

MEET Caio Thomaz

Caio is the Manager of Process Engineering at MML in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Caio's story highlights his struggle with obesity and his remarkable transformation after bariatric surgery.

For years, Caio's weight rose steadily, which took a toll on his self-esteem. He found that he did not have enough energy to play with his son. He worried about his health and described his fear of dying from a heart attack.

Caio tried out weight loss methods like medication, dieting, and exercise but struggled to maintain the changes. He found himself always returning to his regular diet of burgers, pizza, and Coca-Cola.

In 2020, Caio was diagnosed with obesity, fatty liver disease, and high cholesterol. Following the advice of his family doctor, Caio chose to have bariatric surgery to reduce his stomach size.

When asked if he had any fears about the surgery, Caio told us that he was "more afraid of what would happen if he did not undergo surgery."



After meeting his surgeon in 2020, he met with six different specialists to get the final approval. In 2022, Caio finally had the life-changing procedure.

Undergoing this surgery forced him to eat in smaller portions, so he started losing weight. With the support of his family, especially his wife, Caio made changes to the types of food he ate to continue losing weight. He was happy to report that his family has almost completely cut out Coca-Cola. Caio said that the desire to go back to his old eating habits is strong, but his desire to keep the weight off is stronger.

As he lost weight, he found he no longer had joint pain while running or walking. Now, Caio walks 5 km (3.1 miles) every day. He also noticed his

strength and stamina improving with exercise and found these changes motivating. In the two years after surgery, Caio went from 278lb to 187lb (126kg to 85kg). As a result, he no longer falls under the category of obese, and his liver and cholesterol are back to normal.

Caio's newfound energy and improved self-esteem enriches his life. Finally, he can play soccer with his son like he had always wanted. Caio hopes that sharing his story will motivate others to work hard at lifestyle changes before surgery becomes their only option. Although bariatric surgery may not be right for everyone, Caio wants to be an example for those who need it. For Caio, surgery was worth it.

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DID YOU KNOW?

If you enjoy a beer, you might not know how many calories are in it. In many countries, calories are not listed on alcohol, but they are important to consider if you are trying to manage your weight. Alcohol could be stopping your weight loss. Learn what is in your drinks!

Calories vary with alcohol by volume (%), drink size, and other ingredients.

				
	BEER	TABLE WINE	DISTILLED SPIRITS (Gin, Rum, Vodka, Tequila)	MIXED DRINKS OR COCKTAILS
SIZE	12 oz/355 mL	5 oz/150 mL	1.5 oz/44 mL	Varies
CALORIES per standard drink	~100-160	~120	~97	100-500+



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Beyond the Scale: A Closer Look at Fat

FAT.

It sounds like a bad word these days, right? But like everything in life, there are good and bad things about having body fat. Fat is found all over your body, from under your skin to around your organs. Everyone needs fat to live, but why?

Your body is constantly using energy. When you eat, your body works its magic by turning food and drinks into energy that it uses for all its functions. You may know of this energy as calories. You can think of fat as one of your body's energy tanks – fat will store the energy and then release it as needed. This stored energy comes in handy to fuel your body between meals. Stored fat also helps keep you warm, protects your organs, and helps you produce hormones and absorb vitamins.



HOW DO FAT GAIN AND LOSS WORK?

We can think of each fat cell like a high-quality plastic bag.

FAT GAIN

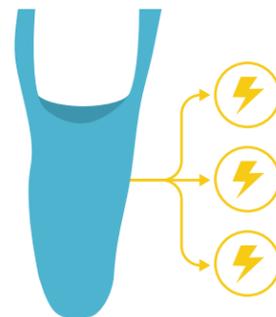
Plastic bags can expand to fit more items. Similarly, when you eat more calories than your body needs, your fat cells will fill up. Once you have filled one plastic bag to its capacity, you need to get a new one. In the same way, once your fat cells are full, your body makes new fat cells to store the excess energy from food.



Energy Storage

FAT LOSS

What about when you “burn fat?” You might know that plastic bags do not break down – neither do fat cells. If you eat fewer calories than your body needs, your body will start to empty your fat cells to use the stored energy. Your fat cells will shrink, but the fat cells will always be there.



