

Importance of Behavioural Modification

Introduction

Obesity and overweight are terms essentially defined as abnormal accumulation of fat and an increase in body weight.¹ Doctors usually check this using something called the body mass index (BMI). where a BMI above 23 kg/m² is considered overweight and above 25 kg/m² is considered obese.² People who are obese have a higher risk of developing conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. Various strategies have been developed over the years to help people lose weight, among which behaviour modification is an effective option.¹

What is behavioural modification?

Self-monitoring

- Self-monitoring involves tracking daily food intake, physical activity and body measurements to increase awareness of personal habits. This helps individuals make healthier decisions and identify areas where changes can improve weight management



Goal-setting

- Setting achievable goals can help one focus on what's important and improve their chances of success. Exercise can be easier to stick with by adding everyday activities like walking, cycling, taking the stairs or performing home-based exercises



Stress management

This aims to reduce the effect of stress on one's eating habits. These include stress relaxation techniques like yoga, meditation, swimming, etc.



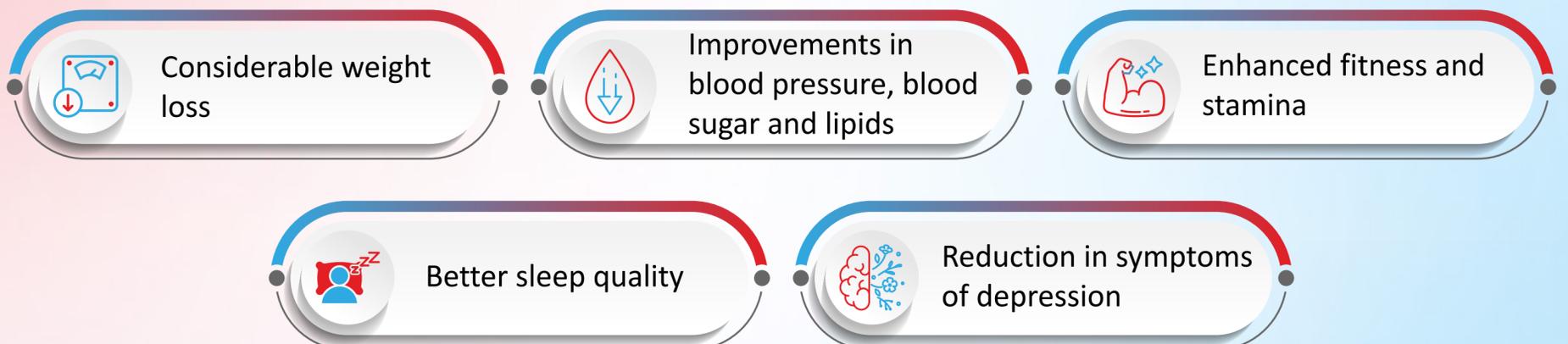
Stimulus control

This involves noticing cues that influence when, what and how much you eat and avoiding them. Examples include not storing snacks at home, strictly eating at the dining table without distractions, putting reminders on the refrigerator, etc.



Benefits of behavioural modification strategies

Behavioural modification has several benefits in managing obesity:³



References

- Olateju IV, Ogwu D, Owolabi MO, *et al.* Role of behavioral interventions in the management of obesity. *Cureus.* 2021;13(9).
- Misra A, Vikram NK, Ghosh A, *et al.* Members IO. Revised definition of obesity in Asian Indians living in India. *Diabetes Metab Syndr: Clin Res Rev.* 2025;19(1):102989.
- Wilfley DE, Hayes JF, Balantekin KN, *et al.* Behavioral interventions for obesity in children and adults: evidence base, novel approaches, and translation into practice. *Am Psychol.* 2018;73(8):981.

