

# WIN Notes

Weight-control Information Network

WINTER 2011

## Efforts to Reduce Childhood Obesity

One out of every three children ages 2 to 19 in the United States is considered overweight or obese. To help reduce the rates of overweight and obesity and their complications among children and teenagers, the Federal Government is committed to a number of strategies.



### Let's Move! Launched

In February 2010 with the launch of the *Let's Move!* campaign, First Lady Michelle Obama made it clear that a major part of her legacy would be efforts to end childhood obesity within a generation. This campaign aims to prevent a future of increased health care costs, shortened life

spans, and diminished national security due to a population that is increasingly physically unfit for military service. The campaign asks all Americans to take responsibility for improving the health and well-being of our children through four initiatives:

- Healthy Choices
- Healthier Schools
- Physical Activity
- Access to Affordable Healthy Foods

In support of *Let's Move!*, President Barack Obama authorized the establishment of the first White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity. In May 2010, the task force released its

first report to the president, *Solving the Problem of Childhood Obesity within a Generation*. This report includes research about obesity, an outline of initiatives to support the *Let's Move!* campaign, and recommendations for reducing the childhood obesity rate to 5 percent by 2030.

The *Let's Move!* campaign website ([www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov)) outlines steps to support the task force recommendations and the four campaign initiatives. These steps include more prominent nutritional labeling, increased nutritional guidance, and reauthorization of Child Nutrition Act programs and funding to improve the healthiness of school

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NIDDK | NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
DIABETES AND DIGESTIVE  
AND KIDNEY DISEASES

# Study Finds Body Mass Index-for-Age Helps Identify Children Who May Need More Follow-up

**B**ody mass index (BMI)-for-age is an appropriate tool to identify children and adolescents who may be overfat and should have further evaluation and follow-up, but it does not directly measure body fatness, according to researchers who recruited 1196 children and adolescents ages 5 to 18 from the New York City area. The findings were published in *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*.

BMI is a measurement of weight in relation to height. It is limited because it does not measure body fat or muscle directly. Total body weight includes muscle, bone, fat, and water.

Researchers conducted dual energy x-ray absorptiometry scans of the whole body to measure each child's percentage of body fat, which was classified as normal, moderate, or elevated. These body fatness cut points were used to make sure that the number of children and adolescents in the three categories would be equal to the number of children in the BMI-for-age categories (< 85th percentile, 85th–94th percentile, and  $\geq$  95th percentile). BMI changes with age and normal growth, so a child's or adolescent's BMI must be compared to BMIs of other children of the same age and sex. Children and adolescents with a BMI-for-age at or above the 85th percentile were considered overweight.

The results indicate that most children and adolescents with a BMI-for-age at or above the 95th percentile had elevated levels of body fatness, with highly variable levels of body fatness in the 85th–94th percentile group.

“The findings showed that there is not a linear relationship between fatness and BMI-for-age,” said Mary N. B. Horlick, M.D., a co-author of the study and director of the pediatric clinical obesity program in the Division of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition within the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

Results also indicated that race and ethnicity should be considered when using BMI as an indicator of body fatness, as BMI was less predictive of body fatness in African American children, when compared with Caucasian, Asian, and Hispanic children.

## Article Information

Freedman DS, Wang J, Thornton JC, et al. Classification of body fatness by body mass index-for-age categories among children. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*. 2009;163(9):805–811.

