

Interested in losing weight?

At Kaiser Permanente, we have lifestyle and weight loss physician experts who design treatment plans and programs based on the most effective, evidence-based approaches to weight loss. Included among our experts are physicians board-certified in internal medicine or family medicine who have additional certification in lifestyle medicine and/or obesity medicine, as well as bariatric surgeons who are fellowship trained in bariatrics. Along with our physicians are our expert lifestyle coaches and nutritionists.

To support a patient along their weight loss journey, we almost always begin by introducing them to our customized programs for healthy eating and exercise (listed below).

Our programs include:



WELLNESS CLASSES

Single session and multisession classes serve as the building blocks for successful weight loss. Learn how to track your food, plan a meal, manage your relationship with food, read a food label, and more. All classes are virtual and available at no extra cost for Kaiser Permanente members.

kp.org/classes



WELLNESS COACHING

Coaches help patients achieve personal wellness goals by helping them find motivation, create plans, and overcome barriers. Coaches meet 1-on-1 with patients through convenient phone appointments. No extra cost for Kaiser Permanente members.

kp.org/wellnesscoaching



DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM

A 12-month weight loss program, led by an expert lifestyle coach, for patients who are prediabetic and willing to commit to a 12-month intensive lifestyle change program. No extra cost for Kaiser Permanente members.

kp.org/diabetesprogram/mas



LIFESTYLE MEDICINE PROGRAM

A physician-led weight loss and weight maintenance program for eligible adults. Our board-certified doctors help patients focus on nutrition, mental health, sleep, exercise, and physical activity with the goal of creating an individualized and sustainable action plan. Copays may apply based on individual benefits.

kp.org/lifestylemedicine/mas



HEALTHY WEIGHT BY DESIGN

An 18-week virtual program, led by expert lifestyle coaches, that provides robust education on long-term dietary change, increased physical activity, and behavioral change strategies for weight control. No extra cost for Kaiser Permanente members.

If these programs do not lead to weight loss, our physicians may discuss weight loss medications, bariatric surgery, and/or endobariatric surgery.

Weight loss medications

Weight loss medications may be helpful for people who haven't been able to lose weight despite changes to diet and exercise. Before a physician can prescribe a weight loss medicine, **patients need to meet eligibility requirements**, including:

- BMI (body mass index) greater than 30, or greater than 27 with an obesity-related health condition
- Attempted weight loss for at least 3 months
- No excluding factors, such as: being pregnant, breastfeeding, or being within 6 months postpartum; having an eating disorder; having weight loss surgery within the last year; poorly controlled medical or mental health conditions; or any medical contraindication

When making a prescribing decision, physicians will assess the patient's lifestyle habits and social support. For weight loss medicine to be effective, patients need to commit to the requirements of the medication they are prescribed, including frequent monitoring and working closely with the health care team—which may include clinical pharmacists—to adjust dosage over time.

In general, if a patient doesn't achieve weight loss with the first medicine prescribed and has committed to lifestyle changes, the physician may prescribe an alternative weight loss medication. This stepwise medication therapy approach will vary by a patient's health conditions and an informed decision with the physician including a discussion about safety and efficacy.

Injectable weight loss medications, such as Wegovy (a GLP-1 medication), have become more visible through advertisements and social media, so it is not uncommon for patients to ask their physician for a GLP-1 prescription as a first step to losing weight. Injectable weight loss medications are often not the first medication prescribed for weight loss. It is important to note that patients should have an established commitment to lifestyle changes before any medications are started.

Coverage for weight loss medications

Your health insurance coverage for weight loss medications depends upon your specific health insurance plan. We make medication choices based on what is the appropriate medication at that time for the patient and their particular care experience or care journey. We use evidence-based medicine in making our treatment recommendations. GLP-1 drugs and other anti-obesity medications may not be covered by your pharmacy benefits plan when those medications are prescribed solely for the purpose of weight loss.

Out-of-pocket costs could reach several thousands of dollars per month if your insurance plan doesn't cover weight loss drugs. If your doctor prescribes weight-loss drugs and your plan does not cover them, you may choose to pay out of pocket. A valid prescription is required.

To learn about your specific plan's benefits and coverage for prescription medications, you may contact Member Services at **800-777-7902 (TTY 711)**, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. You may also visit **kp.org** or use the KP app to email or chat with member services.

If a patient does not lose weight after trying different programs and medicines, the doctor may recommend a 16-week drug holiday, intensifying lifestyle changes, and/or bariatric surgery.

Bariatric surgery

The Mid-Atlantic Kaiser Permanente bariatric and endobariatric surgery team helps patients lose weight, regain quality of life, and restore overall health. After weight loss surgery, most patients report that they are much happier and have fewer visits to physicians for medical problems. **kp.org/bariatricsurgery/mas**

START YOUR JOURNEY TODAY

For more information, visit **kp.org/healthyweight/mas**.

