

## Support groups and patient advocacy organizations

The following information can also be accessed at this web address:

<http://www.obesityinamerica.org/support.html>

The psychological and psychosocial effects of obesity on an individual are profound and deeply rooted. For these reasons, it is often necessary that overweight and obese people have a core network of support—people to turn to in times of need. For many, obesity may lower one's self-esteem or lead to depression or anxiety. A network of support is often made up of individuals who are themselves dealing with overweight or obesity, and who can provide a more personal perspective on obesity and its impact on one's quality of life. In addition to obesity support groups, there are also obesity advocacy groups, which work on behalf of overweight and obese people to inform the public, media, Congress and other influencers about the effects of obesity.

### *Select Obesity Support Groups*

#### **America On the Move**

Address: 150 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02111

Fax: 617-636-2714

Website: <http://www.americaonthemove.org/>

Profile: America On the Move is a national initiative dedicated to helping individuals and communities across the nation make positive changes to improve their health and quality of life. By focusing on individuals and communities, America On the Move strives to support healthy eating, weight loss, and active living habits in society.

#### **American Diabetes Association**

Address: 1701 North Beauregard Street, Alexandria, VA 22311

Phone: 800-DIABETES (800-342-2383)

Website: <http://www.diabetes.org/>

Profile: The American Diabetes Association is the nation's leading nonprofit health organization providing diabetes research, information and advocacy. Founded in 1940, they conduct diabetes-related programs in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, reaching more than 800 communities. The mission of the organization is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

#### **KidShape**

Address: 8733 Beverly Blvd, Suite 400, Los Angeles, CA 90048

Phone: (888) 600-6444

Website: <http://www.kidshape.com/>

Profile: KidShape® Foundation is a non-profit organization that focuses on family-based pediatric weight loss and management to combat childhood (pediatric) obesity through a culturally sensitive curriculum that emphasizes healthy eating habits, positive health behavior changes, positive body image, and improved physical activity. KidShape® Foundation aims to increase awareness and adoption of healthy eating habits in accordance with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Food Guide Pyramid; increase participation in regular physical activity for weight maintenance and weight loss (at least three times a week for at least 30 continuous minutes); increase self-appreciation of positive aspects of each program

participant and work with families to set realistic healthy living and weight loss goals and be rewarded for achieving those goals.

#### **Overeaters Anonymous (OA)**

Address: P.O. Box 44020, Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020

Phone: (505) 891-2664

Fax: (505) 891-4320

Website: <http://www.oa.org/>

Profile: This is a fellowship of individuals who share their experience in overcoming compulsive overeating by holding support meetings worldwide. The group encourages members to partner with a healthcare professional and a sponsor to meet their recovery goals.

#### **Adolescent Obesity Groups – Suburban Hospital Center**

Address: 6410 Rockledge Drive, Suite 410, Bethesda, MD 20817

Phone: (301) 530-0676

Website: [http://www.suburbanhospital.org/eating\\_disorders](http://www.suburbanhospital.org/eating_disorders)

Profile: Adolescent Obesity Groups educate patients about the physical and emotional consequences of childhood (pediatric) obesity and address issues related to obesity of social isolation and teasing. Patients develop healthy problem-solving skills and alternative coping tactics, in an environment safe for self-expression and exploration.

#### ***Select Support Groups for Those Considering Obesity Surgical Options***

##### **Coastal Center for Obesity**

Address: Participating health centers (Orange, CA)

Phone: (888) 527-5222

Website: <http://www.coastalobesity.com/>

Profile: Support group meetings at the Center offer the opportunity for overweight and obese individuals to discuss their obesity surgical experience with other patients.

##### **ObesitySolutions: Morbid Obesity Support Group & Information Lectures**

Address: 1250 Jesse Jewell Parkway, Suite 300, Gainesville, GA 30501

Phone: (770) 534-0110 or (877) 921-0110

Fax: (770) 534-2555

Website: <http://www.obesitysolutions.com/>

Profile: Postoperative gastric bypass (obesity) surgery patients are encouraged to attend monthly support group meetings in Gainesville that offer fellowship, support, and encouragement for post-op patients and often feature guest speakers.

##### **Obesity Consult Center – Tufts-New England Medical Center**

Address: 750 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02111

Phone: (617) 636-0158

Website: <http://www.obesityconsult.org/>

Profile: The program at the Obesity Consult Center is unique among many worldwide. Founded in 1985, the program has achieved stunning results using a multidisciplinary approach to combating obesity that includes clinicians from many fields assisting with the care of obese patients. There is also an obesity support program specifically for men.

**Bariatric Surgery Program Support Group – Rush University Medical Center**

Address: 1650 W. Harrison St., Chicago, IL 60612

Phone: (312) 942-5000

Website: <http://www.rush.edu/patients/surgery/bariatric/support.html>

Profile: The Bariatric Surgery Program includes support group meetings as an integral part of obesity surgery treatment.

