Weight assessment and counseling for nutrition and physical activity for children/adolescents

The emergence of obesity in children and adolescents has been one of the most important developments in pediatrics, and its rapidly increasing prevalence is one of the most challenging dilemmas healthcare givers face today in the United States. In an effort to reduce obesity in children, this measure looks at the child’s height and weight, as well as their physical activity and dietary habits.²

Measure

Patients 3–17 years of age who had one or more outpatient visits with PCPs and documented evidence of all of the following during the measurement year:

- Body mass index (BMI) percentile
- Counseling for nutrition
- Counseling for physical activity³

Patient medical record should include

- BMI percentile or percentile graph for all children younger than 16 years old; BMI value (e.g., 18.5) for patients over 16 years old
- Documentation of counseling in the form of discussion of diet, anticipatory guidance for nutrition, or counseling on nutrition
- Documentation of counseling for activity in the form of discussion of current physical activities, counseling for increasing activity, or anticipatory guidance on activity
- Documentation of any advice you give the patient
- Date, height, weight, and BMI percentile accompanying all BMI documentation
- Height and weight recorded at least annually; for 16- and 17-year-olds only, you may either calculate BMI percentile or document the values alone

Tips for provider and/or staff when talking to the patient

- Let the patient know that the normal BMI range is 18.5–24.9. Show the patient where they fall on the BMI chart; this can be a good opening for discussing their exercise and eating habits.
- Consider incorporating appropriate nutritional and weight management questioning and counseling into your routine clinical practice.
- Take advantage of every office visit (including sick visits and sports physicals) to capture BMI and to counsel on nutrition and physical activity.
- Place BMI charts near the scales to encourage discussion with your patient.
- When counseling for nutrition, include current nutrition behaviors such as meal patterns, appetite, and dietary habits.

¹ HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).
³ Peter Bach et al. HEDIS 2014 Technical Specifications for Health Plans (National Committee for Quality Assurance 2013), 59–63