

**OPTIFAST® Overview Clips transcript – February 1, 2019 – Allina Health
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What is OPTIFAST®?

OPTIFAST® was developed 40 years ago. It's a medically-supervised weight management program that focuses on weight loss but also on improving medical conditions and the patient as a whole person for the long-term. You'll get a team of a medical provider and a registered dietician and those visits will be regular so you will get ongoing support. The other thing is there's group classes and so you get that feedback from your team member as well as further your education and support so that you can have better behavior change.

How does the OPTIFAST® program work?

OPTIFAST® uses meal replacement, teaching and continued support. OPTIFAST® meal replacements replace your eating and so you don't have to make those continued choices throughout the day. This makes it a lot easier and can actually lessen food cravings and make for easier satisfaction. This concept is called stimuli narrowing and is a big part of the program. There are three phases to the OPTIFAST® program. There's the active weight loss phase which lasts about one to four months in length. This is the time when people are using their meal replacements to replace their meals. Next, is the transition phase. This part is where you use your meal replacements and start offering a variety of foods into your diet as well. The maintenance phase is much more long-term and this is where you're getting ongoing support to really make the program work for you and your lifestyle.

What are the benefits of the OPTIFAST® program?

The most obvious benefit is weight loss but we really want you to focus on the benefits for the whole you. It is not just about the weight. OPTIFAST® has been around for forty years and has been cited in 80 publications. Studies are showing improvements in blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol. Not only physical health improves but your mental health can improve as well. We're also seeing improvement in things like fertility, breathing, sleep and in bone health. OPTIFAST® is different because it offers continued support by way of medical visits and dietician visits as well as classes. You're going to learn to develop skills that really change your relationship with food and how you think about eating.

How much weight can I expect to lose on OPTIFAST®?

Depending on your diet plan, your participation and your follow through your weight loss is really going to depend. What we like to do in weight management instead of looking at pounds lost is more looking at percent of your weight loss because everybody starts at a different weight. Newest research is really showing that within about 25 weeks the

average weight loss is about 12% of your body weight. What this means is for a person that's 230 pounds, the average weight loss in six months would be about 28 pounds.

Will I be constantly hungry? And what about cravings?

One of our main objectives in the OPTIFAST® program is to help you manage your hunger. We're also going to really learn the differences between physical hunger and feeling hungry maybe for other reasons such as appetite, cravings, stress and your environment. We know that the real concerns and so those are going to be addressed along the way. The first few days you might feel a bit of hunger but really in the long-term people are saying that their appetite actually decreases as well as their cravings. So it's really something that you can feel satisfied on.

What if I have food allergies?

OPTIFAST® products are gluten-free, peanut-free and work for people with lactose intolerance. If you have a severe milk protein allergy or an egg allergy, OPTIFAST products may not be for you but we're happy to see you in consultation to explore other options.

What does the OPTIFAST® program cost?

Your provider visits within the OPTIFAST program, as well as any labs and an EKG, will be billed to your insurance. Your dietician visits will also be billed to your insurance. But you actually are responsible for any charges that are not covered by your insurance plan – this could include co-pays or deductibles. It is your responsibility to understand your insurance coverage. Insurance doesn't cover the cost of the meal replacement but you have to remember that you won't be having to pay for food, groceries, your meals out and your beverages out. The average cost of OPTIFAST is between 3 and \$4 per meal. Keep in mind it's about the quality of your diet. OPTIFAST is not just a protein shake. It offers complete nutrition, giving you 100% of the daily value of most vitamins and minerals.

Do I have to attend the weekly support classes?

The support group is not mandatory but it is highly encouraged. This is the part of the program where you're really going to learn how to improve your relationship with food and how to really put together a healthy meal that works for you and your family. It really is the part two that can help you succeed in the long-term. We want you to lose weight but we also want you to maintain it. That's sometimes the hardest part – maintenance of weight loss and also maintenance of those behavior changes. The group classes will really help you along with that because they're going to provide you education, support, and accountability. You'll also be able to share your successes with other people that are doing the same thing, sharing of recipes, talking about things that are difficult that's a key component to having success. Studies show that when a meal replacement program is combined with the ongoing support group more weight is lost.

How is OPTIFAST® better than other weight-loss programs?

The most recent research compared two different groups of people. The first group was following an intense structured diet plan along with behavior change. The second group was in the OPTIFAST program but also got nutrition, education, and behavior change. What they found was after 52 weeks the OPTIFAST program group of people lost double the amount of weight.

Managing your weight for life

At OPTIFAST and Allina Health Weight Management we treat obesity as a disease. We know that it's complex and so throughout your life, you're going to need different support along the way. There really is no end. There's really no cure for obesity. What we want to do is help you learn to manage your weight for the rest of your life. In the OPTIFAST program you have two years before we need to reassess but with Allina Health Weight Management you'll be able to come back and we want to encourage you to do that when you need it the most. That's where we're here to help you 'cause maintenance of the weight loss and of the behaviors is the hardest part. We want you to know that we're here for you. That we're a safe and caring place that you can rely on that really understands what you're going through and treats you as an individual.