



Health at Every Size (HAES) is an evidence-based approach to reduce the risk for and to treat chronic disease. HAES encompasses physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health while challenging the assumptions about the relationship between weight and physical health.

As HAES practitioners we commit to promoting:

Body inclusivity

Respect, acceptance and provision of appropriate care for people of all shapes and sizes.

Respectful care

We educate staff about weight bias, risks of dieting and HAES principles. The clinic environment includes chairs and medical equipment that meet the needs of a wide range of body sizes. Health education, promotional materials and other communications use inclusive, diverse images and non-stigmatizing language when discussing weight or health.

Eating for wellbeing

Healthy eating includes eating for energy, nutritional needs and pleasure. We encourage regular eating that is balanced as well as flexible. Dieting for weight loss is not recommended.

Life-enhancing movement

People of all shapes and sizes are encouraged to move their bodies in pleasurable ways in order to enhance their health within the range of their individual abilities, limitations and interests.

Health enhancement

Emphasis is on health-promoting behaviour changes to improve quality of life and with consideration for emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical wellbeing.

Advocacy

We promote HAES principles to our clients, other health care providers, the wider health care system and the community. We promote critical thought around the damage done due to weight bias in the fitness, nutrition, healthcare, fashion, pharmaceutical and diet industries.

Rationale for HAES:

- » Weight bias has a significant impact on social, economic, psychological and physical health.
- » Body size is to a large degree genetically determined and weight is a factor that is not modifiable on a sustained basis for the majority of people.
- » Health behavior changes can reduce risk and treat chronic disease regardless of weight.

- » Weight bias may inhibit larger bodied clients from seeking health care and may prevent health care providers from making appropriate recommendations or investigations.
- » Physical activity may result in increased muscle strength, improved balance and flexibility, improved cardiovascular fitness, pleasure, social connections and a greater sense of wellbeing. Physical activity may or may not result in a change of body shape, size, or weight.
- » Weight loss diets, medications and surgeries do not result in sustained weight loss for the majority of people and in many cases lead to increased weight gain in the longer term.
- » Dieting can lead to weight cycling, poorer health outcomes, disordered eating or eating disorders and poorer measures of mental health including anxiety and depression. Health risks associated with repeatedly losing and gaining weight are often more significant than those risks associated with maintaining a stable, but higher weight.

Sources & Recommended Reading

Association for Size Diversity and Health (www.sizediversityandhealth.org)

HAES Principals, research, suggested books, and blog posts

Bacon, L. and Aphramor, L. Weight Science: Evaluating the Evidence for a Paradigm Shift

Nutrition Journal (2011), 10:9

Body Respect: What Conventional Health Books Get Wrong, Leave Out, and Just Plain Fail to Understand about Weight - by Linda Bacon and Lucy Aphramor

BenBella Books (2014)

Fat Studies Reader - Edited by Esther D Rothblum and Sondra Solovay

New York University Press (2009)

Health at EVERY Size: The Surprising Truth About Your Weight by Linda Bacon

BenBella Books; Rev. 2nd edition (2010)

Rethinking Thin: The New Science of Weight Loss and the Myths and Realities of Dieting

by Gina Kolata

Picador (2008)