

Know Your BMI

A SIMPLE MEASUREMENT CAN HELP DETECT YOUR HEALTH RISKS

Body Mass Index – BMI– estimates body fat based on height and weight. Underwater weighing gives a more exact measure of body fat, but is costly and not practical. BMI is used as a screening tool to place people in categories of underweight, normal weight, overweight, or obese.

WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

To find your BMI, multiply your weight in pounds by 703. Divide this number by your height in inches squared.

Example: Weight = 150 lbs; Height = 5'5" (65")
Calculation: $[(150 \times 703) \div (65^2)] = 24.96$

If you'd rather not do the math, use the online calculator from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/ or find your BMI on the next page.

BMI	WEIGHT STATUS
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Normal
25.0 – 29.9	Overweight
30.0 and above	Obese

A BMI above the normal weight range is less healthy for most people. It may be fine if you have lots of muscle and little fat. In general, though, if your BMI is above the normal range, you are at an increased risk for many diseases and health conditions. These include:

- Breathing problems
- Gallbladder disease
- High blood cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Type 2 diabetes
- Heart disease
- Osteoarthritis
- Some cancers, such as ones of the breast, colon, kidney, and pancreas
- Stroke

The higher the BMI, the higher the risk for these problems.

Action Step

Discuss your BMI with your doctor. Ask about your personal risk of weight-related chronic diseases. Together, make an action plan to reduce your risks.

OTHER FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Bodies vary. BMI does not take body fat percentage into account. For people who are very muscular, their BMI may overestimate body fat. BMI may underestimate body fat in older persons or those losing muscle. People over age 65 should check with their doctors for their recommended BMI.



Body Mass Index (BMI) Table

	Normal					Overweight					Obese						
BMI	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36+
Height	Body Weight (pounds)					Body Weight (pounds)					Body Weight (pounds)						
4' 10"	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167	172+
4' 11"	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173	178+
5' 0"	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179	184+
5' 1"	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185	190+
5' 2"	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191	196+
5' 3"	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175	180	186	191	197	203+
5' 4"	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180	186	192	197	204	209+
5' 5"	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210	216+
5' 6"	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216	223+
5' 7"	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223	230+
5' 8"	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203	210	216	223	230	236+
5' 9"	136	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209	216	223	230	236	243+
5' 10"	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243	250+
5' 11"	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222	229	236	243	250	257+
6'	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228	235	242	250	258	265+
6' 1"	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235	242	250	257	265	272+
6' 2"	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241	249	256	264	272	280+
6' 3"	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279	287+
6' 4"	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254	263	271	279	287	295+