetes and obesity reduced the risk of having lost work days by 64.3% and disability days by 87.2%, compared with those receiving usual medical care. For every dollar an employer invests in the lifestyle modification program for employees with diabetes, the employer would see a return of \$2.67 in productivity.⁴

Massachusetts General Hospital⁵ reported that participants receiving group MNT in a 6-month randomized trial had a 6% decrease in total and LDL-cholesterol levels, compared with the group not receiving MNT. The non-MNT group had no reduction in total cholesterol or LDL levels. The study revealed a savings of \$4.28 for each dollar spent on MNT, much less than the cost of statin therapy.

The Lewin Group documented an 8.6% reduction in hospital utilization and 16.9% reduction in physician visits associated with MNT for patients with cardiovascular disease. The group additionally documented a 9.5% reduction in hospital utilization and 23.5% reduction in physician visits when MNT was provided to persons with diabetes mellitus.⁶

Prenatal nutrition programs that target high-risk pregnant women have been shown to improve long-term health outcomes in children, saving at least \$8 for each dollar invested in the program.⁷

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