Title: WAlt-a-Weigh

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Year: 2012

Summary:
The Walk-a-Weigh program promotes proper nutrition and exercise habits to encourage weight loss in participants. The program was delivered to 133 people in 7 counties and significantly lowered Body Mass Index and improved healthy eating behaviors and physical activity.

Situation:
In Georgia, 28% of adults are obese and over 62% are overweight or obese. Thirty-two percent have hypertension, 26.9% engage in no leisure time physical activity and 10% have diabetes. If things to do not change by 2030, 53.6% of adults in Georgia will be obese. This will increase the dollars lost due to absenteeism, lower productivity and workman’s comp. If the average BMI would be lowered 5% by 2030, Georgia could save 7.7% in health care costs totally $22,752,000,000. We would have much lower rates of type 2 diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, arthritis, asthma, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, dementia, kidney disease, sleep apnea, and obstetrical complications.

Response:
The Walk-a-Weigh Program was developed in 1998 and has been up-dated periodically since then. The most current update added new lessons specifically to reduce risk for diabetes. Participants typically attend 8 or more lessons on different topics related to weight control and exercise together.

Impact:
In 7 counties, 133 people participated in 16 different series of Walk-a-Weigh lessons. The average body mass index (BMI) significantly decreased by about one point with an average weight loss of about 3 1/2 pounds with a standard deviation of 4 pounds. Most participants were African American with most making an income between $25,000 and $50,000 per year. Twelve behavior changes were found to be significant with the top five reported to be 1) reading nutrition labels to make food choices; 2) eating at least 2 fruits a day; 3) eating at least 3 vegetables per day; 4) using a pedometer; and 5) consuming 2 or more servings per day of non-fat or low fat dairy foods.

Scope: State

County: Clarke

Group: Family & Consumer Sciences

State Issue: Food, Nutrition and Health

Program Function(s):
Extension

Program Area(s):
Family and Consumer Sciences

Topic(s):
Overweight & Obesity
FO-6: Georgians will decrease morbidity from chronic disease through improved nutrition practices.

Keyword(s):
Weight Control
Walk-A-Weigh
Physical Activity
Exercise
Chronic Disease

Funding Source(s):
Smith Lever Act Funds
County Funds

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