



Health Bulletin



Study Shows Weight-Loss Medication Significantly Prevents Or Delays Type 2 Diabetes

(NAPSA)—It may be hard to believe, but more than 60 percent of Americans are either overweight or obese. That's a 57 percent increase in obesity in the past 10 years alone.

America has a serious health crisis on its hands; not only is obesity a significant health problem, but it's also a major risk factor for developing type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is a metabolic disorder that's caused by the body's inability to make enough or properly use insulin, which is necessary for the body to use sugar. Sugar is the vital fuel for the body's cells. Left untreated, type 2 diabetes can cause damage to the kidneys, eyes, nerves or heart.

According to the American Diabetes Association, nearly 17 million people suffer from diabetes in the United States, with type 2 diabetes accounting for 90 to 95 percent of all cases. One million new cases of diabetes are diagnosed every year in America, and these numbers are expected to grow as obesity rates continue to skyrocket.

According to a number of recent studies, reducing weight and exercising more can have a dramatic effect on delaying or preventing the onset of type 2 diabetes. "There is a correlation between excess weight and type 2 diabetes," says leading obesity



researcher Dr. George Bray of the Pennington Biomedical Research Center, in Baton Rouge, LA. "It is extremely important that people who are overweight and at risk for type 2 diabetes do what they can to lose weight."

The World Health Organization suggests lifestyle changes are the most effective way to prevent type 2 diabetes. In addition, the added benefits of diet and exercise can include reduced blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and improved quality of life.

Those who are overweight or obese and find it difficult to take off the pounds through diet and exercise alone may want to consult their physician about other available options. One such option

is a prescription weight-loss medication called Xenical (orlistat). Xenical helps patients lose weight by preventing one-third of dietary fat from being absorbed. A recent study showed that Xenical, combined with diet and lifestyle changes, can prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.

The study, called XENDOS, examined more than 3,300 obese or overweight patients over a four-year period. Half of the patients were treated with Xenical plus diet and exercise, while the other half were treated with placebo (sugar pill) plus diet and exercise. Results showed that the risk of developing type 2 diabetes was 37 percent lower in patients treated with Xenical compared to those treated with diet and exercise alone.

Furthermore, both short- and long-term weight loss were notably greater with the Xenical-treated patients compared to those treated with diet and exercise alone. Twice as many patients on the drug lost more than 10 percent of their body weight after four years than those who made only lifestyle changes.

What does this all mean? If you are overweight or obese and at risk for type 2 diabetes, a visit to your doctor to discuss your options may be the first step in helping to lower your risk for type 2 diabetes.

Editor's Note: Fair Balance Statement. Xenical is unlike other weight-loss medications because it is not an appetite suppressant. It is the most extensively studied pharmacological weight-management treatment to date with more than 30,000 overweight or obese patients participating in clinical trials with Xenical. Since Xenical prevents about one-third of the fat in the food consumed from being absorbed, patients may experience gas with oily discharge, increased bowel movements, an urgent need to have them and an inability to control them, particularly after meals containing more fat than recommended. Xenical should not be taken if patients are pregnant, nursing, have food absorption problems or reduced bile flow. If taking cyclosporine, patients should speak to their doctors before taking Xenical. Xenical reduces the absorption of some vitamins. Therefore, a daily multivitamin is recommended.