Stored Energy Used

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE HAVE TOO MUCH BODY FAT?

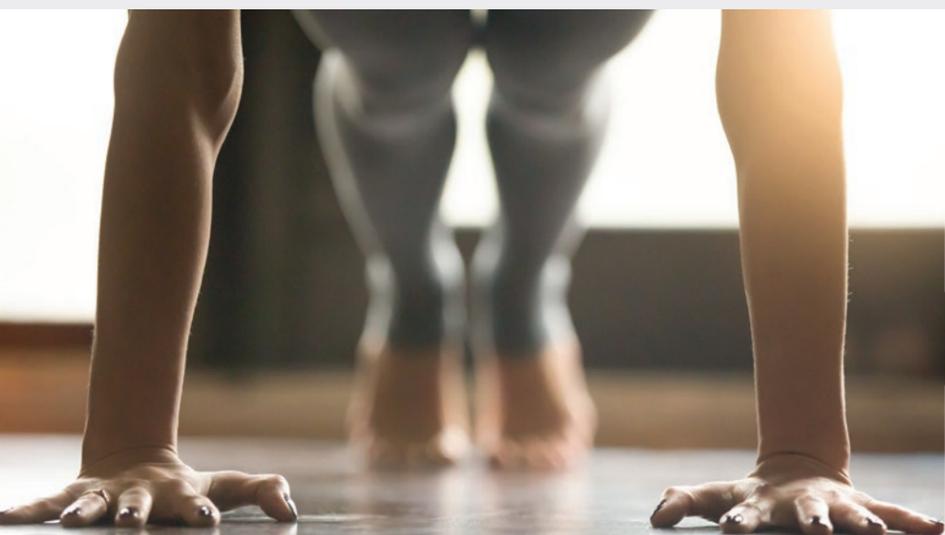
When the energy you take in from your food is greater than the energy your body uses, you will gain weight. Overtime this can lead to excessive fat gain and even obesity.

Obesity is defined as having excessive fat that can impair health, it is diagnosed by a doctor, and treatment must be long-term and consistent. Obesity is a chronic condition, which means there are no short-term solutions to be rid of it.

Your risk for developing obesity depends on what you eat, how much you eat, how active you are, and your genetics. If you exercise less than 150 minutes per week and regularly eat foods with unhealthy fats (saturated and trans) or added sugars, you increase your risk of obesity.

Obesity is not just about carrying extra weight; it is also about the health issues that often come along with excessive body fat. Obesity puts you at higher risk for fatty liver disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, dementia, multiple cancers, heart disease, and having a stroke.

Obesity is treated in many ways such as lifestyle changes, medications, and surgery. Weight loss is often an important part of treatment, but this can be challenging as your body fights to hold onto the weight. Maintaining weight loss can also be difficult and many people who lose weight end up gaining it back. Fortunately, even a smaller weight loss of 10lb (4.5kg) can have huge benefits for your health. In this newsletter, you can learn more about obesity treatments and strategies in the following articles on Weight Loss Medications and Revamping your Routine.



DID YOU KNOW?

YOU CAN UPGRADE YOUR ENGINE WITH STRENGTH TRAINING

You might know that getting your heart rate up with cardiovascular exercise burns calories. But did you know that building muscle is equally important for managing weight long-term?

Your metabolism is like an idling car engine - it burns fuel to keep the car running at rest. However, if you have more muscle, your metabolism acts like an idling truck engine – it will burn more fuel. **So, with more muscle, your body will burn more fuel** (calories from carbohydrates and body fat). Muscle also protects you from obesity-related health risks. Make sure to include strength training in your exercise routine!

What's the big deal with **weight-loss medications?**

Ozempic and Wegovy make headlines every day. Countless photos of jaw-dropping celebrity transformations credit these medications with the underlying message: *Get a needle and get skinny!*

So, what are they all about?

Let's find out.



What are they?

