

A practical guide for the busy paediatrician

First visit: assessment

1 Ask your patients' permission to assess lifestyle habits

According to the motivational interview principle, asking permission is a crucial step to increase the patient's engagement. Providing a short psycho-educational explanation is highly recommended

Example: "Lifestyle behavioral change is the first line treatment for MASLD. The family's diet, physical activity, and sleeping habits are a pivotal aspect of the child's disease and treatment. The treatment is for the entire family, and the parents will act as the change agents. To provide a treatment that will fit the family ability and preference, I want to assess first the current situation. Would you mind if I asked you several questions?"

2 Collect data about your patients' lifestyle habits

Diet

- Vegetable/fruits
- Lentils, nuts, whole grains
- Red & processed meat
- Sugared sweetened beverages and sweets
- Sugar sweetened yogurts/ Milk beverage
- Ultra processed foods-fast food/ snack food/cereals or sweets

Mental health

- Depression/anxiety
- Social/community support
- Disturbing thoughts
- Self efficacy & self esteem
- Racism
- Gender identity/gender dysphoria

Eating habits

- Eating rate/speed
- Eating late or waking to eat
- Eating in front of screens
- Family meals
- Sneaking
- Emotional and/or binge eating
- Understanding of hunger & fullness cues

Stress:

- Childhood adverse events
- Bullying (at school, cyberbullying)
- Weight stigma

Smoking/Vaping

- Current Smoking/ Vaping For Teens

Alcohol

- Alcoholic Consumption For Teens

Food insecurity

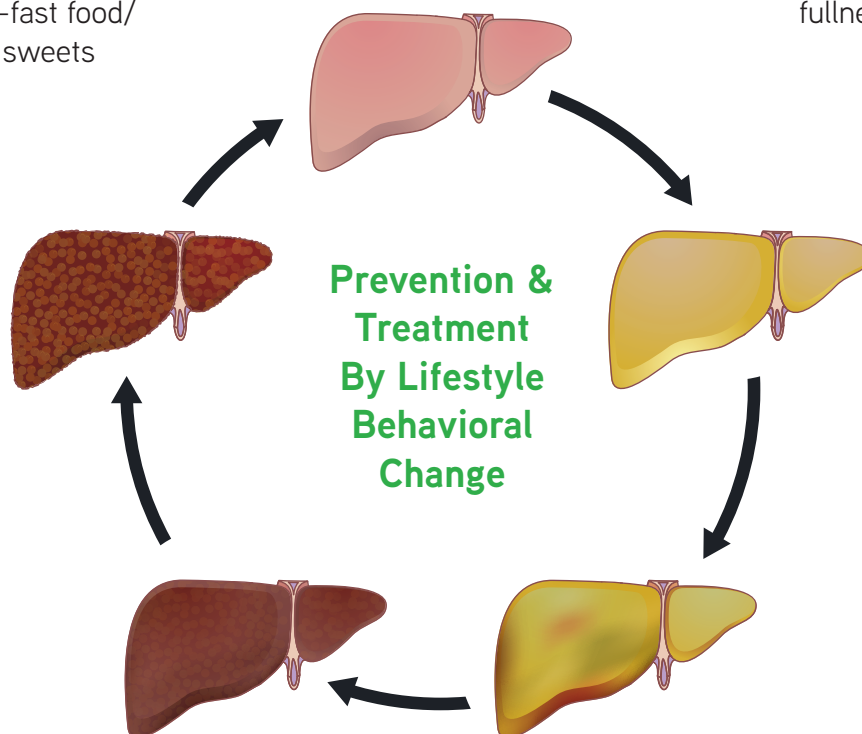
- Ability to buy food
- Concern that the food run out before the end of the month
- Skipping meals due to food insecurity
- Assess for malnutrition

Sleeping habits

- Bedtime routine
- High stimulation Activities before bed
- Sleep quality/snoring/restlessness
- Daytime sleeping

Physical activity:

- Daily physical activity
- Access to indoor/outdoor play
- Activities that encourage whole body movement
- Sedentary time/screen time
- Being active as a family



3 Assess the family's lifestyle and provide a suitable treatment program

- It is essential to keep a non-judgmental position, emphasize the family's ability to change their habits, and the importance of getting support from behavioral and nutritional experts
- It is recommended to refer all families to a clinical dietitian with expertise in children/teens treatment
- Your patient is the family and not just the child/teen. Therefore, it is essential to emphasize the importance of making family changes and avoid singling out one child for changes. The parents are the role models, and they should model healthy lifestyle behavior
- It is recommended to encourage families to increase the family daily activity, insert family meals into their weekly routine, and maintain a healthy bedtime routine
- In some cases, behavioral therapy and/or parenthood guidance may be recommended