



The Health At Every Size® Approach

The Association for Size Diversity and Health (ASDAH) affirms a holistic definition of health, which cannot be characterized as simply the absence of physical or mental illness, limitation, or disease. Rather, health exists on a continuum that varies with time and circumstance for each individual. Health should be conceived as a resource or capacity available to all regardless of health condition or ability level, and not as an outcome or objective of living. Pursuing health is neither a moral imperative nor an individual obligation, and health status should never be used to judge, oppress, or determine the value of an individual.

The framing for a Health At Every Size (HAES®) approach comes out of discussions among healthcare workers, consumers, and activists who reject both the use of weight, size, or BMI as proxies for health, and the myth that weight is a choice. The HAES model is an approach to both policy and individual decision-making. It addresses broad forces that support health, such as safe and affordable access. It also helps people find sustainable practices that support individual and community well-being. The HAES approach honors the healing power of social connections, evolves in response to the experiences and needs of a diverse community, and grounds itself in a social justice framework.

The Health At Every Size® Principles are:

1. **Weight Inclusivity:** Accept and respect the inherent diversity of body shapes and sizes and reject the idealizing or pathologizing of specific weights.
2. **Health Enhancement:** Support health policies that improve and equalize access to information and services, and personal practices that improve human well-being, including attention to individual physical, economic, social, spiritual, emotional, and other needs.
3. **Respectful Care:** Acknowledge our biases, and work to end weight discrimination, weight stigma, and weight bias. Provide information and services from an understanding that socio-economic status, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, and other identities impact weight stigma, and support environments that address these inequities.
4. **Eating for Well-being:** Promote flexible, individualized eating based on hunger, satiety, nutritional needs, and pleasure, rather than any externally regulated eating plan focused on weight control.
5. **Life-Enhancing Movement:** Support physical activities that allow people of all sizes, abilities, and interests to engage in enjoyable movement, to the degree that they choose.

<https://www.sizediversityandhealth.org/content.asp?id=152>