# NCCOR Wins Innovation Award

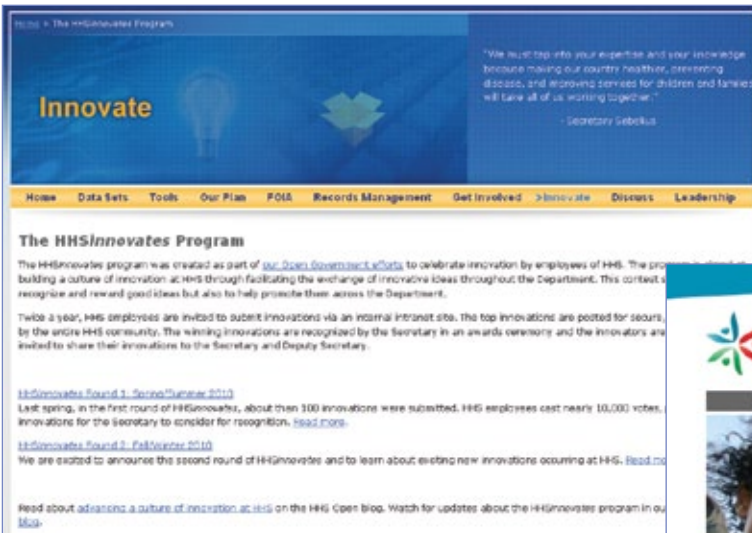
The National Collaboration on Childhood Obesity Research (NCCOR), a public-private initiative launched in 2009 to accelerate research and help reverse the childhood obesity epidemic, is among the first-ever recipients of the new HHS *Innovates* awards, announced in August 2010.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) designed the HHS *Innovates* awards to support a “culture of innovation” and to spark application of new ideas within the department. HHS employees nominated 126 “innovations”—including new programs, electronic products, and educational and collaborative efforts—and produced more than 10,000 votes to elect six winners. From these winners, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius selected three as the “Secretary’s Picks.” NCCOR was one of them.

NCCOR is an example of how federal agencies are partnering with each other and with private organizations to synergize efforts and reduce redundancy in childhood obesity research. Founding members of NCCOR include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

NCCOR coordinates research activity across institutions, and members have committed to jointly funding more than \$45 million in research. Among NCCOR-funded research efforts are a 5-year evaluation study to find out what works in reducing obesity at the local level and another 5-year project developing statistical modeling to determine the cost and effectiveness of obesity-related policies and interventions.

Along with the awards, the HHS also opened an Innovation Gallery on the web ([www.hhs.gov/open/innovate/index.html](http://www.hhs.gov/open/innovate/index.html)) to provide descriptions and the winning themes of each award recipient. To learn more about obesity research at the NIH, visit [www.obesityresearch.nih.gov](http://www.obesityresearch.nih.gov). For more information about NCCOR, visit <http://nccor.org/>.



# NIDDK 60th Anniversary Scientific Symposium and Other Events

On September 21, 2010, the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) hosted “Unlocking the Secrets of Science: Building the Foundation for Future Advances,” a scientific symposium to highlight research advances made possible, in part, with NIDDK support. Three former NIDDK Directors chaired sessions. In addition, 12 scientists received the NIDDK *Early Career Investigator/Scholar Award* and discussed their work during a poster session. Since 1950, the NIDDK has conducted and supported medical research to alleviate some of the world’s most debilitating diseases. NIDDK’s symposium was just one of many special scientific symposia and other events recognizing the NIDDK’s 60 Years of Advancing Research to Improve Health.

## The Obesity Society Celebrates NIDDK’s 60th Anniversary

Following the scientific symposium, the Obesity Society ([www.obesity.org](http://www.obesity.org)) helped NIDDK celebrate its 60th anniversary with a number of activities at the Annual



Van S. Hubbard, M.D., Ph.D., accepts the Mickey Stunkard Lifetime Achievement Award

Meeting held in San Diego, California, October 8–12, 2010.

On October 8, 2010, Griffin P. Rodgers, M.D., director of the NIDDK, gave the keynote address during the Opening Session. Dr. Rodgers’ talk, “Obesity, A Changing Environment, for Worse and Better,” addressed the problem of obesity and the role of basic, clinical, and translational

research supported by the NIDDK.

Research supported by the NIDDK was also the focus of a plenary symposium titled “NIDDK 60th Anniversary Symposium—Physical Activity: From Marathon Mouse to the Y.” The session was chaired by Susan Z. Yanovski, M.D.,



co-director of NIDDK’s Office of Obesity Research, and Christine Hunter, Ph.D., director of the behavioral research program in the NIDDK’s Division of Diabetes, Endocrinology, and Metabolic Diseases.

Van S. Hubbard, M.D., Ph.D., director of the NIH Division of Nutrition Research Coordination, was awarded the Mickey Stunkard Lifetime Achievement Award from the Obesity Society. The Mickey Stunkard Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes people who, like Mickey Stunkard, have made a lifetime of outstanding contributions to the field of obesity in terms of scholarship, mentorship, and education. Dr. Hubbard presented the Mickey Stunkard Lifetime Achievement Award Lecture, “Focus on Obesity Research and Research Translation—Past, Current, and Looking Towards the Future.”

