

Tell Me About Weight



Excess weight is associated with a sedentary lifestyle and a diet high in total calories and fat calories. In some cases, excess weight can be attributed to medical conditions such as low thyroid levels or to medication. Excess weight can contribute to heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, and arthritis.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention identifies three ways to determine risk for weight-related diseases include Body Mass Index (BMI), Waist Circumference and Waist-to-Hip ratio (WHR). Each is a value for which health risk parameters have been established.

BMI assesses the relationship of weight to height. BMI is calculated with the following formula:

- (Weight in pounds) divided by (Height in inches) divided by (Height in inches) multiplied by 703.
For example: The BMI of a person weighing 210 pounds and 6 feet tall is $(210 / 72 / 72) \times 703 = 28.5$

	Underweight	Recommended	At Risk	High Risk
BMI	Less than 18.5	18.5 – 24.9	25.0 – 29.9	30.0 or greater

Waist Circumference is an easy method to assess abdominal fat. Excess body fat in the abdomen is considered a risk factor for heart disease, metabolic syndrome and diabetes, as well as high blood pressure and stroke.

Waist circumference is determined by measuring the smallest area below the rib cage and above the navel (belly button).

Men	Desired: Less than 40 inches	At Risk: 40 inches or greater
Women	Desired: Less than 35 inches	At Risk: 35 inches or greater

Waist-to-Hip ratio can be applied as a secondary check for excess abdominal fat when the waist circumference does not exceed 35 inches for women or 40 inches for men. Waist-to-Hip ratio also assesses weight stored in the abdominal area which can lead to weight related diseases. To calculate waist-to-hip ratio, use the waist circumference, then measure the hip circumference by measuring the largest circumference around the gluteals (buttocks). Divide the waist circumference in inches by the hip circumference in inches.

For example: The Waist-Hip Ratio for a woman with a 34 inch waist and 38 inch hips is $34 / 38 = 0.89$
For men, a ratio of .90 or less is considered healthy. For women, a ratio of .80 or less is considered healthy.

Men	Healthy: 0.95 or less	At-Risk: 0.96 – 0.99	High Risk: 1.0 or greater
Women	Healthy: 0.80 or less	At-Risk: 0.81 – 0.84	High Risk: 0.85 or greater

Tips to Control Weight

Controlling weight for a lifetime requires more than just dieting. It takes a change in behavior, committing to a new way of eating, being physically active, and dealing with unhealthy habits, emotional health and stress management. When beginning a weight-loss program, plan to lose no more than 1-2 pounds per week and follow these guidelines:

- Develop an active lifestyle. Walk, swim, dance, hike, play tennis, ride a bike, take the stairs, park farther away, play with your kids...just keep active!
- Develop a systematic exercise plan. Thirty minutes of moderate physical activity daily is a good goal for weight control. Log your aerobic exercise miles. Charting your progress and seeing improvement motivates long term commitment.
- Eat healthy - limit saturated fat and trans-fats; eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, and whole-grain products; limit sugar and sugar.
- Watch portion sizes, especially at restaurants.

