

Intensive Health Behavior and Lifestyle Treatment (IHBLT) for Children with Obesity



If your child is overweight or obese, an intensive health behavior and lifestyle treatment (IHBLT) program may be a treatment option. These programs are also called family healthy weight programs or pediatric weight management programs. They focus on helping both the child and their family learn and maintain healthy habits and routines. The goal is to encourage lifestyle changes for long-term health and well-being.

When is IHBLT used?

IHBLT is an option when a child or teen is overweight or obese, and lifestyle changes have not worked. It may also be advised if your child has health problems linked to being overweight, such as high blood pressure or prediabetes. IHBLT can be used alone. Or it may be used together with medicines or weight-loss surgery, if advised.

How do IHBLT programs work?

IHBLT programs focus on creating healthy lifestyle behaviors around eating and physical activity. Each program is different. But each program includes the child, parents, and the whole family.

These programs may be offered at community centers or in a healthcare setting. Depending on the program, you and your child may work with several providers, such as:

- Healthcare providers
- Dietitians
- Fitness specialists
- Psychologists

What can I expect from an IHBLT program?

Each IHBLT program is different. But depending on the program, you and your family will have education and support sessions from several providers. These sessions will take place over several months. During this time, the providers can help you learn how to do things such as:

- Add healthy foods to your family's diet
- Shop for healthy foods
- Make healthy meals
- Learn about portion control
- Find fun ways to be more physically active
- Add physical activity to your family's daily routine
- Reduce screen time or time sitting around
- Have better sleep habits
- Learn healthy ways to deal with stress and emotions

These providers can also help you to make sure you maintain these new habits and behaviors by:

- Getting the whole family involved in these activities
- Creating goals and routines around these new habits
- Keeping track of your progress
- Showing you ways to overcome possible problems
- Putting these new skills into action at school, work, and social events

Where can I find an IHBLT program?

If you are thinking about IHBLT, talk with your child's healthcare provider. They may be able to find a program in your area. These programs may be offered at community centers or in healthcare settings.

If there are no IHBLT programs near you, the healthcare provider can work with you and your child on weight management. They may also be able to connect you to other helpful resources in your area. This may include recreation programs, nutrition programs, park facilities, and specialists.

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