

SEE YOUR DOCTOR

When Losing Weight Is Bad

(NAPSA)—“Hey, you’ve lost weight!” Not everyone takes this comment as a sign of successful dieting. For several million Americans, weight loss is a symptom of serious illness.

Involuntary weight loss is a devastating and prevalent condition in cancer, AIDS, and chronic obstructive lung disease (COPD) and may be an associated cause of death in these patients. In fact, weight loss itself can be fatal because lean body mass is the site of 99 percent of the body’s metabolic functions. Involuntary weight loss in cancer is common, occurring in 80 percent of patients with advanced-stage cancer and is one of the most frequent causes of death in patients with cancer. Unfortunately, involuntary weight loss is often not considered by doctors when developing their patient care plan and this is why this condition is now being referred to by physicians as the forgotten “vital” sign.

Involuntary weight loss consists of a loss of muscle and other lean tissue as well as blood cells, and related proteins, such as antibodies. As lean body mass dwindles, organs can start to deteriorate. Involuntary weight loss can be particularly devastating in cancer, AIDS and COPD where the patient’s immune system is under attack by the disease or its treatment. It is estimated that more than 1.3 million Americans will be newly diagnosed with cancer during 2003 and approximately 560,000 will die from the disease or its complications.

“We now refer to involuntary weight loss as the forgotten ‘vital’ sign, because physicians tend to overlook it while focusing in on other, more pressing aspects of disease, such as tumor size in people with cancer and viral load



Be sure to talk to your doctor about “the forgotten vital sign,” involuntary weight loss.

and the presence of other infections in people with AIDS,” said Dr. Jamie Von Roenn, MD, Professor of Medicine, Northwestern University, Division of Hematology/Oncology, and Department of Medicine, Chicago Ill. “Some may take weight loss into account, but do not distinguish between the loss of fat and muscle.”

As part of a comprehensive approach to boosting lean body mass, medical researchers are successfully treating involuntary weight loss with nutritional therapy, resistance exercises and medication. One medication that is increasingly being used is Oxandrin® (oxandrolone, USP) CIII. Oxandrin is a tablet that is used to increase weight mainly as lean body mass.

If you or someone you know is suffering from this, talk to your doctor about your condition and the latest treatments for involuntary weight loss.

To learn more about IWL, visit www.involuntaryweightloss.com.