For more information about the NIDDK’s 60th Anniversary, visit [www3.niddk.nih.gov/fund/other/NIDDK60thAnniver/](http://www3.niddk.nih.gov/fund/other/NIDDK60thAnniver/).

## NIH Celebrates Plain Language

The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) received four Gold Awards at the annual National Institutes of Health (NIH) Plain Language/Clear Communication Awards Ceremony on May 26, 2010, for producing clear and concise health education materials. The NIDDK also won six Silver and five Bronze awards, including awards for materials produced by the Weight-control Information Network (WIN).

The awards are part of a larger, Government-wide clear communication initiative. The NIH hosts the ceremony each year to recognize outstanding employee efforts to produce easy-to-understand fact sheets, newsletters, periodicals, radio features, videos, website materials, and other items. Future awards will broaden the categories to include photography, graphic images, and animation.

### Why We Use Plain Language

Plain language not only helps the general public understand new health discoveries and how to incorporate scientific findings into everyday health habits, but also increases the appreciation of science and support for more research. Employing plain language is not “dumbing down”



information; rather, use of plain language is writing and communicating in a way that is clear and takes less time to read or process. Plain language tells consumers what they need to know, quickly.

A panel of 57 volunteers across the NIH, many of whom were fluent in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese, reviewed 320 entries in multiple languages and formats. Eighty-three awards were distributed.

### NIDDK Awardees

Among the products for which the NIDDK won Gold Awards are these:

- *Healthy Moments*, a series of weekly radio addresses that provide health tips to prevent and control diseases
- the entire National Diabetes Education Program website
- a bilingual brochure containing tips for teens with diabetes

In addition, WIN’s *Cómo Ayudar a Su Hijo a Controlar el Exceso de Peso (Helping Your Overweight Child)* won a Silver Award.

For more information about the 2010 Plain Language Awards, visit [www.nih.gov/clearcommunication/plarchive/2010\\_program.pdf](http://www.nih.gov/clearcommunication/plarchive/2010_program.pdf). To download WIN’s award-winning brochure, visit [www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/hijo\\_exceso\\_de\\_peso.htm](http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/hijo_exceso_de_peso.htm).

## Do You Create Health Communication Materials?

The NIH offers the following tips to guide the writing of health education materials for the general public.

- Be clear and to the point.
- Answer your readers’ questions.
- Use language appropriate for your readers.
- Include only necessary details.
- Use the active voice.
- Use personal pronouns, such as “we” and “you.”
- Use short sentences and paragraphs.
- Use tables, lists, and other easy-to-understand design features.

# Your Food Environment Atlas

Have you ever wondered what influences the food choices you make, or why different regions eat more of certain foods than others? Your Food Environment Atlas, a new online tool from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, provides such insight along with some dynamic, interactive mapping features for consumers, food policymakers, and health researchers.

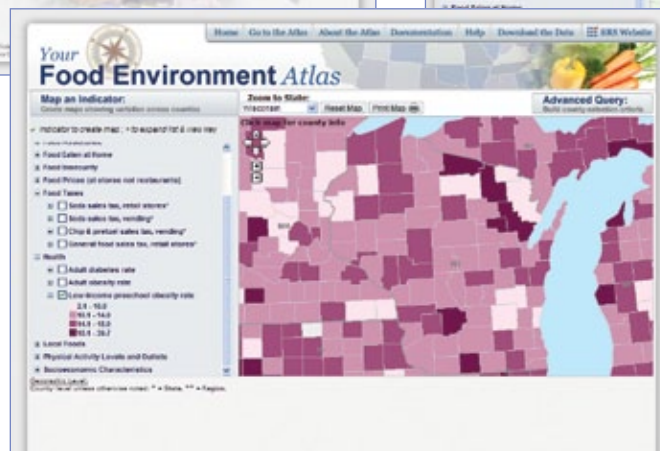
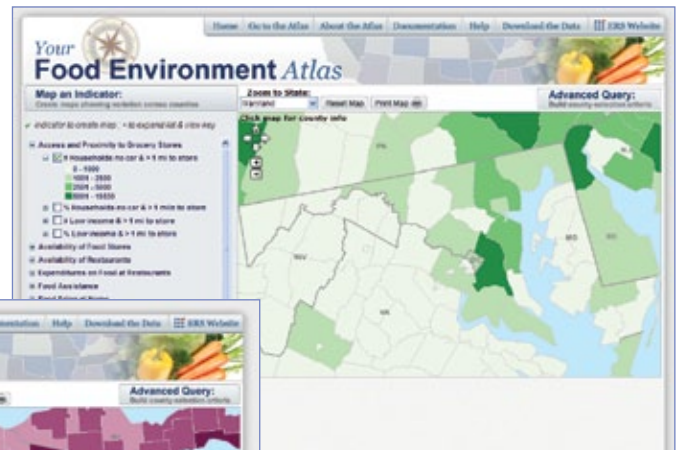
## What is the Food Atlas?

