



Dos and Don't Self Inventory for Preventing and Reducing Bias and Stigma in Clinical Practice

Approaching patients with care and concern for their overall health helps build trust and sets the foundation for open conversations related to weight. Open-ended questions – those requiring more than a yes or no reply – invite the patients to share their feelings, thoughts, and perspectives. Additionally, using open-ended questions removes judgement and invites curiosity. From here, clinicians and patients can continue to partner on next steps in the patient's health journey.

In his recent lecture on reducing weight bias, Dr. Robert Kushner, Professor of Medicine and Medical Education at Northwestern Medicine Feinberg School of Medicine, offered insights into effective and less effective approaches when connecting with patients about weight and overall health.

Do	Don't
Ask patients for permission to weigh and to discuss weight	Give unsolicited advice to lose weight
Assess and consider metrics of health beyond weight	Attribute all health problems to weight
Ask open-ended questions about health and habits <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "What does healthy look like for you?"• "How would you describe your health journey up until this point?"	Lecture patients about their weight or accuse them of engaging in poor health habits
Listen to patients about how their weight might affect their health and well-being	Base advice to patients on your own experience without considering how their needs or priorities may differ from yours
Focus predominately on health rather than weight or appearance	Assume that patients are unmotivated or do not care about their health based on their weight
Examine your own biases related to weight	Assume that you are immune to bias