

# Lifestyle modification

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The USA has witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of individuals who are overweight, suffer from diabetes, or who engage in other behaviorally risky behaviors such as smoking and drinking. Consequently, preventive care, lifestyle modification and anticipatory guidance are areas in which family physicians have an opportunity to make a great impact on the lives of their patients and their families. This chapter addresses some of the more common addictive behaviors in our society, and illustrates a variety of behavioral and motivational approaches to lifestyle modification.

## Smoking cessation/nicotine addiction

◆ *Cat's Eye* (Drew Barrymore, James Woods, Alan King, Robert Hays). This film consists of three suspense and horror tales based on stories by Stephen King. The three stories are bound together by a cat. The first story involves Dick Morrison (James Woods), who tries to quit smoking by going to Quitters Inc, a smoking cessation program run by mobster Mr Tonatti (Alan King), who gives new meaning to the term *aversion therapy*.

a (0:07:29–0:10:12). In this scene, Dick Morrison meets Quitters Inc counselor Mr Tonatti, who explains that being available to clients is only part of the program. Mr Tonatti knows about Dick's family, talks about recidivism rates and demonstrates aversion therapy with the cat.

- 1 How successful is aversion therapy in achieving abstinence?
- 2 What other types of treatment should be considered?
- 3 What approach would you consider?
- 4 How would you assess the patient's current motivation for treatment?

b (0:13:15–0:14:33). Dick is at home and spills a drink. His wife asks what is wrong and Dick tells her that he has quit smoking. She responds by saying 'When? Five minutes ago? Dick replies 'Six hours and 23 minutes.' His wife says that even if he does not succeed both she and their daughter are grateful to him for trying.

- 1 What role does family support play in supporting or curtailing addictive behaviors?
- 2 What effect can a spouse's lack of confidence have on a patient who is trying to quit?
- 3 How would you respond to a patient who tells you the exact number of hours and minutes he has been smoke-free? How could you encourage such a patient to continue his program?

c (0:22:45–0:25:22). This is a rather surreal scene in which Dick and his wife attend a party. The party is seen from Dick’s perspective, in which everyone is smoking. He begins to see people with cigarettes in their ears and children smoking. Dick has been smoke-free for two weeks now.

- 1 What does this scene portray about the impact of quitting smoking?
- 2 What recommendations would you make to a patient who associates social activities with smoking?

d (0:25:48–0:27:36). Dick is caught in a traffic jam and is becoming more and more agitated. He rummages through the glove box and finds an old packet of cigarettes. He begins chewing gum, but keeps looking at the cigarettes. Eventually he lights up and begins smoking.

- 1 What situations or behaviors can predispose a patient to relapse?
- 2 How can patients be assisted in dealing with relapse situations?
- 3 What is the impact of substituting gum chewing for smoking? Is this a successful approach to smoking cessation?

e (0:33:13–0:33:58). Dick is weighing in at Quitters Inc. Mr Tonatti tells him that he has gained eight pounds in six months, and gives him diet pills.

- 1 How would you approach a patient who is substituting eating for smoking?
- 2 How would you address a patient’s concerns that they will gain weight if they quit smoking?
- 3 Would you give diet pills to a patient who engages in addictive behaviors?

## Dieting and weight loss

◆ *I Don’t Buy Kisses Anymore* (Jason Alexander, Lainie Kazan, Nia Peeples, Eileen Brennan). Bernie Fisbine (Jason Alexander) is an overweight man in his thirties who runs the family shoe store and lives with his mother (Lainie Kazan). Bernie is looking for a girlfriend when he meets Tress Garabaldi (Nia Peeples), a psychology student who thinks that Bernie will make a great subject for her thesis on overeating.

a (0:08:30–0:09:30). Bernie is sitting down to dinner with his mother. He places some meat on his plate, which his mother quickly removes. She tells him that if he loses 30 pounds like the doctor says, then he will be able to eat whatever he wants.