Ozempic took the media by storm during the pandemic. This weekly injectable medication was developed to treat type 2 diabetes but was found to have the side effect of weight loss.

Soon, shortages were rampant and similar products flooded the market – Wegovy, Saxenda, and Zepbound. Ozempic and Wegovy are actually the same drug, however, Wegovy is approved for weight loss and given at a higher dose.

How do they cause weight loss?

Wegovy and similar medications help reduce cravings and overeating.

They slow your stomach from emptying, which means you feel full faster and for longer.

They also turn down hunger signals by targeting areas of the brain linked to appetite. All this lowers the number of calories you consume, causing you to lose weight.

Could I really lose weight and keep it off?

People can expect to lose 12-20% of their body weight on Wegovy or Zepbound after one year. For someone starting at 200 pounds, that would be a weight loss of 24 to 40 pounds!

After taking Wegovy over four years, people maintained an average weight loss of 10%, which is enough to significantly benefit health. These medications also improve blood sugar, cholesterol, blood pressure, liver, and kidney health. For those who have long struggled with weight gain, these medications can be life changing.

The effects of stopping use are currently uncertain. Early studies show that those who stop use will regain two-thirds of lost weight on average. However, additional research found that just over half of people who came off these medications either maintained their weight loss or continued losing weight. For now, it is recommended that people who start these medications stay on them indefinitely unless another treatment plan is in place to manage weight.

You may be asking yourself, **“Is it really that simple?”**

Not exactly. These medications are not meant for everyone. If you are thinking of taking them, there are many factors to consider.

Am I eligible to take them?

To be prescribed weight-loss medications like Wegovy, you must be obese, or be overweight with at least one weight-related health problem like high blood pressure or diabetes.

They may be a good option for those who need to lose weight for medical reasons and have not found success with other methods.

Would I need to change my lifestyle?

All weight-loss medications should be paired with a healthy lifestyle. The right habits will support continued weight loss and maintenance, minimize muscle loss, and reduce side effects.

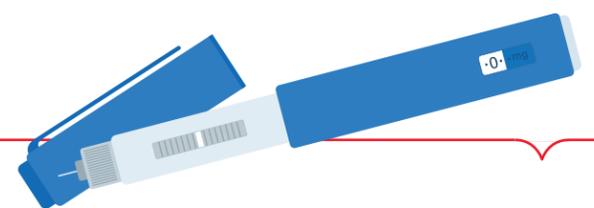
A healthy diet for weight loss includes protein, fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and avoids foods high in sugar and saturated fats. As well, weekly routines should have physical activity, including strength training.

If you take weight-loss medications, consider enlisting experts to help you make and sustain the right changes. These could include a multidisciplinary weight-loss program, dietician, wellness coach, personal trainer, or mental health worker.

What are the downsides?

High costs and frequent shortages are barriers to access that turn some people away. As well, some discomfort when starting these medications is normal, but occasionally the side effects are severe enough to make people stop using them.

These medications are also not right for people with certain health conditions or family history, such as thyroid disease. All risk factors should be discussed with your doctor before starting medication.



So, are they right for me?

It depends. If you are looking to slim down for an upcoming event, these drugs are not for you.

They are not the “quick fix” to extra belly fat like celebrities claim. They are a long-term treatment option for a long-term health condition.

Unmanaged obesity can lead to severe consequences. Current evidence suggests that the benefits of approved weight-loss medications outweigh the health risks of unmanaged obesity. They may not be right for everyone, but new medications have changed the game by expanding the toolbox to treat obesity. If you are interested in weight-loss medications, discuss your options with your doctor.

REVAMP YOUR ROUTINE

Strategies to Prevent and Manage Obesity

When trying to prevent or manage obesity, we often hear the same messaging: eat healthy and exercise more. While this is true, knowing where to begin is hard! To get started, test out a few of these simple strategies.

FOOD

Food is the fuel that keeps you energized to tackle each day. Without the right fuel, your body suffers. Diet can be a challenging part of managing weight.

Try these tips to better manage your menu:

1 Eat slowly

Did you know it takes 20 minutes for your stomach to tell your brain that you are full after you start eating? Eat slowly to allow time for that signal to kick in and prevent overeating.

