

# Importance of Patient Bodyweight in Hospitals

Is Obtaining Patient Weight During Assessment an Effective Method to Prevent Complications and Assess Patient Status?

By: Abby Petersen, Hannah Van Iperen, Brittney Berry, & Dr. Karie Stamer



## Abstract

Ten research articles that included information about patient weights, weight errors, and importance on weight in relation to nutritional assessment, fluid assessment, and medication doses were reviewed to create a policy. The results of the articles conclude that within healthcare, the facilities and faculty are not doing enough in making sure each patient is being weighed during their hospital stay. Nurses and other patient care staff should be properly educated and trained on how to obtain bodyweights to reduce the instances of inaccuracy.

### Introduction

The recording of accurate patient weight is a fundamental part of the initial patient assessment along with daily assessments when admitted to a hospital. The recording could potentially influence a variety of clinical tasks during hospital admission. These clinical tasks include accurate prescription of medication doses, fluid assessment, educational topic regarding nutrition and obesity, and helps the staff determine safe patient lifting practices. Many hospitals within research studies have experienced barriers to why patient weights are not being accurately recorded or fattered during the assessment process. Recording patient weight should be a standard practice for all hospital admission and for all hospital units.

### Methods and Materials

Within the 10 articles that were uncovered to be beneficial there are different levels of research evidence, different types of methods used, and different research strategies. These articles include simple, experimental, quantitative, qualitative, and cross-sectional studies. Within these articles hold different environments and standards in which the information was gathered. The materials of the articles consist of studies regarding the nursing assessment, medication errors due to bodyweight, and preventive measures to promote positive patient outcomes. These studies show the importance of obtaining accurate weights for cardiac patients.

### Results

The overall results of these 10 articles is that within healthcare, the facilities and faculty are not doing enough in making sure each patient is getting an accurate weight during their assessment or hospital stay. Each article proves the importance of why patient weights are gathered and how to accurate weight can help with other measures such as prevention related to medication dosage error, treatment plans, education topics, and positive patient outcomes. The most frequent barrier to weight not being recorded was interruptions to the admission process. It stated that only 55% of patients are being weighed due to staff compliance. Another result included the importance of education regarding patient weights. When properly educated, the percentage of documented weights had risen from 19% to 91%. To conclude results, gathering patient weights is an assessment piece that is crucial to the patient in many aspects including status, education, medication dosage, and treatment plans.

### Impact on Population

The population that is involved within the evidenced-based practice project would be all patients that are seen and/or admitted to the Spencer Hospital. It would not exclude any units or floors; all patients should have an accurate weight gathered and documented while in the hospital. This research would impact the population by increasing positive patient outcomes by preventing complications or errors within daily cares. It would also decrease the chance for a missed diagnosis relating to eating disorders, at-risk for diabetes and hypertension. Lastly, it would decrease the chance for re-admission to the hospital.



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### Approach to Integrate Evidence and Interventions

The approach to integrate the evidence is based on our evidence-based practice question. The research that has been conducted has answered the question in a positive manner. The interventions that are suggested in order to improve this policy is to properly educate the staff on the importance of a patient bodyweight and how to properly gather a bodyweight. A second intervention is to recommend that a bodyweight will be documented every 24 hours in the electronic charting system. The last intervention is to acknowledge the overall outcome that could occur when gathering an accurate bodyweight. This intervention would benefit both the patient and the hospital by decreasing the cost for hospital acquired complications and increased patient satisfaction.

### Conclusion

An accurate patient weight may be seen as a standard skill, uncomplicated skill but holds the potential to influence many different factors regarding the patient and their health status. By integrating this research, hospitals will have improved reports, patient recommendations due to satisfaction, and better reviews. Hospitals will also have a decrease in cost related to hospital acquired complications and errors. Recording accurate bodyweights is a fundamental part of nutrition screen, prevention of medication dosage errors and monitoring patient status.

### References

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