

MNT Effectiveness: The Latest Research

- ✓ Medical nutrition therapy provided by registered dietitians as part of a health plan is an effective, low-cost way of helping people safely lose weight. The cost of the MNT benefit to the health plan was \$0.03 per member per month¹.
 - Overweight or obese adults participating in a medical nutrition therapy benefit sponsored through their insurer were compared with individuals who did not participate. After 2 years, the adults who received the MNT benefit provided by a registered dietitian were twice as likely to achieve a clinically significant reduction in weight, experience greater average reductions in weight, and were more likely to exercise more.
- ✓ Primary care physicians identify dietitians as the most qualified providers to care for obese patients².
 - In a national cross-sectional survey of 500 primary care physicians, fewer than half (44%) thought they achieved success by helping their obese patients lose weight. Respondents identified dietitians as more qualified than primary care physicians, behavioral psychologists or nurses to help obese patients lose or maintain weight.
- ✓ Community-based, point-of-testing nutrition counseling provided by registered dietitians (or a registered nurse under the supervision of a registered dietitian) may reduce risk factors for obesity and related chronic diseases among older adults³.
 - During a 3-year intervention, individual screening and point-of-testing counseling sessions (20-40 minutes each) were offered every 6 months to 159 subjects ages 65 years and older. Significant improvements in BMI, serum LDL cholesterol, fasting blood glucose and diastolic blood pressure were noted for participants who attended three or more counseling sessions. Participants who attended all six sessions had the most favorable results in each value.

¹ Bradley DW, Murphy G, Snetselaar LG, Myers EF, Qualls LG. The incremental value of medical nutrition therapy in weight management. *Managed Care*. January 2013: 40-45.

² Bleich SN, Bennett WL, Gudzone KA, Cooper LA. National survey of US primary care physicians' perspectives about causes of obesity and solutions to improve care. *BMJ Open* 2012;2:e001871. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2012-001871.

³ Walker MH, Murimi MW, Kim Y, Hunt A, Erickson D, Strimbu B. Multiple point-of-testing nutrition counseling sessions reduce risk factors for chronic disease among older adults. *Journal of Nutrition in Gerontology and Geriatrics*, 31:2, 146-157.