

**Maine Medical Center  
Maine Transplant Program  
Policies and Procedures  
Obesity Policy**

**Purpose**

To define the parameters and determine the policy of the Maine Transplant Program with regards to patient weight.

**Policy**

It is the policy of the Maine Transplant Program to take all aspects of a potential transplant recipient's physical condition when making a determination of suitability for transplantation. As patients who maintain an appropriate body mass index (BMI) have better outcomes, the program has determined the following guidelines with respect to patient BMI:

**Procedures**

1. The body mass index (BMI, kg/m<sup>2</sup>) will be calculated for all potential transplant recipients according to the following formula: 
$$\frac{\text{Weight (Kg)}}{\text{Height}^2 \text{ (m}^2\text{)}}$$
2. The results will be interpreted according to WHO definitions as follows:

Adults	Women	Men
Anorexia	<17.5	<17.5
Underweight	<19.1	<20.7
In normal range	19.1-25.8	20.7-26.4
Marginally obese	25.8-27.3	26.4-27.8
Overweight	27.3-32.3	27.8-31.1
Very overweight or Obese	>32.3	>31.1
Severely Obese	35-40	35-40
Morbidly Obese	40-50	40-50
Super Obese	>50	>50

3. In the setting of transplantation, obesity is a known risk factor for:
  - Wound complications including infection, dehiscence and hernia formation
  - New onset diabetes mellitus after transplantation
  - Premature graft failure
  - Death
4. A BMI of greater than 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup> at time of referral will preclude the potential recipient from wait listing. Patients may be re-referred once BMI is below this threshold.
5. A BMI of greater than 37 kg/m<sup>2</sup> will exclude candidates for transplantation until a target weight has been achieved. Under such circumstances, the patient will be:
  - Referred back to their nephrologist
  - Transplantation workup will be deferred
  - A re-referral will be needed when the target weight has been achieved

The only exception will be for patients for whom there are compelling evidence that BMI is not an accurate indicator of obesity.

6. A BMI of less than 32 kg/m<sup>2</sup> is desirable for all transplant candidates

A BMI of > 32 and < 37 kg/m<sup>2</sup> will be viewed as a risk factor for complications after transplantation. As such, a target weight loss may be required if the overall profile of the patient is indicative of unacceptable risk for transplantation. The consequences of this policy are that it is entirely possible, even likely, that two patients with the same BMI may receive different recommendations from the Maine Transplant Program. For example, a 20 year old with non-diabetic kidney disease and no cardiac risk factors would likely be considered transplantable at a BMI of 37, while a 64 year old diabetic with a history of heart disease and stroke and a BMI of 37 may be sent back and required to lose weight before workup is even commenced.

7. If a target weight loss is required, the patient will be informed using the worksheet in Appendix A.

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Review Dates: 6/10/09, 5/3/10, 2/13/12, 10/27/14, 6/15/17, 5/22/20, 9/1/21

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**APPENDIX A**

Name:

DOB:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

You have been informed that weight loss is required before you can be transplanted. The reason for this requirement is to minimize your risk of the following severe problems that can occur after transplantation:

- Death
- Graft loss
- Severe wound complications that include infection, wound breakdown and hernia formation
- New onset diabetes after transplantation

Current Weight:	
Current BMI:	
Target BMI:	
Target Weight (lbs)	
Target Weight (kgs)	

Please contact your primary care provider or primary nephrologist to learn about ways to lose weight.

As soon as you have achieved your target weight, please contact your coordinator and we will be happy to see you back in order to move the process of transplantation forward.

Sincerely

Transplant Coordinator

Transplant Physician

cc: Nephrologist  
Primary Care Physician