



# 5As of obesity management

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## 5As Team learning modules

**The 5As of obesity management** are an evidence-based framework developed for primary healthcare providers by the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The 5As (Ask, Assess, Advise, Agree, and Assist) are a useful resource, based on guiding principles that focus on rapid assessment, increasing confidence to ask about weight, emphasizing the importance of supporting longitudinal relationships with patients, increasing the focus on weight gain prevention, strategies for emotional eating, strategies to help sustain lifestyle changes, behavioural goals, weight bias in the clinical setting, and addressing the cultural aspects of weight. While these tools are effective as a general resource, each patient will have unique drivers and barriers to weight management that need to be taken into account. This session discusses some of the successes and challenges faced by healthcare practitioners when implementing the 5As into clinical practice.

Dr. Arya Sharma is Professor of Medicine & Chair in Obesity Research and Management at the University of Alberta. He is also the Clinical Co-Chair of the Alberta Health Services Obesity Program. Dr. Sharma is founder and Scientific Director of the Canadian Obesity Network, a network of over 10 000 obesity researchers, health professionals, and other stakeholders.

He has authored and co-authored more than 350 scientific articles and has lectured widely on the etiology and management of obesity and related cardiovascular disorders. Dr. Sharma is regularly featured as a medical expert in national and international TV and print media, and maintains a widely read blog, Obesity Notes: [www.drsharma.ca](http://www.drsharma.ca).

(Excerpt taken from [www.drsharma.ca/about](http://www.drsharma.ca/about)).

This module contains:

- A web link to a video of Dr. Arya Sharma, founder and scientific director of the Canadian Obesity Network, discussing the implementation of the 5As of obesity management into clinical practice.
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q53Gr2oKPIs>
- A discussion guide for further reflection (page 2)

## Discussion guide

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This is a guide for questions and topics to consider after viewing Dr. Sharma's video and on the topic of the 5As of obesity management. These questions can be discussed in a group or on your own.

1. **Please take a moment on your own and consider what are the key messages you took from the speaker today** (tips, messages, tools).
  - How do you see yourself incorporating the 5As (Ask, Assess, Advise, Agree, Assist) of obesity management into your future practice?
  - What are some of your concerns regarding patients who do not wish to discuss their weight? Can you think of ways you could modify the "Ask" to make these patients more comfortable discussing weight management?
  - How could you approach a patient who believes that overweight healthcare practitioners are unqualified to advise on weight management?
  - Which strategies could you use to encourage a patient struggling with a plateau in their weight loss?
  - Is there anything you found surprising during the talk?
  - Is there anything you would like to learn more about on this topic?
  
2. **Goal Setting**
  - Take a few moments of quiet time to come up with your own goal regarding
  - Can you anticipate difficulties in achieving this goal?
  - Are you confident that you can reach your goal?