

Medical Weight Loss — Patient Guide

Evidence-based care for adults in Allentown & the Lehigh Valley

What "medical weight loss" means

Medical weight loss is a clinician-guided program that combines prescription medication with nutrition and physical activity support. The goal is safe, sustainable health improvement (energy, sleep, blood pressure, glucose control) through evidence-based pharmaceutical interventions.

Who this may help

- Adults with overweight/obesity seeking medical intervention
- People with weight-related conditions (e.g., prediabetes, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea)
- Individuals who have plateaued with diet/exercise alone or regained weight after prior loss
- Patients appropriate for anti-obesity medication therapy

How care works here

- 1 Initial evaluation (60–90 min):** medical history, current medications, weight history, prior attempts, screening for secondary causes, assessment for medication appropriateness, and shared goal-setting.
- 2 Medication selection:** review of FDA-approved anti-obesity medications, discussion of benefits, risks, side effects, cost, and insurance coverage.
- 3 Follow-ups (typically every 4–12 weeks):** medication efficacy review, side-effect monitoring, dose adjustments, lab monitoring as needed, and plan modifications. Telehealth may be available.

- 4 **Care coordination:** communication with your primary care clinician or specialists regarding medication therapy (with your consent).

Primary treatment approach: Medication therapy

(individualized to your health history; not all medications are suitable for every patient)

- **GLP-1 receptor agonists:** Semaglutide (Wegovy, Ozempic), Tirzepatide (Mounjaro, Zepbound), and Liraglutide (Saxenda) — injectable medications that regulate appetite and blood sugar.
- **Other FDA-approved options:** Phentermine, Phentermine-topiramate (Qsymia), Naltrexone-bupropion (Contrave), Orlistat (Xenical, Alli), and other evidence-based medications as appropriate.
- **Medication management:** Starting doses, titration schedules, combination therapy when indicated, and ongoing monitoring for effectiveness and tolerance.
- **Insurance navigation:** Prior authorization assistance, appeals support, and discussion of self-pay options when necessary.

Supporting lifestyle foundation

- **Nutrition guidance:** Calorie awareness, protein optimization, fiber intake, hydration strategies to support medication effectiveness.
- **Activity recommendations:** Gradual, sustainable increases in physical activity tailored to your abilities and preferences.
- **Monitoring:** Regular tracking of weight, waist circumference, vital signs, and laboratory values (A1c, lipids, liver function) as clinically indicated.

Safety notes—tell us if you have

- History of pancreatitis, gallbladder disease, severe GI disease, medullary thyroid carcinoma, MEN 2 syndrome, uncontrolled thyroid disease, kidney/liver disease, pregnancy/breastfeeding, or plans for pregnancy.

- Any medication allergies, eating disorders, or significant mood symptoms. Together we'll determine which medications are safe and appropriate for you.

How to prepare for your first visit

- Bring a **current medication/supplement list** and recent **labs** (if available).
- Know your **insurance formulary** and pharmacy benefit information.
- Think about **prior weight loss medications** you've tried—what helped, side effects experienced.
- Complete intake forms and medical history questionnaire if provided.
- Preferred pharmacy information for prescription processing.

What results to expect

Response to medication varies; we focus on **measurable outcomes** including percentage of body weight loss, improvements in metabolic markers, blood pressure, and quality of life measures. Most patients on appropriate medication therapy can expect 10-20% body weight reduction. We'll monitor your progress and adjust medications as needed.

Contact & next steps

- Website: **stephenmccarthypa.com**
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- Address: **6081 Hamilton Boulevard, Suite 600, Allentown, PA 18106**

To schedule or ask questions, visit our website or call during office hours.

Important: This guide is general information and not a diagnosis, treatment plan, or guarantee of results. For urgent symptoms, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.