The Atlas is a web-based database that helps users explore how food environment factors—such as the proximity of grocery stores and fast food restaurants, food prices and taxes, food and nutrition assistance programs, and community characteristics—affect food choices and diet quality in communities across the nation. The Atlas is cross-indexed with some 2000 Census data and other state or local data as recent as 2009. These data include household

characteristics, such as household sizes and income, as well as statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on overweight, obesity, and diabetes.

By selecting one or more of the Atlas's 90 food environment indicators, a user can create an interactive map showing the variation of diets and food choices throughout the country, across a state, or within a particular county. Consumers can find the nearest farmers' market; policymakers can use it to advocate for more grocery stores in areas where stores are scant; and obesity researchers can incorporate food environment data into their findings on food choices and diet quality.

Visit [www.ers.usda.gov/foodatlas](http://www.ers.usda.gov/foodatlas) to explore Your Food Environment Atlas.



## WIN Community Outreach

**D**uring 2010, the Weight-control Information Network (WIN) conducted many outreach efforts for WIN and its *Sisters Together* program (targeting African American women ages 18 to 54). WIN provided

publications, information, and branded giveaways at seven professional conferences and general public meetings with an estimated total of 80,700 attendees. See below a sampling of comments from visitors at WIN exhibits.

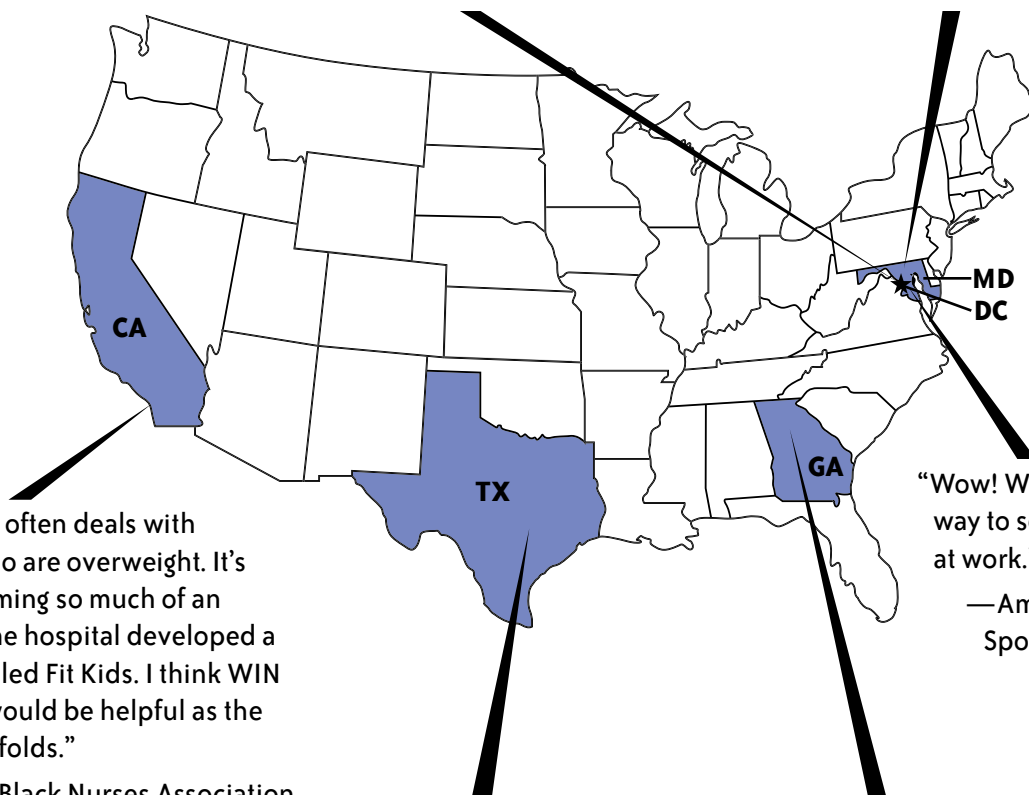
### What Conference Attendees Are Saying about NIDDK, WIN, and *Sisters Together*