- 1 What is the role of the family in facilitating weight loss?
- 2 How helpful do you think Bernie’s mother is in dealing with his weight problem?
- 3 Does her type of approach help or hinder patients?

b (0:43:33–0:44:50). Bernie was unsuccessful in getting a date with Tress and comes home. He immediately heads for the refrigerator and makes himself a sandwich.

c (0:46:50–0:47:25). Tress talks to a friend about her research and discusses how stress affects addicts.

- 1 What role does stress play in addictive behaviors?
- 2 How would you counsel patients about stress reduction and addictive behaviors?

d (0:57:30–0:58:29). Bernie is having dinner with Tress, who comments on how much he ate the other night. She talks with him about ‘falling off the wagon.’

- 1 How would you describe Tress’s behavior? Is she helpful or harmful to Bernie’s weight-loss program?
- 2 How does Tress’s talking about ‘falling off the wagon’ affect Bernie?
- 3 How would you discuss relapse with patients?
- 4 What anticipatory guidance would you offer to patients regarding relapse prevention?

◆ *Heavy* (Shelly Winters, Deborah Harry, Liv Tyler, Pruitt Taylor Vincent). Victor (Pruitt Taylor Vincent) is an overweight cook who lives with his domineering mother, Dolly (Shelly Winters), and works in her diner. Victor, a virgin, becomes attracted to the new waitress, Callie (Liv Tyler), and begins to fantasize about her, which frightens Dolly, who fears that she is losing control over her son.

a (0:49:53–0:50:44). Victor is in the grocery store. He picks up a can of ‘light and fit’ protein powder instead of the rich and fatty foods he had been looking at.

- 1 What factors are motivating Victor’s desire to change?
- 2 As a physician, how can you motivate a patient to make healthy lifestyle modifications?
- 3 Where does Victor’s behavior fit into the Stages of Change model?
- 4 How can you assess resistance to change?

## Exercise

◆ *I Don’t Buy Kisses Anymore* (Jason Alexander, Lainie Kazan, Nia Peeples, Eileen Brennan). See previous section on dieting and weight loss for movie description.

a (0:24:08–0:29:24). Tress takes Bernie to the gym and introduces him to a personal trainer. This is Bernie’s first visit to the gym, and the trainer takes him from a stationary bicycle to a treadmill, and then to the pool, where he is told to swim ten laps. Bernie arrives home late, barely able to walk. The next morning at breakfast his mother is trying to talk him out of going to the gym again. Bernie tells her that he will be going every day and that he will probably be worse when he gets home tonight.

- 1 How does ‘overdoing’ affect compliance with exercise prescriptions?
- 2 What is the role of the family or significant others in promoting behavior change?
- 3 How would you counsel patients who ‘overdo’ behavioral changes?

b (0:29:45–0:30:48). Bernie is at the gym lifting weights, working out on the life cycle and then walking on the treadmill as a young woman jogs next to him.

- 1 What effect does seeing other individuals who are more physically fit have on patients who have just initiated an exercise program?

## Diabetes management

◆ *Soul Food* (Vanessa Williams, Vivica A Fox, Nia Long, Brandon Hammond, Irma P Hall). This movie is the story of an extended family who share Sunday dinner, family values, traditions and secrets.

a (0:12:16–0:12:52). Big Mama (Irma P Hall) is cooking with her arm over one of the burners of the stove. She does not realize that she has burned her arm until her grandson shouts at her. Immediately her daughters begin to barrage her with questions about taking her insulin, seeing her doctor and caring for her diabetes. Big Mama replies that she does not need a doctor – she only needs her turpentine, salve and herbs.

- 1 How would you address this patient's understanding of her disease?
- 2 How would you assess Big Mama's motivation and resistance to following a diabetic regimen?
- 3 What is the role of the family in aiding or hindering patient compliance?
- 4 What is your understanding of this patient's values and perceptions about risky behaviors?
- 5 What direct interventions could be used to address patient compliance?

