

## How to Find a Qualified Obesity Care Provider: A Practical Guide

Obesity is a complex, chronic medical condition—not a personal failure. Just like diabetes or high blood pressure, it requires evidence-based care from trained medical professionals. Yet, many people don't know where to start when looking for a qualified obesity provider. If you're ready to take control of your health and are searching for the right specialist, this guide will help you navigate your options with confidence.

### Why Specialized Obesity Care Matters

Obesity treatment goes far beyond “eat less and move more.” A qualified provider understands that weight regulation is influenced by biological, genetic, environmental, and psychological factors. They use medically sound tools such as:

- ✔ **Comprehensive metabolic assessments**
- ✔ **FDA-approved obesity medications**
- ✔ **Behavioral therapy and lifestyle coaching**
- ✔ **Nutritional strategies tailored to your biology**
- ✔ **Referral for bariatric surgery when appropriate**

Choosing the right provider ensures you're receiving safe, effective care rooted in science—not fad diets or one-size-fits-all advice.

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### Types of Qualified Obesity Care Providers

Here are the types of professionals who may be trained in obesity medicine:

Provider Type	What They Offer
<b>Obesity Medicine Specialist</b>	Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers (nurse practitioners / physician associates) with specialized education in obesity treatment using medical, nutritional, and behavioral tools. <b>Tip:</b> Look for ABOM certification for physicians or certificates of advanced education in obesity management for advanced practice providers.
<b>Endocrinologist</b>	Focuses on hormonal/metabolic factors that may contribute to weight.

Provider Type	What They Offer
<b>Registered Dietitian (RD/RDN)</b>	Provides personalized nutrition plans grounded in medical nutrition therapy.
<b>Bariatric Surgeon</b>	Performs metabolic / weight-loss surgery and offers long-term follow-up care.
<b>Behavioral Health Professional</b>	Helps address emotional eating, mindset, and habit change.

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## How to Evaluate a Provider

When researching or meeting a potential provider, ask yourself:

### ✔ Do They Take a Medical Approach?

- Do they assess your full health history—not just your weight?
- Do they discuss metabolic labs, medications, and long-term care plans?

### ✔ Do They Offer Personalized Care?

- Ask how they tailor treatment across different biological needs.
- Avoid programs that advertise the same plan for everyone.

### ✔ Do They Treat Obesity Without Stigma?

- A good provider uses respectful, person-first language (e.g., “person living with obesity,” not “obese person”).
- You should feel supported, not judged.

### ✔ Do They Offer Ongoing Support?

- Obesity is a chronic condition—treatment and follow-up should reflect that.
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## Red Flags to Watch For

Be cautious of providers who:

- Promise “**rapid weight loss without effort**”
  - Sell **exclusive supplements or products** as a main solution
  - Provide **no long-term follow-up plan**
  - Use **shaming or dismissive language**
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### **Final Thought: You Deserve Compassionate, Expert Care**

Seeking treatment for obesity is a courageous step. The right provider will work *with* you—not against you—using science-backed strategies to improve your health, quality of life, and confidence.

Your journey doesn’t have to be overwhelming. Start by finding a provider who listens, understands the complexity of obesity, and is committed to guiding you toward sustainable health.

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### **Where to Start Your Search**

- **Professional Directory Searches:**
  - **American Board of Obesity Medicine (ABOM) Directory** – <https://www.abom.org>
  - **Obesity Medicine Association** – <https://obesitymedicine.org>
  - **The Obesity Society** - <https://www.obesity.org/>
  - **American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery** - <https://asmbs.org/>
- **Obesity Action Coalition (OAC)** – Offers patient resources and provider referrals.
- **Ask Your Primary Care Provider** – They may refer you to reputable specialists.
- **Insurance Directories** – Look for “obesity medicine,” “metabolic health,” or “weight management” services.