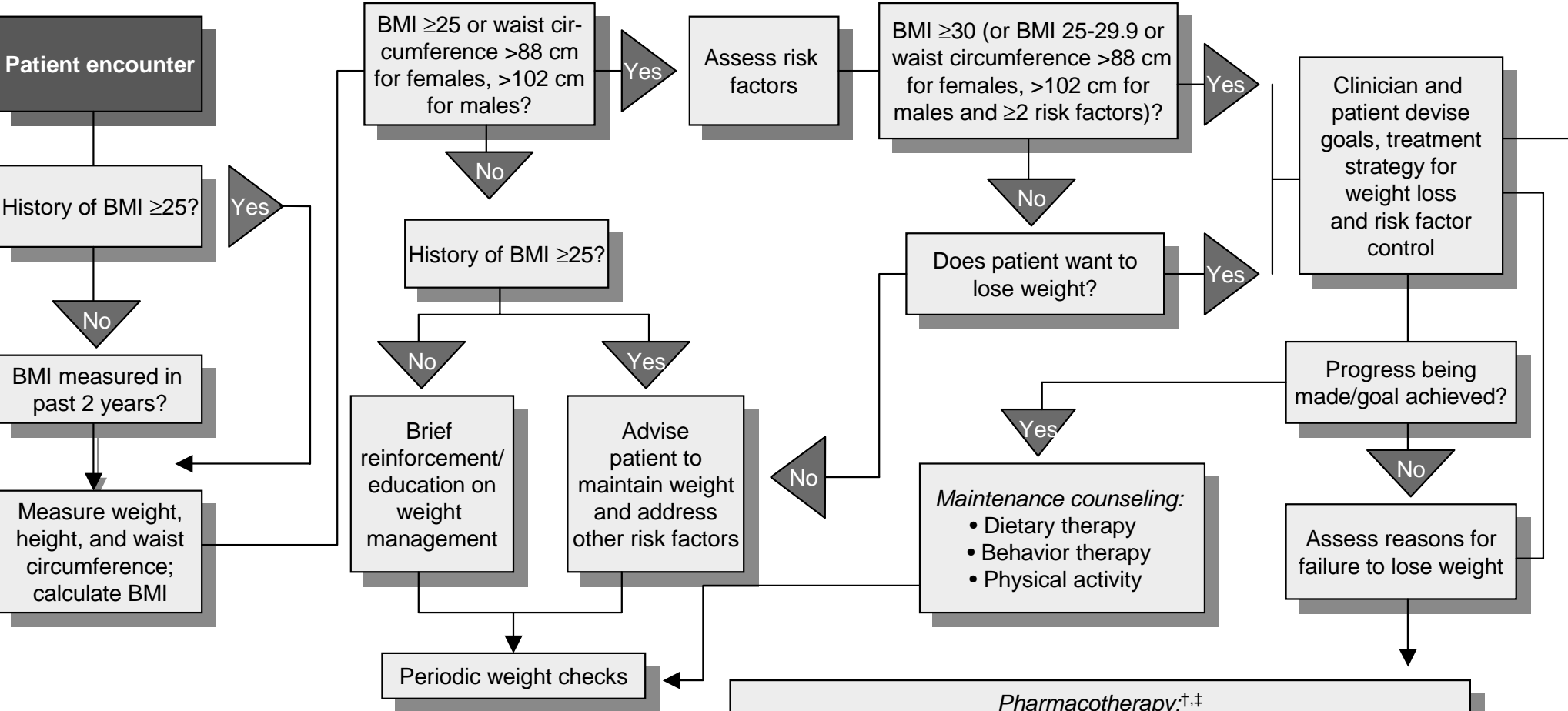


**Figure 13. Treatment Algorithm for Overweight and Obese Patients\***



\*This algorithm applies only to the assessment of overweight and obesity and subsequent decisions based on that assessment. It does not reflect an initial assessment for other cardiovascular risk factors that may be indicated.

†Drug side effects/contraindications must be evaluated for each patient.

‡Pharmacotherapy recommendations not included in original algorithm.

Reproduced from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Obesity Education Initiative Expert Panel. Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults: The Evidence Report 1998. NIH Publication 98-4083.

**Pharmacotherapy:†‡**

Weight-loss drugs approved by the FDA may be used as part of a comprehensive weight-loss program, which includes dietary therapy and physical activity, for patients with a BMI ≥30 with no concomitant obesity-related risk factors or diseases—heart failure, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, hypertension, and sleep apnea—and for patients with a BMI ≥27 with concomitant obesity-related risk factors or diseases. Weight-loss drugs should never be used without concomitant lifestyle modifications. Continual assessment of drug therapy for efficacy and safety is necessary. If the drug is efficacious in helping the patient to lose weight and/or maintain weight loss and there are no serious adverse effects, it can be continued. If not, it should be discontinued.