

**B25**

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**Patient/Parental Perceptions and Engagement as a Guide for Improvement in a Community-Based Weight Management Program (Live Light Live Right)**

Background: Obesity is a chronic, relapsing disease. Besides lifestyle modification, the recent addition of anti-obesity medications (AOM) has been implicated in severe obesity. Access and utilization of AOM in underserved communities of color is unknown. Our study assessed patient/parental perception and engagement in a lifestyle modification program (LMP), including utilization of AOM, in the strategy towards weight loss and maintenance.

Methods: We generated a questionnaire to assess the patients' acceptance of changes in nutrition, exercise, and AOM, and change in perceptions towards weight bias and hunger following the treatment strategies. Responses were collected and analyzed for 20 patients.

Results: Out of the 20 participants, 65% had obesity class III, 25% had class II, and 10% had class I. 90% reported improvement in their diet. 80% of the sample was taking AOM, and 92% of respondents reported a reduction in cravings. Of the 64% of respondents with mental health issues, including weight bias, 56% showed improvement. Though 75% of participants were not a part of the program exercise sessions, 90% of them were exercising on their own. 79% of the respondents were aware that obesity is a chronic, relapsing disease requiring sustained lifestyle changes. 44% of them reported some side effects with medications, mainly GI side effects and fatigue.

Conclusion: The study showed that with focused education on the complexity of obesity with expert opinion and supervision, most patients were able to follow an LMP and successful use of AOM. This led to improvement in weight bias, appetite control, and self-motivated physical activity. Our study provides a framework for program intervention as a chronic disease model (obesity) in underserved communities, opportunities for community-engaged research, and patient advocacy to improve health equity.