



YOUR WEIGHT, YOUR HEALTH, YOUR TOOLKIT, YOUR TALK



A HELPFUL GUIDE FOR TALKING TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER ABOUT YOUR WEIGHT AND HEALTH



A National Weight and Health Awareness Campaign Brought to You by the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC)



Weight affects everyone differently and can be difficult to talk about. However, talking about weight with your healthcare provider, spouse, friend or other loved ones is important. The *Your Weight Matters* Campaign is here to help.

Whether you have taken the *Your Weight Matters* Challenge online or received this toolkit at your healthcare provider's office, it was designed with you in mind. Use this toolkit to:

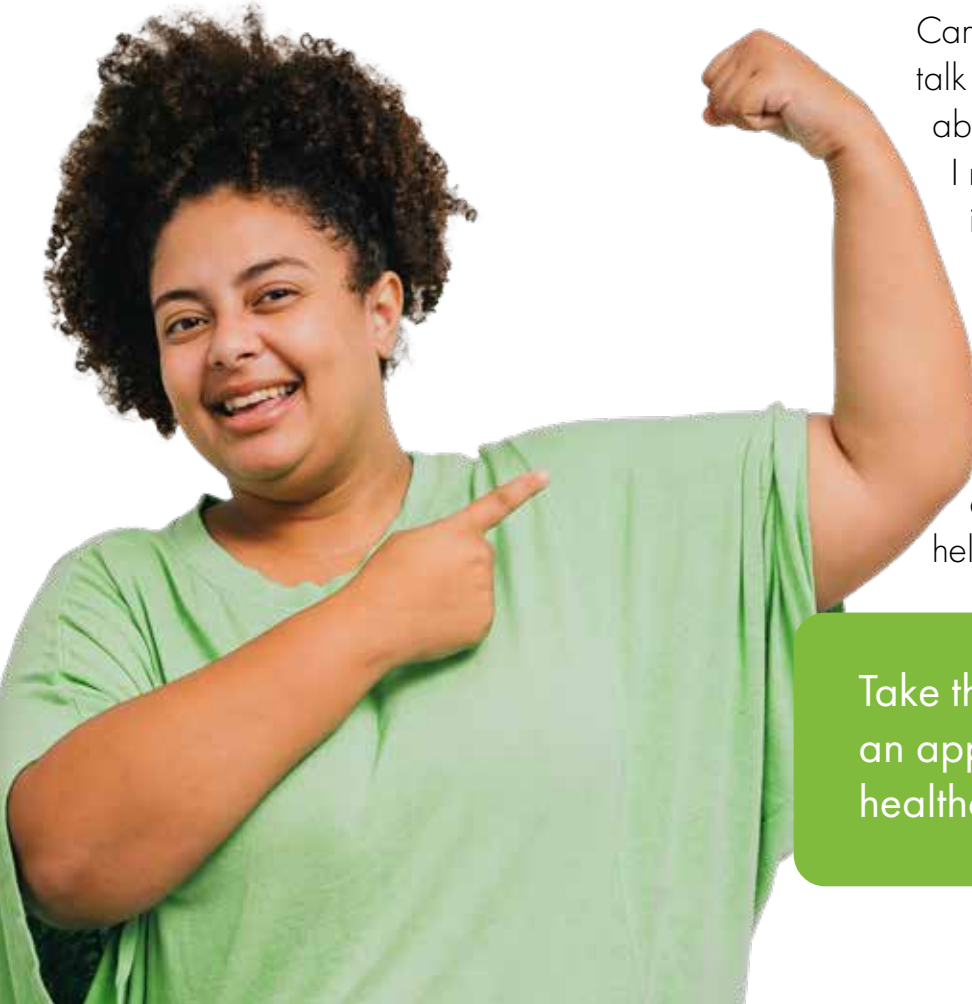
- Understand how your weight impacts your health.
- Learn about safe and effective weight-loss options.
- Prepare for The Challenge you pledged to take: Have a discussion about your weight with your healthcare provider.

