



Wellness Buddy Tip

Providing guidance and support to make the "healthy choice the easy choice."

Chronic Disease Health Promotion and Education Program
Jackson County Health Department

What's a Healthy Weight?

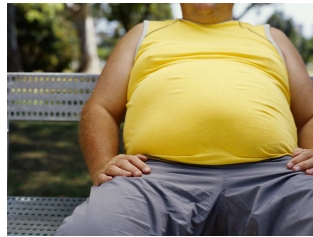
To judge your weight and whether it is healthy you must look at three factors:

1. Body mass index (BMI)
2. Waist circumference, and
3. Risk factors for conditions linked to obesity

Body mass index is a measure that considers your weight relative to your height. It basically measures body fatness. The amount of total body fat is related to the risk for diseases and death. BMI is not a perfect measure and should not be used by itself. In muscular people or athletes, the BMI may overestimate body fat. In elderly people or those who have lost muscle mass, the BMI may underestimate body fat.

For adults, a BMI measurement between 18.5 and 24.9 is considered to be normal, healthy weight, while 25 to 29.9 is considered to be overweight, and anything over 30 is considered to be obese.

Waist circumference is the distance around your waist. This measurement is important because obesity research shows that abdominal fat in particular is a risk factor for metabolic syndrome, which increases the risk of cardiovascular dis-



For most adult men, the waist circumference should be less than 40 inches or 102 centimeters.

ease and type 2 diabetes. Metabolic syndrome is a disease phenomenon that is characterized by a cluster of symptoms: insulin resistance, hypertension, dyslipidemia, and obesity.

If the waist circumference is more than 40 inches in men and over 35 in women risk increases. If the BMI is above normal AND the waist circumference is above 40 inches for men/35 for women, the risk for developing other diseases goes up, too.

Recent research shows that your waist/hip ratio (WHR) is a better indication for developing heart disease than BMI or waist circumference. To check WHR, measure your waist, then your hips (at the widest part). Divide the waist measurement BY the hip measurement. If the WHR is greater than 0.9 for men or

greater than 0.85 for women, the risk for heart disease is increased.

What are risk factors linked to obesity?

- High blood pressure
- High LDL "lousy" cholesterol
- Low HDL "healthy" cholesterol
- High triglycerides (blood fats)
- High blood glucose
- Family history of early heart disease
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Smoker

Obesity means having too much body fat while overweight means weighing too much from muscle, bone, fat, and/or body fat. Being obese increases your risk of diabetes, heart disease, stroke, arthritis, and some cancers.

GREAT NEWS! Research shows that losing a few inches off your waist can have great benefits. Losing just 2.3 inches lowers the risk of heart disease by 11% in men and by 15% in women.

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Special points of interest:

- A moderate weight loss means losing 5% to 10% of body weight.
- Studies show that slow weight loss of ½ to 2 pounds per week is kept off more easily than rapid weight loss.
- Physical activity should always be part of any weight loss effort, along with a healthful eating plan.



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