2 Fill your plate with nutrients

Many weight loss trends focus on taking things away and miss out on what you need to add back in. If you work on eating filling meals loaded with vegetables and protein, you will often lower your cravings for the high-calorie treats.

3 Prepare and freeze extra food for ready-to-go meals

When you cook a dinner, make double the amount to freeze some. Saving meals in the freezer helps you make healthier choices when time is tight. This is a much healthier option than store-bought freezer meals which are often high in salt and calories.



EXERCISE

It is no secret that exercise is important for managing weight. But did you know that exercise also helps prevent diseases linked to obesity? You can add more movement to your everyday tasks by trying out these ideas.

1 Pick up the pace

When you are on-the-go, try walking at a quicker pace. Getting your heart rate up will help you burn more calories and prevent high blood pressure.

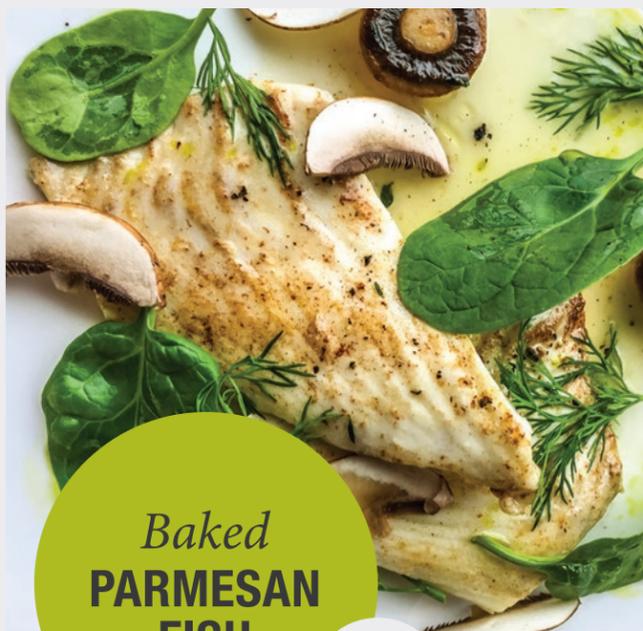
2 Turn daily tasks into exercise

Unloading groceries from the car? Work those muscles by lifting the grocery bags a few times. Building muscle lowers your risk of diabetes and increases your metabolism so you burn more calories.

3 Find your fun

Exercise can be a helpful tool to prevent and manage depression and anxiety, which are associated with obesity. Think about the activities you enjoyed doing as a kid and rediscover the joy! Exercise does not have to look a certain way for it to improve your health.

Preventing and managing obesity can feel like an impossible task, but taking small steps towards a healthy lifestyle can have a big impact on your health.



Baked PARMESAN FISH

SERVES 4

This parmesan-crusted fish is savory and delicious! Fish is a lean meat that is heart-healthy and calorie-conscious. Serve this recipe with a side salad and a complex carbohydrate, such as quinoa, to complete the meal.

INGREDIENTS

1/3 cup	non-fat parmesan cheese (grated)
1 tsp	all-purpose flour
1 tsp	thyme sprigs (leaves removed and crushed)
4	fish fillets (white fish, 4–6 ounces each)
1	medium onion (chopped)
1 cup	halved mushroom caps
1/2 cup	green onions (finely sliced)
1	clove garlic (crushed)

NUTRITIONAL FACTS

Serving size: 1 fish fillet with toppings

204 calories	7 g carbohydrates
36 g protein	1 g fiber
4 g fat	2 g sugars
149 mg sodium	640 mg potassium

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Place cheese, flour, and thyme in a bag. Add one fish fillet in the bag and gently shake to coat the fish. Repeat this step for each fillet.
3. Place fillets on a baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes or until the fish flakes easily when tested with a fork.
4. Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion, mushrooms, green onions, and garlic. Cook, stirring frequently, until onions are tender. Season with ground black pepper.
5. Serve baked fish topped with mushroom mixture.

Recipe from [MyPlate](#)

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