Congratulations
and Welcome to
the *Your Weight*
Matters Campaign
Challenge!



Use this toolkit throughout your weight management journey. Take it along with you to your appointment with your healthcare provider.

I am Taking the **CHALLENGE!**



I, _____,

have pledged to take the *Your Weight Matters* Campaign Challenge to talk to a healthcare provider about my weight and health.

I recognize this as an important next step to understanding my weight and how it impacts my health. I will make an appointment with my healthcare provider and use this toolkit to help me prepare.

Take the next step and make an appointment with your healthcare provider.

Inside Your **Toolkit**

This toolkit will help you with your next steps on your weight management journey. It includes useful information on topics related to your weight and health, sample questions for your first appointment with your healthcare provider, and much more. Topics covered are:

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Understanding
Weight and Its
Impact

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Food and
Nutrition

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Exercise and
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Management

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Your Healthcare
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Food
Journal

Weight – Why Does It Matter?

Weight matters to people for many different reasons. The most important reason weight matters is how it affects your health.

Weight and Health

Excess weight strains your whole body. Being impacted by excess weight is a health concern. It can lead to other health problems including obesity. More than 50 health problems are linked to having obesity. These health problems are diseases and conditions that decrease your quality of life and include type 2 diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, sleep apnea, osteoarthritis and many others.

The more excess weight you have, the more likely you are to develop related health problems.

Finding and treating health conditions early is best for your overall health.

Weight-loss as small as 5-10% can reduce the effects of having excess weight.



Obesity-related Health Conditions

What is **Type 2 Diabetes**?

Type 2 diabetes is a chronic condition requiring regular monitoring of an individual's blood sugar level and treatment. People with type 2 diabetes cannot properly make or use insulin which causes high blood sugar levels. Left untreated, diabetes can cause an added risk of heart disease and loss of limbs.

What is **High Blood Pressure**?

High blood pressure (also called hypertension) refers to the pressure that blood applies to the inner walls of your arteries. Having excess weight is a risk factor for high blood pressure. When you have obesity, your heart has to work harder to pump blood through your body. That extra effort puts strain on your arteries. Your arteries, in turn, resist this flow of blood, causing your blood pressure to rise.

What is **Heart Disease**?

You are at an increased risk of heart disease when you have the combination of excess weight and high blood pressure. Your blood carries oxygen and nutrients that your body needs. Heart disease is a disorder of the blood vessels of the heart that can lead to a heart attack. A heart attack happens when an artery becomes blocked, preventing oxygen and nutrients from getting to the heart.

When a person has excess weight, their volume of circulating blood goes up. This means the heart has to pump more blood with each heartbeat, which puts strain on the heart throughout time, increasing your risk for a heart attack and congestive heart failure.



Emotional Issues and **Weight**

Weight can impact both your physical and emotional health. Some studies have shown that people affected by obesity have a 20% greater chance of experiencing depression. People with depression are more likely to overeat and less likely to exercise. Emotional eating can greatly impact your weight and can be difficult to overcome.

Finding ways to manage mental health is important for improving your weight and making healthy lifestyle changes. A healthcare provider can help.



Health and Well-being Tips



Health and well-being go hand-in-hand, so it is no surprise that factors that affect your weight can impact your health and well-being. Eating healthy foods and getting physical activity are important steps when working to manage your weight. As always, before making changes to your eating habits or starting an exercise program, be sure to check with your healthcare provider.

Nutrition Facts

Nutrition is key to managing your health and weight, but many of us were not taught about healthy eating and nutrition in school. Here are some facts to get you started:

- How many calories should you consume each day?** The average person should consume about 2,000 calories each day from food and beverages. Please note, this number is based on a 200-pound male. This number may be more or less based on your height, weight and dietary needs. Your healthcare provider or dietitian can help you determine the number best for you.
- How many calories are in a pound of body fat?** 3,500 calories
- Do you know how much money spent on food is spent on food eaten outside the home?** It is estimated that 40% to 50% of every dollar spent on food is spent on food eaten outside the home.
- How many calories are in a 16oz can of soda?** 200 calories—or about 10% of your recommended daily intake—are found in just one can.
- Why is added sugar bad?** Many added sugars are “hidden” sugars found in most processed foods from breads to frozen dinners. Sugar has no nutritional value. Eating a large amount of added sugars can cause weight gain and contribute to heart disease and type 2 diabetes.
- Why should I eat a variety of vegetables each day?** Vegetables are high in vitamins, minerals, fiber and many other nutrients beneficial to your health.

