

Healthy Homes/ Healthy Families

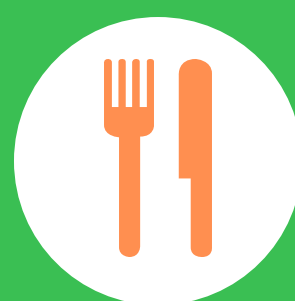
Preventing weight gain by changing the home environment in SW Georgia

WHAT DID WE WANT TO KNOW AND WHY?

Adults in the United States:



Spend a significant amount of time at home.



Consume most of their calories at home.



Gain about 1 pound per year, increasing risk for diabetes, coronary heart disease, and cancer.

So we wanted to know:
Does an intervention targeting the home environment prevent weight gain?

WHAT DID WE FIND?

Patients who received the intervention made several healthy changes to their home environments and:



Improved the quality of their diet



Consumed fewer calories, lost weight, and maintained the loss at one year



Did not increase their physical activity

[See side 2 for full results >](#)



Community Engaged Research

The EPRC conducts community-based participatory research in SW Georgia, guided by a Community Advisory Board (CAB) comprising over 15 residents and local organizations. This project was a partnership between the CAB, Horizons Community Solutions, and three community health centers.

WHAT DID WE DO?

The Emory Prevention Research Center (EPRC) and partners developed and tested the Healthy Homes/ Healthy Families (HH/HF) intervention.

Over 16 weeks, health coaches from the community helped female clinic patients who were overweight and obese make at least 6 healthy changes to their home environment by providing:

- 3 Home Visits
- 4 Coaching Calls
- Tailored Home Environment Profile
- Mailings
- Goal Setting
- Behavioral Contracting

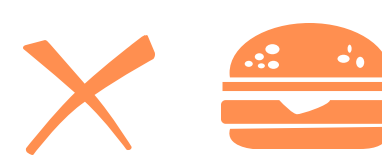
HEALTHY CHANGE EXAMPLES

Several aspects of the home environment affect diet and physical activity. HH/HF coached participants to adopt at least 6 healthy changes to their home environment.

For example:



Identify one unhealthy food or drink and do not allow it in the home.



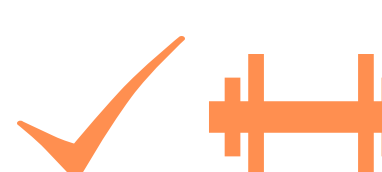
Cut back on how often your family eats fast food or restaurant food.



Establish rules that limit eating while watching TV.



Post and use a family exercise log.




Create a place for exercise in your home or yard and commit to using it at least once per week.

DID IT WORK?

We tested the intervention by asking participants about their home environment, physical activity, diet, and weight before and after the intervention, and comparing their results with a comparison group that did not receive HH/HF.


Patients who received the intervention changed their home environments by making the following changes:

↑ Placing exercise equipment in a visible location 


↑ Creating an exercise space in the home or yard 

↑ Being physically active with family members 

↑ Buying fruits and vegetables 

↑ Improving how they prepared and served meals in the home 

↓ Watching TV while eating meals and snacks 

↓ Unhealthy drinks and snacks in the home 



They also:

↗ Improved the quality of their diet

↘ Consumed fewer calories, lost weight, and maintained the loss at one year

✗ Did not increase their physical activity

WHAT NEXT?



2-1-1 is an information and referral system that connects mostly low-income callers to community resources.

To reach more people, we adapted the program to collaborate with 2-1-1. The adapted program is shorter, focuses only on the nutrition part of the program, and is delivered by telephone and text message only.

Pilot Test:

Call center staff from the United Way of Greater Atlanta 2-1-1 recruited eligible callers and provided their contact information to the EPRC.

Pilot Results:

Similar to original study: improvements in BMI, weight, diet, and the home food environment.

Next:

Full effectiveness study, partnering with 2-1-1s in Southwest Georgia, Greater Atlanta, Central Georgia, and the Chattahoochee Valley.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Overweight and obesity is a serious health problem in the United States, but changing the home food environment can help prevent weight gain. We hope to deliver this program to more people through the 2-1-1 delivery system to help prevent weight gain and the development of chronic diseases.

If you are interested in making changes to your home food environment, try adopting some of the healthy actions listed above!

Read more about the original study: Michelle C. Kegler, Regine Haardörfer, Iris C. Alcantara, Julie A. Gazmararian, J. K. Veluswamy, Tarccara L. Hodge, Ann R. Addison, and James A. Hotz. "Impact of improving home environments on energy intake and physical activity: A randomized controlled trial." *American Journal of Public Health* 106, no. 1 (2016): 143-152. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4695922/>.

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