



Make the most of your conversation with your child's doctor about acquired hypothalamic obesity (HO)

If your child is struggling with sustained weight gain, constant hunger, and fatigue after an injury to the hypothalamus, it could be acquired HO

Acquired hypothalamic obesity, or acquired HO, is caused by injury to the hypothalamus, a key control center in the brain. Causes of this injury can include brain tumors or their treatment, traumatic brain injury, stroke, and other neurological conditions.

A key sign of acquired HO is sustained weight gain, even with diet and exercise. However, there's more to acquired HO than just weight gain. Living with acquired HO can make day-to-day life emotionally and socially challenging and may also lead to an increased risk of various health problems over time.



Acquired HO is a distinct and diagnosable medical condition that is a result of an injury to the hypothalamus—**not something you or your child caused**

Be your child's voice


It's important to have an open and honest conversation with your child's doctor to get a diagnosis sooner rather than later. The more you share about the symptoms your child is experiencing after a brain tumor or brain injury and the impact on their daily life, the more your care team can help.



Even if it has been years since your child had a brain tumor or brain injury, identifying the underlying cause of your child's obesity can help you and the doctor approach their symptoms together



Tips to support a productive conversation

 **Prepare** for your child's appointment by collecting their full medical history, documenting their symptoms, and noting how soon after their brain tumor or brain injury these symptoms began.


Use the checklist below to summarize their symptoms

Date of onset

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weight gain that began after injury and has been sustained over time | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weight gain even when limiting food or calorie intake | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased hunger or constant, hard-to-control hunger | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New or unusual food-seeking behaviors | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue or feeling excessively tired | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doing less physical activity | _____ |

Symptoms like hunger and fatigue can differ in severity from person to person.

 **Ask questions** to guide the conversation. Some suggestions are included on the next page.

 **Repeat** the doctor's answers in your own words to make sure you are understanding them correctly.

 **Be open** with your child's doctor when discussing their health.

 **Act early:** An acquired HO diagnosis is a positive first step to managing it.



Questions to ask at your child's next appointment

Starting the conversation

- 1 Based on my child's symptoms and medical history, do you think they could have acquired HO?
- 2 Could it be another condition that causes obesity?

Getting a diagnosis

- 1 When and where should my child be evaluated?
- 2 Would we need to go to a specialist?

If your child is diagnosed with acquired HO

- 1 What might we expect after an acquired HO diagnosis?
- 2 Should I expect to change how I manage my child's weight and hunger?
- 3 Are there other doctors who should be added to our care team to help manage my child's obesity due to acquired HO?
- 4 What support and resources are available for people with acquired HO?

To learn more about acquired hypothalamic obesity (HO), visit HO.DifferentObesity.com or scan the QR code to the right.

