

Extended and standard duration weight-loss programme referrals for adults in primary care (WRAP): A RCT

Ahern AL, Wheeler GM, Aveyard P, Boyland EJ, Halford JCG et al

Lancet 2017; 389:2214-25

P: primary care patients, over 18 years old with BMI > 28

I: Best weight loss programme in primary care

C: Brief intervention for weight loss vs 12 week weight management programme vs 52 week weight management programme

O: 52 week weight management programme was superior for weight loss at greater short term costs, however prediction is this programme is more cost effective in the long term

Summary

This study aims to provide evidence regarding the optimal time course for weight loss intervention. It was a non-blinded, parallel-group RCT. Participants had to be over 18 years old and have a BMI of more than 28 kg/m². 23 primary care practices in England were involved. 1267 participants were randomised to brief intervention which consisted of advice and self help leaflets, 12 week weight management programme (weight watchers) or the same weight management programme for 52 weeks.

The most effective intervention was the 52 weeks programme, however, unsurprisingly this was also the most expensive per kilo of weight loss. When looking at health economics it suggests that despite in the short term this being the most expensive, the longer-term benefits at 25 years are projected to be best with the 52 week programme. It was also felt to give greater clinical benefits over the 12 week programme.

Therefore weight loss management programmes are effective with the longer the programme the more effective it is in the short and long term.

Authors

Amy Ahern, Senior investigator scientist, University of Cambridge

Graham Wheeler, medical Statistician, university of London

Professor Paul Aveyard, professor of behavioural medicine, Oxford

Emma Boyland, Senior lecturer, psychological sciences, Liverpool

Jason Halford, Professor Jason Halford is Head of the Department of Psychological Sciences at the University of Liverpool

Adrian Mander, Senior statistician, London

Impact

The screenshot shows the top section of The Guardian website. The navigation bar includes 'Support The Guardian' with 'Contribute' and 'Subscribe' buttons, and the site's name 'The Guardian' with 'UK edition' and search options. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for 'News', 'Opinion', 'Sport', 'Culture', 'Lifestyle', and 'More'. A sub-navigation bar lists categories like 'Fashion', 'Food', 'Recipes', 'Travel', 'Health & fitness', 'Women', 'Love & sex', 'Beauty', 'Home & garden', and 'Money Cars'. The main content area features an article titled 'Give overweight patients a year of weight-loss classes, say researchers' by Nicola Davis, dated Thursday 4 May 2017. The article's sub-headline reads: 'Tens of thousands of cases of obesity-related diseases could be prevented if the standard three-month course of weight-loss classes were extended, says study'. An advertisement on the right says 'Don't miss out Our Home Broadband offer ends 26 November'. A cookie consent banner is visible at the bottom of the page.

The screenshot shows a professional article on the Safefood website. The URL is 'https://www.safefood.eu/Professional/Nutrition/Nutrition-News/en/Nutrition-News/May-2017/Weight-loss-classes-for-treating-obesity.aspx'. The Safefood logo and tagline 'Safe and healthy eating on the island of Ireland' are at the top. A navigation menu includes 'Home', 'Food Safety', 'Healthy Eating', 'Recipes', 'Education', 'Professional', 'Publications', and 'News'. The article breadcrumb is 'You are here: Home > Professional > Nutrition > Nutrition News > Nutrition News > May 2017 > Weight loss classes for treating obesity'. A sidebar on the left lists months from December 2018 to August 2017. The article title is 'Weight loss classes for treating obesity'. The text states: 'Offering overweight and obese individuals 12 months of weight loss classes could prevent thousands of cases of obesity-related diseases.' It describes a study with participants aged 18 or older with a BMI of 28kg/m² or higher, recruited from 23 primary care practices in England. Three interventions were used: 1. Brief intervention: Given a self-help weight management booklet. 2. Referral to a weight loss programme for 12 weeks. 3. Referral to a weight loss programme for 52 weeks. Participants had anthropometric measurements taken at the beginning of the trial, at 3, 12 and 24 months. The article concludes: 'People who were referred to the 52-week weight loss programme experienced the greatest weight loss at 1 year. At 1 year mean weight loss was 3.26kg for the brief intervention, 4.75kg for the 12-week programme and 6.78kg for the 52-week programme. The 52-week programme was significantly more effective than the 12-week programme. This difference remained at the 24-month follow up. The 52-week...'. A 'Cookie Compliance' banner is visible at the bottom left.

Thinking points:

1. How would you discuss with a patient that they were overweight?
2. Look at BMI, do you know how it is worked out?
3. What is a randomised control trial?
4. If you were commissioning for a health service would you go with the 12 week or 52 week programme for your patient population and why?