



FA and the Health Care Professional

Do you have patients who have medical conditions that are related to weight, distorted body image, or unhealthy behaviors with food?

FA can be a resource for you and your patients.



FOOD ADDICTS
in recovery anonymous

www.foodaddicts.org

WHAT IS FA?

Food Addicts in Recovery

Anonymous (FA) is an international recovery program based on the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). We offer a solution to many whose behaviors in relation to food and body image can be understood as addiction.

WHAT WE MEAN BY FOOD ADDICTION

Food addicts have a relationship with food that parallels an alcoholic's relationship with alcohol. No amount of willpower can lead the food addict to normal eating or sane attitudes about food or body size.

Food addiction can manifest as follows:

- Obsession with food, weight, or body image
- Overeating or obesity
- Bulimia
- Undereating
- Compulsive exercise or dieting

HOW FA WORKS

FA is distinctive because it focuses on addiction. Neither a diet program nor a religious group, FA understands addiction as a physical, mental, and spiritual disease. **FA addresses these three dimensions with**

- **abstinence** from flour and sugar, with measured portions of protein, vegetables, grains, fat, and fruit to help reduce cravings;
- **daily help** from a sponsor and fellow members;
- **ongoing support** in working the Twelve Steps of AA as adapted for food addiction.

We charge no dues or fees, and our meetings include no weigh-ins. We are not a medical group. We recommend that individuals considering the FA program consult with their health care providers.

Survey Respondents Reporting Health Improvements

n=Members who reported having had a health issue in each of these categories.

98%

MENTAL HEALTH
(n=3862)

94%

TYPE 2 DIABETES
(n=630)

93%

PREDIABETES
(n=1062)

BENEFITS OF FA

Long-term recovery has freed members from addictive behaviors and mental obsession with food, body image, and exercise. Many of our members have maintained normal weights and healthy ways of eating for over 30 years. Through daily use of the FA tools, we have also experienced more fulfilling relationships, better stress management skills, and increased personal effectiveness.

In 2016, 4,238 of FA's estimated 6,000 members completed a self-reported survey*:

Improvements in weight management

- Of those needing to lose weight,
 - 81% reported loss of over 20 lb / 9 kg
 - 49% reported loss of over 50 lb / 23 kg
 - 15% reported loss of over 100 lb / 45 kg
- Of those at goal weight,
 - 83% had maintained it for over 1 year
 - 64% had maintained it for over 3 years

Improvements in physical health

- Cardiovascular (92%)
- Gastrointestinal (91%)
- Musculoskeletal (88%)
- Of members who had type 2 diabetes,
 - 94% reported improvement
 - 40% reported their diabetes symptoms resolved

Improvements in mental health

- Reduced anxiety (95%)
- Reduced depression (93%)
- Improved stress management (87%)

92%

CARDIOVASCULAR
(n=2917)

90%

RESPIRATORY
(n=1513)

91%

GASTROINTESTINAL
(n=2593)

88%

FOOT PROBLEMS
(n=949)

*For more information about this survey, please email survey@foodaddicts.org.

TALKING TO YOUR PATIENTS ABOUT FA

- Keep in mind that denial is a hallmark of addiction. Few of us realized right away that the concept of food addiction might apply to us.
- Begin with a few simple questions like the ones on the back of this brochure.
- Mention that you know a program that has demonstrated long-term success, and that it is free.
- Describe FA as a place where patients can find others who understand their experience.
- Guide them to the **FA website**, www.foodaddicts.org, where there is a list of meetings and more information.
- Encourage them to attend a meeting. If there are no local meetings, your patients can get help by calling the number on the back of this brochure.
- Suggest a follow-up appointment in one to three months.

PHYSICIAN'S EXPERIENCE

*"In my view, undeniably, food addiction is real. I see it every day. **I refer all my patients to FA.** I explain, 'Right now, you have a relationship with food that is taking you down a road you don't want to take. These people can help you.' FA seems to me to be a perfect solution. It works. No question about it."*

— Carl Lowe, Jr., M.D.

American College of Surgeons, Fellow

American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery

Dr. Lowe has no financial or professional affiliation with FA.

88%

MUSCULOSKELETAL
(n=3230)

82%

HEADACHES/MIGRAINES
(n=1339)

82%

SLEEP PROBLEMS
(n=2978)

63%

UROLOGICAL
(n=1222)

Questions for Your Patients

	YES	NO
1. Have you ever wanted to stop eating and found you just couldn't?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you constantly think about food or your weight?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you find yourself attempting one diet or food plan after another, with no lasting success?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Do you binge and then "get rid of the binge" through vomiting, exercise, laxatives, or other forms of purging?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do you eat differently in private than you do in front of other people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Has a doctor or a family member ever approached you with concern about your eating habits or weight?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Do you eat large quantities of food at one time (binge)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Is your weight problem due to your "nibbling" all day long?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Do you eat to escape from your feelings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Do you eat when you're not hungry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Have you ever discarded food, only to retrieve and eat it later?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Do you eat in secret?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Do you fast or severely restrict your food intake?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Have you ever stolen other people's food?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Have you ever hidden food to make sure you will have "enough"?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Do you feel driven to exercise excessively to control your weight?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Do you obsessively calculate the calories you've burned against the calories you've eaten?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Do you frequently feel guilty or ashamed about what you've eaten?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Are you waiting for your life to begin "when you lose the weight"?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Do you feel hopeless about your relationship with food?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



FOOD ADDICTS

in recovery anonymous

For more information, call (781) 932 6300
or visit www.foodaddicts.org