IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR COUNSELING PATIENTS WITH OBESITY

Key Principles
• Recognize and set aside weight bias
• Follow the 5 A’s of obesity counseling
• Provide counsel rather than advice
• Listen more than you talk
• Offer encouragement

Weight Bias
• Negative attitudes toward people with obesity expressed as:
  – Rejection
  – Prejudice
  – Discrimination
• False assumptions:
  – Obesity is a choice, not a disease
  – Stereotypes of undisciplined, lazy, and uncooperative patients

Eliminate Weight Bias from Your Interactions
• Confront your own bias
• Discuss it with colleagues
• Set it aside
• Treat every patient with respect

5 A’s of Obesity Counseling
• Ask – engage the patient and seek permission to start a weight conversation
• Assess – the patient’s weight status, issues, and reasons for seeking treatment
• Advise – provide counsel on the benefits of modest weight loss and control
• Agree – on achievable goals
• Assist – with resources and follow-up

Provide Counsel, Not Advice
• Avoid telling patients what to do
• Most will already know what to do
• They need help with how to do it
• Listen to the patient’s concerns
• Offer encouragement