Healthy Eating Tips

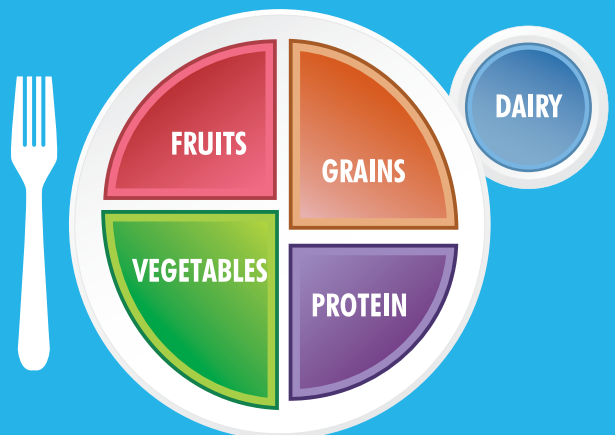
- Avoid fad diets that recommend cutting out an entire food group.
- Eat slowly – it can take up to 15 minutes for your brain to get the message that you are full.
- Drink plenty of water and calorie-free beverages.
- Avoid eating in front of the TV, while driving, walking or busy with other activities – you are less likely to realize you are full.
- Take one serving according to the food label and eat it off a plate rather than straight from the package.
- Get plenty of fiber from fresh fruits, vegetables and high-fiber starches.
- Limit juice, regular soda, high-fat and calorie foods as well as alcoholic beverages.
- Cut restaurant portions in half.
- Make a shopping list of healthy foods before going grocery shopping.
- Use smaller dishes, bowls and glasses so you eat and drink less.
- Eat meals at regular times to avoid overeating later or between meals.

Keep a Food Journal

Writing down what you eat and drink along with how much you ate, when you ate it and why you ate it is very helpful. It will help you track your total calories for the day as well as help you manage portion size and understand why you eat. A sample food journal is found on pages 16 through 18 of this toolkit.

My Plate

In school, you may have learned about the Food Guide Pyramid. Today we have MyPlate. MyPlate shows the 5 food groups that make a healthy diet in an image we all know well, a place setting. For more information on MyPlate please visit www.ChooseMyPlate.gov.



Choose**MyPlate**.gov

Portions and Servings: What is the Difference?

A portion is how much food you eat at one time. A serving is the amount of food suggested on the Nutrition Facts or food label.

Did you know the most important information about food is often printed on the back or side of a food product? That is where the Nutrition Facts for every food can be found. One of those facts is the serving size. Each food has its own suggested serving size from 13 pretzels to 250 ml of milk or 1 oz of cooked boneless, skinless chicken.

Sometimes a serving is the entire container (a yogurt cup or canned beverage) and sometimes there are many servings in one container (a bag of frozen peas). Servings are based on an "average" 2,000 calorie diet. It might be suggested that you consume fewer calories to lose or maintain weight. A dietitian can work with you to adjust the serving size listed on a package to be a portion that works best for you.

- 1 Servings per container and serving size:** Compare your portion size to the serving size listed on the label. If the label serving size is one cup, and you eat two cups, you are getting twice the calories, fat and other nutrients listed on the label.
- 2 Calories per serving:** The number of calories in a single serving.
- 3 Total fat:** These numbers let you know how much total fat is in each serving as well as the amount of saturated or trans fats (fats to avoid) in each serving.
- 4 Sodium:** The amount of sodium (salt) in a single serving. It is suggested you limit total sodium intake to 2,400 mg per day, which is less than 1 teaspoon.
- 5 Added sugars:** The amount of sugar added to a product. It is advised to limit the amount of added sugars to 10% or less of your total calories per day.
- 6 Daily vitamins:** These numbers show the amount of needed daily vitamins per serving. Getting enough vitamins is important in maintaining a healthy life.

