

## WARNING SIGNS FOR CHILD'S WEIGHT GAIN

As a parent you may have wondered when you should be concerned about your child's weight. While there is no specific weight where you should be concerned about your child, risk for medical problems related to obesity can be determined by comparing height and weight for age (BMI percentile for age) and this is not easy to do without access to a growth chart that can track BMI percentile. We begin to be concerned for children who have a BMI above 85<sup>th</sup> percentile for age (like BMI >25 for adult). Yearly visits with your child's pediatrician/primary care provider allow you to review these numbers and growth charts with them and track your child's trends over time.

If your child has not been to a visit with their provider or isn't due for a visit for some time and you have concerns, here are a few things to look for to know when it's time to discuss your concerns with your child's pediatrician:

- Weight gain attributed to new medications
- Pain with exercise
- Your child not keeping up with peers at recess or in gym class
- Not meeting usual age-related benchmarks not related to any other medical condition
- Your child has reported being bullied at school- especially about weight
- Breathing problems at night, snoring or restless sleep
- Shortness of breath in everyday activities
- Change in behavior with food (hiding/sneaking food)
- Rapid weight gain without any obvious reason
- Child expresses concern about weight or wants to start 'dieting'

If you do not have any weight related concerns, you may be researching steps you and your family can take to prevent excess weight gain and its associated health risks. Even though our clinic primarily focuses on those children with a BMI >85<sup>th</sup> percentile for age and the intensity of our full program may not be the right fit for a child who is in a more normal BMI range, improved feeding practices can help children/families of all shapes and sizes. Our team works closely with and provides education for local pediatricians and family medicine providers so they can be the first step in helping you prevent excess weight in your child.

If your child does have excess weight and you would like to be seen at CentraCare Pediatric Weight Management, you do not have to wait until your next visit with a pediatrician. A provider referral is not needed to be seen in our clinic; however, we do request that your child has a primary care provider or pediatrician to help with general health concerns since our clinic is not set up to address those concerns and to follow the health of your child over time.