

Countdown

Countdown to a Healthy ME

Countdown to a Healthy ME is a multi-disciplinary treatment program for those Maine children and their families most severely affected by obesity and its co-morbidities. Countdown intervenes to stabilize weight gain of children and adolescents, and through individualized goal setting, assists families to adopt lifelong healthy behaviors. The treatment team consists of a dietitian, licensed clinical social worker, exercise physiologist, pediatricians and a pediatric gastroenterologist, each with expertise in the evaluation and treatment of childhood obesity. The program provides intensive, patient-focused treatment and includes medical and nutritional evaluation and monitoring, behavioral support and counseling and physical activity assessment and structured exercise programs.* Services are provided through individual, family, and group sessions.

The criteria for inclusion in the program include:

- Children and adolescents 18 or younger
- BMI at or above 95%.
- Referral from a primary care provider or specialty physician.
- Patient and family ready to engage in treatment towards lifestyle changes.

The Countdown Team approach is to:

- Clinically intervene to treat the medical and behavioral causes of obesity.
- Engage patients and families in strategies to stabilize or lose weight.
- Set goals with patients, with the cooperation of their families and other caregivers, related to diet and physical activity.
- Teach patient and family skills and strategies to maintain or lose weight.
- Motivate patients to comply with the treatment plan.
- Instill confidence in patients as they make choices towards healthier lifestyles.
- Ensure follow-up visits by patient to monitor long term outcomes.

Initial Medical Evaluation occurs with:

- A referral completed by the primary care provider or specialty physician.
- A completed questionnaire returned by the patient and family.

For more information contact:
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* Based on Recommendations for *Treatment of Child and Adolescent Overweight and Obesity*. Bonnie Spear et al. Pediatrics 2007;120;S254-S288.