“This [*Sisters Together*] is really encouraging. I’m going to move more, eat better, and spread the word.”

—National Urban League Centennial Conference  
Washington, D.C.

“These Spanish publications will be very helpful with my Latino population.”

—Maryland Dietetic Association Annual Meeting  
Linthicum Heights, MD



“My hospital often deals with children who are overweight. It’s really becoming so much of an issue that the hospital developed a program called Fit Kids. I think WIN resources would be helpful as the program unfolds.”

—National Black Nurses Association  
38th Annual Institute and Conference  
San Diego, CA

“It always amazes me to see the good ways that the Government helps to make people stay healthy. These are great resources.”

—The Obesity Society 28th Annual Scientific Meeting, San Diego, CA

“I love your materials. I refer patients all the time to your website. You are my favorite referral.”

—American Association of  
Diabetes Educators  
37th Annual Meeting  
San Antonio, TX

“Wow! What a wonderful way to see my tax dollars at work.”

—American College of  
Sports Medicine 57th  
Annual Meeting  
Baltimore, MD

“It’s important that women feel beautiful on the outside as well as the inside. I will share this information with my clients. Thank you.”

—Bronner Brothers  
International Hair Show  
Atlanta, GA

## WIN Increases Outreach to the Nation's Most Obese Counties

Doing its part to reduce the rates of obesity in the United States, WIN launched an outreach effort this fall to educate the health policymakers, media, and residents of the counties identified as having the highest rates of obesity in the country. Using data from the Behavioral Risk Surveillance System—statistics collected by State health departments with assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—WIN is targeting 20 counties in the following states:

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Georgia
- Indiana
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- North Carolina
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- West Virginia

Primarily in the South, these States have counties where more than 31 percent of the population is classified as being obese. WIN provided the communities with materials for health officials and sent brief informational articles to community media outlets to help residents understand that small, healthy steps in diet and physical activity may lead to big rewards, including reducing the chances of developing serious diseases like diabetes.





# Updated Materials from WIN

**W**IN continues to produce new weight-control publications, as well as to update existing works. The following publications have been revised to include the latest scientific research.

To obtain a free copy of these or other publications, contact WIN at 1-877-946-4627 or [win@info.niddk.nih.gov](mailto:win@info.niddk.nih.gov). You can also download PDF copies at [www.win.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov).



## Walking . . . A Step in the Right Direction

(Available in print, online, and on CD)

A quick guide to beginning a walking program for your health



## You Can Control Your Weight as You Quit Smoking

(Available online and on CD only)

A practical guide for avoiding the common pitfalls of weight control after an individual stops smoking



## Overweight and Obesity Statistics

(Available online only)

The basic facts on overweight and obesity in the United States, using data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey



## Physical Activity and Weight Control

(Available online and on CD only)

A fact sheet explaining how physical activity helps individuals keep their weight under control

## “What’s in Your Child’s Lunchbox?” DC Bus Ad Campaign

**W**IN teamed up again this year with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to encourage residents of the Washington, D.C., metropolitan community to stay healthy as local schools resumed this fall. WIN displayed “What’s in Your Child’s Lunchbox?” advertisements inside Metro area buses in September 2010 to draw public attention to tips on helping children eat healthier and become more physically active.



