OBJECTIVE: To assess the impact of an intensive nutrition program on bodyweight and serum levels of glucose, insulin and leptin in olanzapine-treated outpatients.

METHOD: Nineteen subjects diagnosed with schizophrenia (DSM-IV) already treated with olanzapine and recruited from our out-patient clinic received 12 individual medical nutrition therapy sessions and 12 group cooking sessions in each of the two groups (Intervention Group, IG; Non Intervention Group, NIG) over 6 months. After 6 months, the subjects in the IG were assessed entering the program, and then at 6 months (Intervention Group, IG). The group sessions focused on medication and food interaction, perils of dieting and their consequences, and how to plan a menu and prepare healthy reimbursable recipes.

RESULTS: Ten subjects in the IG and 6 in the NIG completed the study. The bodyweight change was significantly, respectively, 0.7 ± 2.9 and 4.3 ± 3.0 kg after 6 months. One subject developed diabetes mellitus and 1 abnormal fasting glucose levels in the NIG, whereas glucose levels remained unchanged in the IG. Leptin and insulin levels were numerically elevated in the NIG but the figure did not reach statistical significance.

CONCLUSIONS: A comprehensive nutrition care program at the initial stage of treatment may prevent olanzapine effects on bodyweight and carbohydrate metabolism. This study waits for replication in newly treated olanzapine patients.