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Maintenance and relapse after weight loss in women: behavioral aspects

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ABSTRACT

Obese women who regained weight after successful weight reduction (relapsers, n = 44); formerly obese, average-weight women who maintained weight loss (maintainers, n = 30); and women who had always remained at the same average, nonobese weight (control subjects, n = 34) were interviewed. Most maintainers (90%) and control subjects (82%) exercised regularly, were conscious of their behaviors, used available social support (70% and 80%, respectively), confronted problems directly (95% and 60%, respectively), and used personally developed strategies to help themselves. Few relapsers exercised (34%), most ate unconsciously in response to emotions (70%), few used available social support (38%), and few confronted problems directly (10%). These findings suggest the advisability of development and prospective evaluation of individualized treatment programs designed to enhance exercise, coping skills, and social support.

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