Nutrition Facts	
1	8 servings per container Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)
2	Amount per serving Calories 230
	% Daily Value*
3	Total Fat 8g 10% Saturated Fat 1g 5% Trans Fat 0g
	Cholesterol 0mg 0%
4	Sodium 160mg 7% Total Carbohydrate 37g 13% Dietary Fiber 4g 14% Total Sugars 12g
5	Includes 10g Added Sugars 20% Protein 3g
6	Vitamin D 2mcg 10% Calcium 200mg 15% Iron 8mg 45% Potassium 235mg 6%
	<small>*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small>

Combining a physical activity plan with your nutritional plan is key in reaching your health goals. Increasing your physical activity will help you feel better and give you more energy. No matter what exercise you choose, make sure your goals are **SMART**.

Specific: Pick one specific behavior to modify per goal.

Measurable: Can you measure this goal against a baseline?

Attainable or Action-based behaviors: Is the goal attainable? Use action words when writing goals. For example: "I can take a walk each night after dinner" or "I will drink one less can of soda each day."

Realistic: Do you have realistic and honest expectations of yourself with your time, body and likes/dislikes?

Timely: Is your timeline for modifications reasonable and manageable?

Tech Corner

A wide variety of tech devices, apps and programs are available to help you lose weight and improve your health.

From wearable wrist bands and smart watches that track your heart rate, activity and sleeping pattern to downloadable apps designed to help you manage your diet or encourage you to stand once an hour, the choices are nearly endless.



Physical Activity Facts

- There are about 2,000 steps in a mile.
- It is recommended you get 10,000 steps per day.
- One hour of power yoga burns approximately 300 calories.
- The average person burns 1.3 calories while laughing.
- Exercise, no matter the level, can lead to a more effective cardiovascular system and a lower risk of heart disease.
- Physical activity can help prevent or manage type 2 diabetes.

Calories Burned per 30 Minutes of Activity

Activity	160 pounds	200 pounds	240 pounds	280 pounds
Bicycling	320 cal.	400 cal.	480 cal.	560 cal.
Gardening	144 cal.	180 cal.	216 cal.	252 cal.
Golf (no cart)	160 cal.	200 cal.	240 cal.	280 cal.
Housework	144 cal.	180 cal.	216 cal.	262 cal.
Walking (15 minute mile)	160 cal.	200 cal.	240 cal.	280 cal.

Benefits of Weight-Loss

There are many benefits to weight-loss. Losing 5% of your body weight has been shown to greatly improve your overall health and reduce the effects of related health problems such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

It is important to make changes that you can keep long term. If you feel your weight management plan is not working, talk with your healthcare provider. Explain your concerns. They are there to help. And always remember, *Your Weight Matters — For Your Health!*



Lifestyle and Behavioral Modification

Your everyday choices are your behaviors. They include everything from sleeping to what you have for lunch and if you take the stairs or the elevator. They all fit together to form your lifestyle. A healthy lifestyle is one where you choose healthy foods, take walks with your family and get a full night of sleep. Keeping a food journal, joining the OAC Community (see page 19) and seeing your healthcare provider are also great ways to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Focusing on manageable modifications to improve your health is important. Becoming your healthiest self isn't about achieving a specific size or weight; it's about establishing sustainable, healthy habits.

Chronic Weight Management Options

It has been proven that losing weight is more than just eating less and moving more. Thankfully, there are many options available to help you manage your weight. While there are many choices, not all are created the same. Take time to read about options and find one that is safe and effective. What works for you may not work for someone else.

For most people living with excess weight and obesity, initial weight-loss is part of an overall weight management plan. Chronic weight management is a lifelong journey.

