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Improvement of Total Body Weight Loss in a Comprehensive Weight Loss Program at a Community Gastroenterology Practice with Consistent Support Group Attendance

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Improvement of Total Body Weight Loss in a Comprehensive Weight Loss Program at a Community Gastroenterology Practice with Consistent Support Group Attendance

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Introduction

Obesity-related gastrointestinal disorders, including non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), account for over 30% of visits to GI practices. Total body weight loss (TBWL) of 10% or more is associated with reversal of NAFLD-associated fibrosis and steatosis. Support groups have proven to help individuals recover from other lifestyle diseases. This study assesses the impact of support group attendance on a patient achieving 10% TBWL while enrolled in a community-based weight loss program.

Methods

Patients participated in a 6-month support group with weekly meetings. TBWL was calculated by taking the difference between the patient's starting weight and their 6-month weight divided by starting weight. Data was collected retrospectively through chart review. By April 2023, 95 patients completed the support group program. Statistical analysis was performed using ANOVA and Tukey-Kramer post-hoc tests.

Results

The mean percent weight loss was 6.18% for patients with 0-49% attendance, 8.78% for patients with 50-74% attendance, and 13.24% for patients with 75-100% attendance. The ANOVA test revealed a statistically significant difference in mean percent weight loss across the three groups ($F(2,92) = 10.299, p < 0.001$). The Tukey-Kramer test revealed a statistically significant difference in mean percent weight loss between the 0-49% and 75-100% attendance groups ($p < 0.001$) and between the 50-74% and 75-100% attendance groups ($p = 0.003$).

Discussion

The results indicate that patients with at least 75% support group attendance reported significantly higher percent weight loss than patients with lower attendance. This study supports the efficacy of support groups toward achieving weight loss.