**Maimonides Medical Center – SUNY Health Science Center at Brooklyn**

Address: 4802 Tenth Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11219

Phone: (718) 283-6000

Website: <http://www.maimonidesmed.org/>

Profile: Peer support groups for post-surgical patients of obesity surgery are a part of the Center's patient outreach. Meetings include guest speakers, education and updates on nutrition, and self-care techniques.

**Select Advocacy Organizations****Obesity Action Coalition**

Address: 4511 North Himes Avenue, Suite 250, Tampa, FL 33614

Phone: (800) 717-3117

Website: <http://www.obesityaction.org>

Profile: The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a non-profit organization whose sole focus is representing individuals affected by obesity. Founded in 2005, the OAC remains at the forefront of the fight against obesity. From advocating on capitol hill for access to obesity treatments to publishing hundreds of educational resources for individuals affected, the OAC truly represents the voice of all those affected by obesity. The OAC aims to raise awareness of the disease of obesity, ensure access to safe and effective treatment options and eradicate the negative bias and stigma associated with it.

**The Endocrine Society**

Address: 8401 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 900, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Phone: 301-941-0200

Fax: 301-941-0259

Website: <http://www.endo-society.org/>

Profile: The Endocrine Society is the world's largest and most active professional organization of endocrinologists. Founded in 1916, the Society is internationally known as the leading source of state-of-the art research and clinical advancements in endocrinology and metabolism. The Endocrine Society is dedicated to promoting excellence in research, education and clinical practice in the field of endocrinology.

**The Hormone Foundation**

Address: 8401 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 900, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Phone: 800-HORMONE

Website: <http://www.hormone.org/>

Profile: The Hormone Foundation is an independent, nonprofit organization established by The Endocrine Society to serve as a resource for the public by promoting the prevention, treatment and cure of hormone-related conditions (hypothyroidism, thyroid disease, diabetes, obesity), and does

so through public outreach and education. Through its public education campaigns, web site, forums, toll-free number and free publications, The Hormone Foundation is a leading source of hormone-related information for the public, physicians, allied health professionals and the media.

**The North American Association for the Study of Obesity (NAASO)**

Address: 8630 Fenton Street, Suite 918, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Phone: 301-563-6526

Fax: 301-563-6595

Website: <http://www.naaso.org>

Profile: NAASO is a scientific society dedicated to the study of obesity. Since 1982 NAASO has been committed to encouraging obesity research on the causes and treatment of obesity, and to keeping the medical community and public informed of new advances.

**International Size Acceptance Association, Inc. (ISAA)**

Address: P.O. Box 82126, Austin, TX 78758

Website: <http://www.size-acceptance.org/>

Profile: The ISAA, founded in 1997, is an international, non-profit, civil rights organization dedicated to promoting size acceptance and helping to end size (obesity) discrimination. Within the U.S., ISAA has chapters in Georgia, Tennessee, California and Illinois and virtual chapters in New York and Texas.

**International Obesity Task Force (IOTF)**

Address: 231 North Gower Street, London NW1 2NS, United Kingdom

Phone: +44 (0) 20 7691 1900

Fax: +44 (0) 20 7387 6033

Website: <http://www.iotf.org/>

Profile: As part of the International Association for the Study of Obesity, the IOTF is an international organization that collaborates with the World Health Organization to examine the global obesity epidemic. The organization maintains a commitment to informing the international community about obesity and works to influence governments to take decisive action regarding obesity management and treatment recommendations.

**Council on Size & Weight Discrimination**

Address: P.O. Box 305, Mt. Marion, NY 12456

Phone: (845) 679-1209

Fax: (845) 679-1206

Website: <http://www.cswd.org/>

Email: [info@cswd.org](mailto:info@cswd.org)

Profile: This nonprofit group advocates for overweight and obesity, especially in the areas of medical treatment, job discrimination and obesity images portrayed in the media.

**National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NAAFA)**

Address: P.O. Box 188620, Sacramento, CA 95818

Phone: (916) 558-6880

Fax: (916) 558-6881

Website: <http://www.naafa.org/>

Profile: Since 1969, this national nonprofit organization has been dedicated to improving the quality of life for overweight and obese people by working to eliminate (obesity) discrimination based on body size. The association maintains a commitment to providing these individuals with tools for self-empowerment. A list of local chapters can be found at <http://www.naafa.org/>.

**Partnership for Healthy Weight Management**

Website: <http://www.consumer.gov/weightloss/index.htm>

Profile: This group is comprised of a coalition of representatives from the science, academia and healthcare fields, and government and commercial organizations, whose mission is to promote sound guidance on strategies for achieving weight loss and maintaining a healthy weight.

**Society for Nutrition Education (SNE)**

Address: 7150 Winton Drive, Suite 300, Indianapolis, IN 46268

Phone: (317) 328-4627 or (800) 235-6690

Fax: (317) 280-8527

Website: <http://www.sne.org/>

Profile: SNE represents the professional interests of nutrition educators by educating and influencing policy makers about nutrition, food and health.