## Substance use

◆ *Drunks* (Richard Lewis, Faye Dunaway, Dianne Wiest). This film provides an in-depth look at the 12-step recovery process as it follows an ethnically and socially diverse group of individuals who share their stories during their weekly AA meetings.

a (0:20:48–0:22:20). Jim (Richard Lewis) passes by several bars and liquor stores after sharing his 'story' at an AA meeting. He buys a pint of bourbon, opens the bottle, smells the bourbon, caresses the bottle and finally leaves it behind.

- 1 How would you counsel a patient who related an episode such as this?
- 2 What are the risks of such a patient drinking again?
- 3 How would you assess the patient and counsel them against relapse?

b (0:26:20–0:27:30). Jim goes into another liquor store. The owner, Harry, refuses to sell him any alcohol, reminds him that he has been sober for two years and tells Jim that he will not get drunk from alcohol bought in this store.

- 1 What role does the liquor-store owner have in addressing Jim's sobriety?
- 2 What other actions might the store owner have taken?
- 3 What do you think is the likelihood that Jim will maintain his sobriety?
- 4 How would you counsel a patient like Jim?

c (0:30:10–0:30:53). Jim goes into another liquor store, purchases a fifth of bourbon and begins drinking.

- 1 What prompted this relapse?
- 2 What signs and behaviors might have contributed to the relapse?
- 3 What was the impact of sharing his story in AA on his current drinking?

d (1:05:35–1:08:35). A young woman attending the AA meeting raises her hand to speak. She says that she would rather be dead than sober. She says that she does not feel any better with AA, and that she drank alcohol and smoked a joint this morning so she could get through the day. She adds that she had planned to go out and get drunk tonight, but came to the meeting instead because she wants someone to stop her.

- 1 How would you describe this woman's level of understanding of her disease?
- 2 How would you help a patient who expresses similar feelings?
- 3 What could you do to enhance such a patient's motivation to achieve sobriety?

## Dual addictions

◆ *28 Days* (Sandra Bullock, Reni Santoni). Gwen (Sandra Bullock) ruins her sister's wedding after arriving drunk. She ends up in a 28-day inpatient program for alcoholics and addicts.

a (0:14:45–0:15:09). The group is on an outing and stops at a convenience store. Gwen asks for a packet of cigarettes and is told that they are out of stock. She becomes enraged and says that these people out here are addicts and they need their cigarettes like they need air. Finally she asks the store clerk if she has gum.

- 1 What is the impact of substituting one addictive behavior for another?
- 2 Which addiction would you treat first, nicotine or alcohol? Or, would you treat both behaviors at the same time?

## Anger management

◆ *Anger Management* (Jack Nicholson, Adam Sandler, Marisa Tomei). A marketing executive, Dave (Adam Sandler), is a mild-mannered individual who, through a series of comical, escalating misperceptions, is sentenced for assault and battery against a flight attendant. He is ordered to pay a fine and attend 20 hours of anger management training. His anger management coach, Dr Rydel (Jack Nicholson), goes overboard when monitoring his behavior, making the audience wonder why he himself has not been sentenced to treatment. A twist in the plot exposes the involvement of Dave's girlfriend (Marisa Tomei) in these bizarre events.

a (0:08:11–0:08:45). In court with his attorney, Dave is sentenced for assault and battery against a flight attendant on a recent flight. He is ordered to pay a fine and attend 20 hours of anger management training.

b (0:08:51–0:12:37). Dave shows up for his first anger management class. He recognizes the facilitator, Dr Rydel, as the passenger who sat next to him on the plane and who witnessed the misunderstanding which resulted in his assault and battery charge. Dave asks Dr Rydel to sign off for him because, despite the charge, he did not do anything wrong. Dr Rydel suggests that he should attend one class and then he will sign him off. The scene ends when Dr Rydel suggests that others in the class introduce themselves to Dave.

- 1 While the recommendation for anger management treatment may be court ordered, are there circumstances in which you might suggest anger management training to a patient?
- 2 What health conditions are associated with anger, hostility and other type A behavior?
- 3 How would you approach an angry patient in your practice?
- 4 What anger management resources are available in your community?