

Weight Loss

Clinically significant weight loss is that which exceeds 5% of body weight over a 6 month period. Depression is the most common cause of weight loss in elderly and institutionalised patients.

Information Required

- Presence of Red flags
- Document degree of weight loss
- Associated symptoms
- Smoking and alcohol
- Family history

Investigations Required

- FBE, EUC, LFTs, Calcium, Magnesium, Phosphate, CRP, TFTs, coeliac serology
- Urinalysis
- CXR

Fax Referrals to

- **Gastroenterology Outpatient Clinic**
Flinders Medical Centre 8204 5555

Red Flags

- Vomiting
- Dysphagia
- Persistent abdominal pain
- Altered bowel habit
- Rectal bleeding

Suggested GP Management

- Consider non-gastrointestinal causes
- Enquire about the number of meals per day and their composition
- Perform preliminary investigations
- If no gastrointestinal or non-gastrointestinal alarm symptoms are present and investigations are normal, a period of observation over 3 months is acceptable. Refer if Red flags present or if weight loss is progressive

Clinical Resources

- An approach to the management of unintentional weight loss in elderly people, 10.1503/cmaj.1031527 CMAJ March 15, 2005 vol. 172 no. 6 773-780
<http://www.cmaj.ca/content/172/6/773.long>

General Information to assist with referrals and the and Referral templates for FMC are available to download from the SAHN Outpatient Services website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/SALHNoutpatients

Version	Date from	Date to	Amendment
2.1	Nov 2017	Nov 2019	Removed all RGH details