

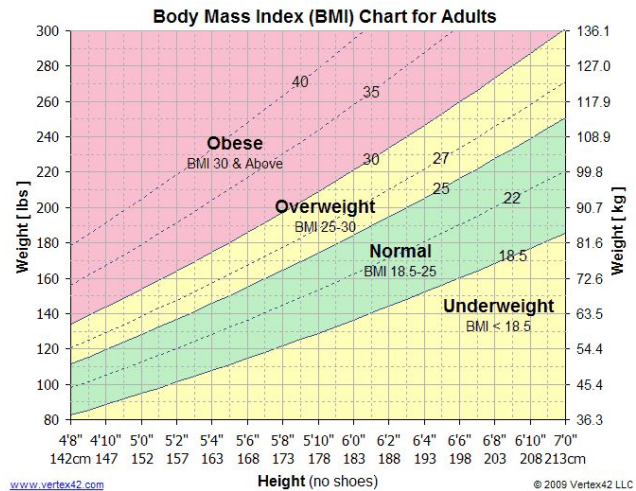
Body Mass Index

Summary

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Definition

What is Body Mass Index (BMI)?



- BMI is a measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to adult men and women
- BMI is a useful measure to assess being overweight and obesity. It is a good gauge of your risk for diseases that can occur with more body fat. The higher your BMI, the higher your risk for certain diseases such as: heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, gallstones, breathing problems, and certain cancers.
- BMI Categories:
 - Underweight = <18.5
 - Normal weight = 18.5–24.9
 - Overweight = 25–29.9
 - Obesity = BMI of 30 or greater
- Some limitations with BMI measures
 - It may overestimate body fat in athletes and others who have a muscular build.
 - It may underestimate body fat in older persons and others who have lost muscle.

Ways to Decrease BMI

Exercise

- Regular exercise has been shown as one of the most effective ways to reduce BMI and maintain a healthy weight
- The Department of Health and Human Services notes that as a **general goal, aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity every day**. Weekly Recommendations:

○ **Aerobic activity:** Get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity a week, or a combination of moderate and vigorous activity. The guidelines suggest that you spread out this exercise during the course of a week.

Even small amounts of physical activity are helpful, and accumulated activity throughout the day adds up to provide health benefit.

o **Strength training:** Do strength training exercises for all major muscle groups at least two times a week. Aim to do a single set of each exercise, using a weight or resistance level heavy enough to tire your muscles after about 12 to 15 repetitions.

o **Short bouts:** Small doses of exercises throughout the day can make a meaningful impact. Whether it be a 10 minute walk on lunch break or parking in spots further from your destination to get some extra steps in.

Healthy Diet

- Maintaining proper nutrition and eating in a caloric deficit will help lead to a healthy BMI
- <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/> is a great resource for diet and nutrition recommendations

o A healthy eating plan:

- Emphasizes vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat dairy products
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts
- Limits saturated and trans fats, sodium, and added sugars
- Controls portion sizes

Proper Sleep

- The National Sleep Foundations recommends that adults get 7-9 hours of sleep per day
- Inadequate sleep lead to increased cortisol levels and can increase risk for metabolic diseases

*Information presented in this educational hand-out was obtained and credited to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Mayo Clinic