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Diet and Weight Management

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Excess body weight and increased body fat increases the risk for acquiring numerous health problems and chronic diseases. Obesity also contributes to mechanical pain syndromes involving the spine and large weight-bearing joints. It may contribute to accelerating the degenerative process affecting the intervertebral discs and facet joints of the low back. A protuberant abdomen shifts the center of gravity forward adding additional stress on the intervertebral discs and intervertebral joints (facet joints) of the lower back. Obesity also contributes to less activity that promotes osteoporosis, impaired circulation and muscle weakness all of which are detrimental to spine health. Accelerated osteoarthritis afflicting large weight-bearing joints and the joints of the low back is common in overweight individuals. Successful diet and weight management requires a combination of approaches including increasing the level of physical activity, reducing caloric intake and consuming foods with high nutrient value.

This involves dietary counseling, nutritional supplementation, exercise therapy, exercise recommendations and behavioral counseling. In some cases referral to a medical specialist in the field of bariatrics or endocrinology may be required.