

The ideal 'dose' of behavioral interventions to prevent and treat childhood obesity

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Establishing the optimum "dose" of behavioral interventions to prevent and treat childhood obesity is critical for addressing the ongoing obesity epidemic and developing future interventions.

William Heerman, MD, MPH, and colleagues reviewed existing behavioral trials targeting [childhood obesity](#) – published between 1990 and June 2017 – to quantify the relationship between dose and weight-related outcome. Dose was defined as the intended duration of the intervention, the number of sessions and the length of sessions.

In a set of 133 controlled trials with sufficient data for statistical analysis, the average duration was 26 weeks and the average total contact (number of sessions x length of sessions) was 27.7 hours.

The researchers reported in the *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* that there was wide variation in the dose of interventions and no clear relationship between dose and weight-related outcomes. The authors stress that future behavioral trials targeting obesity should report the dose intended, delivered and received to facilitate evaluation of [optimal dose](#).

More information: William J. Heerman et al. The dose of behavioral interventions to prevent and treat childhood obesity: a systematic review and meta-regression, *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* (2017). [DOI: 10.1186/s12966-017-0615-7](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-017-0615-7)

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