

Randomized Trial of Social Network Lifestyle Intervention for Obesity: MICROCLINIC

Intervention Results and 16-Month Follow-up

History: Because social networks have been suggested a propagators of obesity, a social network program, based in rural Appalachia, KY, was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of social networks to control obesity.

Questions to answer: Can a social network be an effective lifestyle intervention for weight loss?

Trial Design	A first-time long-term randomized trial evaluating the impact of social networks on health outcomes (obesity). The Microclinic Social Network Behavioral Health Intervention (MSN) was investigated in rural Appalachia, KY to compare changes in health outcomes for social clusters (2-8 individuals) vs. standard care received at the local county health department. Health educators led weekly sessions for the social cluster (microclinic) group in areas that included physical activity, nutrition, health education and social activity. N= 552; women 85.5%; mean age 50.9 years; 242 clusters.	
Primary Endpoint	Health outcomes (waist circumference, weight): social network program participants vs. standard care controls	
Trial Results <i>MSN compared to controls</i>	<u>9-10 Month Intervention Program</u> Waist Circumference: -1.24 inches (p<0.001) Body Weight: -6.52 lbs. (p<0.001)	<u>16-month f/u</u> Weight and waist circumferences - maintained

Take Away: In a setting with limited resources, MSN demonstrated effectiveness in obesity control. This has potential for promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors using social networks.