



## CHLA Healthy Weight Clinic

In 2021, Children's Hospital Los Angeles launched a new clinic to provide medical management for pediatric patients with severe obesity. The Healthy Weight Clinic is evidence-based and offers virtual visits to patients and their families. Patients have access to a multidisciplinary team that can provide behavior-change counseling, individual and group nutrition classes, pharmacotherapy, and medical management of obesity comorbidities like hypertension, metabolic syndrome and dyslipidemia.

### Why obesity?

- Obesity is now the most common chronic childhood disease.
- Prevalence is increasing, reaching 30-40% in underserved, lower-income communities.
- Data indicates an earlier age of onset of obesity-related comorbid conditions, like diabetes, fatty liver disease and hypertension.

### Why refer to a specialist at CHLA?

- Research shows that multidisciplinary obesity treatment results in better outcomes for patients.
- CHLA pediatric obesity specialists have experience delivering pharmacotherapy to manage complex obesity.
- Once referred to CHLA, patients have access to other specialties for the management of comorbidities, such as Pulmonology, Cardiology and the Fatty Liver Clinic.

### Why virtual?

- Increased access
- Flexible scheduling
- Reduced travel and time burden on families

### What do patients need?

- Access to the internet
- A device that has a camera and an internet connection (e.g., phone, tablet, computer)
- A CHLA patient portal account (will be provided to all new patients before their visit)

### Who should be referred?

- Patients 12 years and older with severe obesity, defined as BMI  $\geq$  120% of the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile for age and gender, or BMI  $>$  34 kg/m<sup>2</sup> in patients 14 years or older
- Patients of any age with obesity (BMI  $\geq$  95<sup>th</sup> percentile) and one or more confirmed comorbidities
- Patients of any age with confirmed or suspected syndromic obesity
- Patients of any age with confirmed or suspected monogenetic obesity
- Patients of any age with central obesity (e.g., brain or pituitary injury)

### What can patients expect?

- Further lab workup as needed for obesity comorbidities
- 12-26 contact hours in the first six months, including:
  - Group and individual visits with our dietician, nurse practitioner, coordinator and physicians
  - Individual visits with nutritionist for meal planning
  - Individual visits with physicians and nurse practitioners for pharmacotherapy and medication management if indicated
- Predominantly telehealth visits with in-person visits as needed
- A maintenance phase for patients who are making progress, with visits every two to three months as needed to stay on track after the initial intensive three-to-six month phase ends

### Questions?

Please contact the clinic at [HealthyWeight@chla.usc.edu](mailto:HealthyWeight@chla.usc.edu), phone: 323-361-3373, fax: 323-361-3415



## Pediatric Obesity Referral Pathway:

Children's Hospital Los Angeles offers a variety of pediatric weight management services to best meet the needs of your patients. To determine appropriate options for your patient, you will need to order the following labs and include results with the referral:

- Hemoglobin A1C and fasting blood glucose
- Fasting lipid panel
- Hepatic function tests (including AST and ALT)

Please ensure that the above lab work results are attached with your referral, and that the labs were performed within the past three months.

1. If your patient does not have one or more suspected or known obesity-related comorbidities but still requires multidisciplinary clinical weight management, your referral options include:

- **Endocrinology at CHLA** (MD, RD, PT)
- **Healthy Weight Clinic at CHLA** (MD, RD, NP) -- NEW!
- **Bariatric Surgery at Keck Medicine of USC** if patient is 18 or older with BMI > 40 or has BMI > 35 with a significant comorbidity such as Type 2 DM or pseudotumor cerebri

**Note:** We are not currently accepting referrals to CHLA's **EMPOWER Program** or the **Nutrition Program** (i.e., nutrition-only referral for obesity/weight management) as those programs are no longer available.

2. If your patient has an existing obesity-related comorbidity and/or abnormal lab levels, your referral options include:

- **Type 2 Diabetes Clinic** in Endocrinology if your patient has Type 2 diabetes (FBG > 125, A1C  $\geq$  6.5)
- **Fatty Liver Clinic** in Gastroenterology if your patient has an ALT > 45
- **Pulmonology Clinic** if your patient has obstructive sleep apnea diagnosed by a sleep study (if you suspect OSA, order a sleep study)
- **Lipid Clinic** in Cardiology if your patient has fasting triglycerides > 500 mg/dL or LDL > 160 mg/dL