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Recovery of Mental Health Issues Leading to 23% Weight Reduction with Lifestyle Interventions: A Case Report

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Introduction:

Obesity is a chronic illness closely linked to metabolic, cardiovascular and respiratory disorders, such as the obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA). Though pharmacological and surgical treatment are effective, lifestyle modifications are still an essential part of the management. This case highlights the effects of intensive lifestyle interventions, in the setting of a multi-disciplinary weight management clinic (WMC) in a tertiary hospital setting.

Methods:

We present a case of 40-year-old male who was referred to WMC with morbid obesity (weight 121 kg, BMI 42 kg/m²). His weight at 33 years was 95kgs and gradually increased leading to comorbidities such as hypertension, type 2 diabetes mellitus, and severe OSA (AHI 75). He had depression for many years which recently improved with anti-depressants and psychotherapy. This improvement helped his motivation for weight loss while attending the WMC. The dietary management involved structured dietary counselling with gradual reduction of calorie intake (1800 kcal/day initially to 800 kcl/day) with emphasis on low carbohydrate and high protein diet. Physical activity was gradually increased over time, with group sessions and personalised exercise programme starting with daily walking and later incorporating resistance exercises. The patient demonstrated high adherence and strong intrinsic motivation, despite previous unsuccessful weight loss attempts.

Results:

There was a sustained weight loss of approximately 30 kg (23%) over six months. His BMI reduced from 42 to 32 kg/m². This was accompanied by marked improvements in functional capacity, glycaemic control, and obesity-related symptoms. HbA1c improved from 7.2% to 5.6% with reduction of glucose-lowering therapy. His depression also improved resulting in cessation of antidepressants.

Conclusion:

This case demonstrates that substantial and clinically meaningful weight loss can be achieved through lifestyle modification when supported by structured counselling, behavioural readiness, and sustained follow-up. Mental health is a major factor in adhering to lifestyle interventions and should be addressed appropriately.