When you talk with your healthcare provider about your weight, you might discuss some of the options mentioned in this toolkit. Share with your provider the weight management programs you have used in the past, even if you have never tried one. Your provider is there to help.

Commercial Weight Management Programs

Weight management programs offered through someone other than a healthcare provider are widely used. These programs range from books and websites to commercial weight-loss programs or support groups.

Some options may require you to use their food or supplements and charge service fees. It is important to remember not all methods are reviewed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for safety and effectiveness. Also, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Finding the right option for you is important. Review what's available and discuss it with your healthcare provider.



Medical Weight Management

Today, there are FDA-approved prescription medications, including injections and oral medications, designed to assist with chronic weight management. Your healthcare provider may include them in your treatment plan and will discuss their risks and benefits with you. These medications are not a replacement for healthy eating and physical activity but are taken in conjunction with lifestyle and behavioral modifications. Your provider might also encourage you to consult with a dietitian or exercise physiologist to help tailor lifestyle modifications that are most effective for you.

Bariatric Surgery

Bariatric surgery is a weight management treatment. There are several surgical options available. Most common are Vertical Sleeve Gastrectomy (VSG) and Roux-en-Y gastric bypass (RYGB). Following surgery, lifestyle modifications will be an integral part of your post-surgery lifestyle. Your care will involve a team of providers, including a dietitian, exercise therapist, and psychologist, who will support you throughout your journey. Your healthcare provider will help determine if surgery is a suitable option for you.

Understanding how weight impacts your health and the benefits of weight management is important. It is also important to know that weight management is not something you need to face alone. Weight and weight-loss are complex issues. Your healthcare provider can help you better understand the different reasons for weight gain as well as the best options for your weight management journey.



What to Expect at Your Appointment

Discussing your weight with your healthcare provider should be a team effort. The relationship you have with your healthcare provider is very important. At this first appointment, you can expect to talk about:

- Your daily eating and physical activity habits.
- The types of weight management options you used in the past.
- Personal stress levels.
- Current medications (including vitamins and supplements).

As part of your appointment you may be sent for labs (blood test, urine analysis, etc.) and have your blood pressure and pulse checked. Your healthcare provider may also refer you to a dietitian or nutritionist to learn more about your nutrition and dietary needs.

Following your healthcare provider's advice and maintaining open communication will help you reach your goals and improve your health.

If you don't have a specialized healthcare provider to discuss weight-related matters, consider visiting Obesity Care Providers, powered by the Obesity Action Coalition, founders of the *Your Weight Matters* Campaign. Find a provider in your area by visiting www.ObesityCareProviders.com today.



Find the Right Healthcare Provider to Talk about Your Weight and Health!



Powered by the Obesity Action Coalition

📍 What is your zip code?

👤 Select Specialty... ▾

🔍 SEARCH

How does it work? It's easy! Filter your search by:

Specialization:

- Bariatric Surgeon
- Dietitian
- Nurse Practitioner
- Physician
- Physician Assistant
- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist

Location:

- Use your zip code to do a quick search
- Find healthcare providers near you!

Get Useful Tips

Prepare for your appointment with:

- Valuable tips on what to bring during your consultation
- Practical information to better understand your journey with weight
- Questions to ask in order to have an honest conversation about your weight and health

Finding the right healthcare provider is a click away! Get started now!

ObesityCareProviders.com

This resource is brought to you by:



Sample Questions for You to Ask Your Healthcare Provider

Asking questions and being proactive during your first appointment is the best way to understand your weight and improve your health. Here are some sample questions:

