

Discussion Board Terms of Use

Use

The Weight Management (WM) Dietetic Practice Group (DPG) manages a discussion board to promote networking and sharing of information and expertise among members. Opinions expressed by participants on the WM discussion board are not necessarily the views of the WM or the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and WM/Academy is not responsible for information posted by participants. While the Academy will from time to time monitor the content of messages on the discussion board, it does not select or edit material posted by list participants prior to its posting. Participants are urged to use their professional judgment in evaluating the appropriateness and nature of the information posted.

The following are points of conduct and protocol that will improve the experience of all participants in the lists.

Requirements:

The following practices are required for **all** WM postings. Any breach of the following requirements will be grounds for removal from the mailing lists (see "Violations and Enforcement").

1. Commercial endorsements and/or postings **are not allowed**. Specific examples may include (but are not limited to) educational offerings on behalf of clients or promotion of a client's product or service.
 - a. WM members will check with the WM (wmdp@quidnunc.net) prior to posting any material that may be in question.
 - b. Event postings will be consistent, listing the title, date and time of the program, a one-sentence description, a link that the member can go to for additional information, and if CDR has approved the program for CPEU.
 - c. Postings should be clear, concise, and informational in nature.
2. Surveys are not allowed, except for student-initiated surveys that receive WM/Academy approval prior to posting. Please contact WM at wmdp@quidnunc.net for more information on the survey submission, review, and approval process.
3. Employment-related advertisements, including job openings and opportunities, are not allowed to be posted on the discussion board or on WM social media channels.
4. Subscribers will understand the Academy's [Pledge of Civility](#) and align all discussion board communications with the Academy's [Pledge of Professional Civility](#).

Recommendations:

Adherence to these suggested practices is strongly encouraged.

1. Unless responding to a message in which the author has specifically asked for private replies, a participant should send any reply to the entire discussion board, so the response is shared.
2. A participant should include a descriptive subject line in each posting. A participant should sign every message with the name, organization, phone number and e-mail address of the sender. Promotional tag lines should be kept to a minimum.
3. Where it is appropriate to reply only to the original sender, as with "me too" or "I agree" messages, the participant should refrain from replying to the entire list unless the message will be of interest to most contributors to the ongoing discussion.
4. The language of a written message can be ambiguous and subject to different interpretations. Each participant should carefully consider the phrasing and choice of language in his or her message to ensure that the intended message is conveyed. Although the list is private and confidential, all participants should also consider the effect of their message if publicly distributed or read by a third party.
5. A participant should refrain from sending jokes/chain letters/junk mail, religious messages, political messages, or spam.

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Other Usage Guidelines

The following Guidelines are intended to preserve the purpose and intent of the discussion board. Anyone who participates is expected to read and abide by the Guidelines in all communications. Any breach of these Guidelines will be grounds for removal from the mailing lists (see "Violations and Enforcement").

1. All participants must conduct themselves within the bounds of professionalism, courtesy, and respect. While disagreements and differences of opinion are encouraged, no one may engage in personal attacks or criticism that has the effect of disparaging or insulting any individual. Inflammatory comments, taunting, and baiting are prohibited.
2. **The following topics and subject matter are unacceptable, must not appear in messages on the lists, and may in some instances constitute violations of the Academy Code of Ethics:**
 - a. Discussions of price, fees, or reimbursement amounts (which, as noted by the Academy's General Counsel, may create the risk of antitrust exposure to the Academy and to participants);
 - b. Employment-related advertisements, job openings and / or opportunities;
 - c. Abusive, threatening, defamatory or libelous comments;
 - d. Pornographic, obscene or sexual materials or references;
 - e. Inappropriate comments or references with respect to race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or ethnic background;
 - f. Religious solicitations or commentary;
 - g. Political solicitations or commentary;
 - h. Profanity;
 - i. Unapproved/reviewed surveys or solicitation for information via survey
 - j. Illegal or unethical practices; or
 - k. Advertising, promotions, or endorsements of commercial products or services.
3. All messages posted to the discussion board are, except where otherwise indicated, intended to be viewed only by members of the discussion board (WM members), other Academy members and Academy staff, and should be treated as confidential. Except for messages clearly intended for broad circulation, such as those requesting professional assistance, no message should be forwarded to or shared with an unintended recipient without the author's permission.
4. List participants must not utilize the discussion board for purposes that cause injury or damage to the Academy, its DPGs, or that are directly detrimental to the Academy's or WM's interests. While constructive criticism and open discussion are appropriate, distortions, false statements, misrepresentations, or deceptive practices are not. Participants should state clearly that opinions expressed on matters of public interest are their personal views and not those of the Academy.

Violations and Enforcement

Discussion boards are a value-added service of WM/Academy, and they are owned by the Academy for use by its members. WM/Academy reserves the right to remove offending or offensive messages from the discussion board and to bar any participant who violates these Guidelines. The following process shall apply to addressing potential violations:

1. Members or staff noting violations may raise complaints or inquiries about possible violations. Academy and WM reserve the right to designate staff personnel to monitor the lists from time to time.
2. The initial decision to act upon any violations, or any complaints about list participants' conduct, will depend upon the violation.
3. Where action beyond a warning to the violator is recommended and called for, such as removal of the participant from the list or referral to the Academy Ethics Committee, the decision will be referred to the Executive Committee of the Academy Board of Directors for consideration and action.