

Body Mass Index for Adults

My BMI today is: _____ Date: _____

Body Mass Index (BMI) measures weight in relation to height, and is associated with measures of body fat. BMI is used as a screening tool to identify possible weight problems. It also helps to assess your risk of developing diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, sleep disorders, certain cancers (breast, endometrial and colon) and other health problems.

It is important to remember that BMI is only one factor related to risk for disease. BMI does not differentiate between fat, muscle and bone density. So it may overestimate body fat in athletes, and underestimate body fat in older people and others who have lost muscle mass.

A BMI of 18.5 to 24.9 is considered “healthy.”

Take action: You’re at a healthy weight. Keep up the good work!

- Maintain your weight.
- Eat 5 – 9 servings of fruit or vegetables per day and 3 servings of fat-free/low-fat dairy per day.
- Consume whole grains, such as wheat bread, wheat pasta and oatmeal.
- Be physically active for 30 – 60 minutes daily.
- Be sure to check your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Sometimes, even people at a healthy weight can have unhealthy cholesterol levels. Family history and your food choices can play a role.

A BMI of 25 to 29.9 is considered “overweight.”

Take action: It’s time to make lifestyle and behavior changes to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. And avoid health problems in the future.

- Practice action points for being “healthy”.
- Take a look at your eating habits — write down when, where and why you eat. This will help you identify what triggers you to eat. Your body may also be telling you it’s thirsty, not hungry.
- Plan your meals. Thinking ahead helps keep you from making last-minute, unhealthy choices. Try bringing your own snacks and lunch to work. Keep a healthy snack in your car.
- Control your portion sizes. When eating out, try to eat only half of your meal and take the rest home.
- Think about barriers that keep you from being active, such as time, money or lack of motivation. Try to come up with creative ways to overcome these.
- Talk to your doctor about a personal plan of action for exercise.
- Increase your physical activity. Your goal should be 30 minutes of physical activity daily. Try breaking your physical activity into 10 minute increments if needed.

A BMI over 30 is considered “obese.”

Take action: Your weight puts you at high risk for diabetes, heart problems, high blood pressure and more. Now is the time to make some serious lifestyle and behavior changes.

- Practice action points for being “healthy” and “overweight”.
- Talk to your doctor about a personal plan of action for nutrition and exercise.
- You may face some challenges to being active — you might not be able to move as well as you’d like, or may feel self-conscious. Be proud of yourself for taking a step towards better health!
- Be patient with yourself. Start by making one improvement in your eating habits and one improvement in your physical activity.
- Set goals for yourself. For example, choose a short-term goal of walking 5 to 10 minutes, 5 days a week. A long-term goal might be to walk for 30 minutes, 5 to 7 days a week.
- Think about joining a support group, a community weight loss program or talking to a Nutritionist. Check out your health plan for discounts to fitness and weight loss centers.
- Remember to appreciate what you **can** do. Any movement, for even a short amount of time, can improve your health.

Note: Reduce calories and increase physical activity to achieve a healthy 1– 2 pound weight loss per week. Always consult your doctor before starting a diet or exercise program.