1. What is my current weight?

2. What is my height?

3. What is my Body Mass Index (BMI)?

4. What does my BMI measurement mean?

5. Are you formally diagnosing me with obesity?

6. What is a healthy weight for someone of my gender and height?

7. What conditions am I at risk for because of my weight?

8. Is weight affecting any conditions I currently have (if any)?

9. Could a health problem I currently have be affecting my weight?

10. Do I need to have blood work done? What information will that provide?

11. Will my blood work improve if I lose weight?

12. How will losing weight impact my health?

13. How do I start getting control of my weight?

14. How often should I monitor my weight/weigh myself?

15. Should I see a dietitian to help me lose weight?

16. Based on my fitness level, what types of exercise would be best for me to start with?

17. Why is it hard to control my weight?

18. Why is it important to address my weight now, rather than later?

19. What should my goal weight be?

20. How long should it take to reach my goal?

Sample Questions Your Healthcare Provider May Ask You

Not only will you have questions for your healthcare provider, but they will also have questions for you. It is important to give your provider as much information as possible to allow for the best health assessment. Below is a list of sample questions you might be asked. You may want to write down notes for your responses on the allocated spaces under each question.

Questions About Your Medical History

1. When was the last time you saw a healthcare provider?

2. Have you discussed your weight with a healthcare provider in the past?

3. When did you last have blood work done?

4. What medications do you currently take (over-the-counter, prescription, vitamins or supplements)?

5. What conditions have you been diagnosed with in the past?

6. Do other members of your family have issues with weight or weight-related conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes?

Questions About Your Lifestyle

1. How long have you been concerned about your weight and health?

2. Have you tried different weight management approaches in the past?

3. Are there factors in your life that may be affecting your weight and health?

4. Have there been significant life events that impacted your weight and health?

5. How do you perceive your current health status? Can you elaborate on any challenges you face?

6. Are there specific obstacles that affect your dietary choices? For instance, do you have a busy schedule or are you on the road a lot?

7. How physically active are you? Are there physical activities you enjoy?

8. Have you experienced any emotional challenges that are affecting your weight and health?

9. Why are you concerned about your weight and health?

Food Journal

Keeping track of what you eat and drink and when for a week before your first appointment will give you and your healthcare provider valuable information. It is not just about total calories. How often you eat and how many calories you drink per day are things you may not typically think about. Writing down why you are eating or drinking will also be key. It can lead to a natural pause before you eat or drink that can allow you to question if you are hungry or eating for another reason.



Important things to remember when filling out your Food Journal:

- Be thorough. It will help you and your provider better understand your eating habits.
- Include all food and remember to track drinks many have calories and those need to be counted too.

SUNDAY					
TIME	FOOD	AMOUNT	PLACE	HUNGER/REASON	CALORIES*
Morning					
Afternoon					
Evening					

MONDAY					
TIME	FOOD	AMOUNT	PLACE	HUNGER/REASON	CALORIES*
Morning					
Afternoon					
Evening					

TUESDAY					
TIME	FOOD	AMOUNT	PLACE	HUNGER/REASON	CALORIES*
Morning					
Afternoon					
Evening					

WEDNESDAY					
TIME	FOOD	AMOUNT	PLACE	HUNGER/REASON	CALORIES*
Morning					
Afternoon					
Evening					

THURSDAY

TIME	FOOD	AMOUNT	PLACE	HUNGER/REASON	CALORIES*
Morning					
Afternoon					
Evening					

FRIDAY

TIME	FOOD	AMOUNT	PLACE	HUNGER/REASON	CALORIES*
Morning					
Afternoon					
Evening					

SATURDAY

TIME	FOOD	AMOUNT	PLACE	HUNGER/REASON	CALORIES*
Morning					
Afternoon					
Evening					



Obesity Action Coalition

ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



YWM CONVENTION



ADVOCACY



PUBLIC EDUCATION

LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC believes that great things happen when we learn, connect, and engage. That's why the OAC Community exists. The OAC Community is a place that brings together individuals from all backgrounds and experiences. The OAC's Community members are the driving force by which we make change happen - whether it's in our own weight and health journeys, in each other's lives or for anyone who has ever been affected by obesity.

Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
- Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections

AND MUCH MORE



JOIN TODAY: GO TO [OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN](https://www.obesityaction.org/join)

info@obesityaction.org

(800) 717-3117 | (813) 872-7835 | Fax: (813) 873-7838



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For Your Health!**

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