The ads were displayed in buses on routes traveling through Downtown Washington; Southeast and Southwest D.C.; Montgomery County and Prince George’s County, Maryland; as well as Northern Virginia.

WIN and WMATA originally began this public service partnership in December 2007, when healthy holiday tips were displayed at five D.C. Metro subway stations.

EFFORTS TO REDUCE CHILDHOOD OBESITY *continued from page 1*

meals. Additional steps include revamping the President's Challenge to make it consistent with the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* ([www.health.gov/PAGuidelines](http://www.health.gov/PAGuidelines)) and increased equality in food access to ensure that all Americans can put nutritious foods and fresh produce on their tables.

### New Childhood Obesity Research

The HEALTHY Study was another effort designed to evaluate ways to prevent or treat childhood obesity. The goal of the HEALTHY Study was to determine whether changes in school food services; longer, more intense periods of physical education; and classroom activities to promote behavior change would lower the combined prevalence of overweight and obesity in youth at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

The study was conducted from the beginning of the sixth grade to the end of the eighth grade for 4,600 students attending 42 middle schools in seven areas of the country. Schools were randomly assigned to implement the program or serve as a comparison school. Researchers found that the number of overweight and obese students declined in comparison schools as well as program schools. This was an unexpected result of the study. "One possible explanation for this result is that the comparison schools may have implemented changes to the school environment because of increased awareness about the problem of childhood obesity created by being part of the HEALTHY Study," said Barbara Linder, M.D., Ph.D., senior advisor for the childhood diabetes research program in the Division of Diabetes, Endocrinology, and Metabolic Diseases within the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK).

The intervention significantly lowered the obesity rate among particularly high-risk children—those whose body mass index, or BMI, was initially at the 85th percentile or greater. About half the sixth graders were overweight or obese. In children, overweight is defined as a BMI at the 85th to 94th percentile for their age and sex; obesity is defined as a BMI at the 95th percentile or higher. BMI is a measurement of weight in relation to height.



HEALTHY was jointly funded by the NIDDK—part of the National Institutes of Health—and the American Diabetes Association (ADA). Findings from the research were presented at ADA's 2010 Scientific Sessions over the summer and published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* ([www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa1001933](http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa1001933)).

### Article Information

The HEALTHY Study Group. A school-based intervention for diabetes risk reduction. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2010;363:443–453.

White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity. *Solving the Problem of Childhood Obesity within a Generation*. Washington, D.C.: Executive Office of the President;2010. Available at the Let's Move! website: [www.letsmove.gov/pdf/TaskForce\\_on\\_Childhood\\_Obesity\\_May2010\\_FullReport.pdf](http://www.letsmove.gov/pdf/TaskForce_on_Childhood_Obesity_May2010_FullReport.pdf).

## Tell Us What You Think!

What articles did you enjoy or find most useful in this edition of *WIN Notes*?

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What topics would you like to see addressed in *WIN Notes*?

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Where do you use or distribute *WIN Notes*? (health clinic, research facility, school, at home for personal information)

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Do you have any other comments or questions? Use the space below to let us know.

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Please send your responses, questions, or other comments to:

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## Editor's Notes

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### WIN Publications Ordering Information

Visit [www.win.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov) to read and download any WIN publication free of charge. To request a copy of a publication to be mailed to you, contact the WIN Information Line at 1-877-946-4627. Be advised that you may order up to 25 publications for free, and fees as explained in the chart apply to orders greater than 25.

The **order fees** are as follows:

<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Cost</b>
1-25	FREE
26-50	\$20
51-100 (New maximum quantity)	\$30

The **order limit is 100 total** publications.



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## WIN Offers Public Information



**Toll-free Number:** 1-877-WIN-4627 (1-877-946-4627)  
**Phone:** 202-828-1025  
**Fax:** 202-828-1028

The Weight-control Information Network (WIN) is an information service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which is the Federal Government's lead agency responsible for biomedical research on nutrition and obesity. Authorized by Congress (Public Law 103-43), WIN provides the general public, health professionals, the media, and Congress with up-to-date, science-based health information on weight control, obesity, physical activity, and related nutritional issues.

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