

HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH!

Your Healthy Weight

Body mass index, or BMI, is a new term to most people. However, it is the measurement of choice for many physicians and researchers studying obesity. BMI uses a mathematical formula that takes into account both a person's height and weight. BMI equals a person's weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared. (BMI = kg/m²).

To find out your BMI, visit www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi

What is a healthy weight?

It's a weight in a range for you – a range that statistically relates to a longer, healthier life than weights above or below the range.

What is MY healthy weight?

Your range is only one tool to measure the results of your eating patterns, genetics, activity and metabolic rate, and body composition.

- 1) Check your Body Mass Index (BMI), which compares your weight to your height.
- 2) Consider your body type and location of body fat. People who gain weight around the middle (apple shape) have increased risk of diabetes and heart problems, while pear-shaped folks have a lower risk of most health problems. Risk goes up as waist size increases, especially over 35 inches for a woman and for a man, over 40 inches. Studies show that even a small weight gain can have unhealthy effects.
- 3) Examine your family to assess your risks for diabetes, high blood pressure, and other weight-related problems. Family history of both weight and chronic diseases can guide your eating and exercise patterns and lifestyle choices.

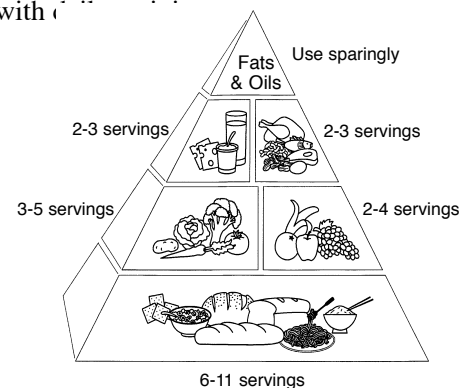


Health tip:

You may have a “celery” shape, a “pear” shape, or an “apple” shape – losing weight may make you a smaller celery, pear, or apple but can't turn a pear into celery. Be at peace with your body type and make health your goal. Enjoy delicious healthy food and fun physical activity!

Should I follow a “diet?”

Special diets catch our imagination, but may not provide balanced nutrition for the long run. Most experts agree that all food groups balanced and eaten in moderation will provide long term benefits. Food contains “calories,” which give our bodies the energy they need. Look for foods that supply high nutritional value for the number of calories they provide, then consider your body's needs. Are you building muscle with increased exercise? Do you want to lose an inch around your waist? Use the Food Guide Pyramid to guide your daily choices and balance the calories you eat with your activity.



**Tri-County
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Health tip:

Let your body tell you when to push away from the table. Eat slowly – your brain gets fullness messages from the stomach 15–20 minutes after food reaches it.



Health tip:

Build in extra steps each day by:

- Taking the stairs
- Using the restroom on another floor
- Parking on the other side of the parking lot
- Planting a garden and tending it yourself. Enjoy the produce to insure 5-a-day fruits and vegetables
- Walking your dog (or the neighbor's.)



Health tip:

When eating out, ask for a take-home box when served and save half of your meal for later – unless you need all the calories and nutrients to gain weight!

What is “exercise” and do I need it?

Any movement requires energy. About 30% of the calories we eat provide energy for physical activity. Very active people may require 40% of their calories for movement. Weight-bearing exercise – walking or running, or lifting any kind of weights (doing a push-up or even lifting soup cans) – strengthens our muscles and bones. The American Heart Association, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other authorities urge us to choose activities we like and enjoy them at least five times a week for 30 minutes.

Are portions really out of control?

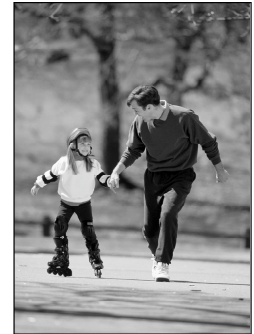
Restaurants became popular for over-feeding us and have even influenced how we eat at home. Yet many of us need even less food to fuel our sedentary lifestyles. When the Food Guide Pyramid specifies 6–11 servings of bread or cereal per day, knowledge that a bagel provides two servings and a plateful of spaghetti may be three servings puts our choices in perspective.

Should I be concerned about my children’s healthy weight?

The number of overweight children in the US has tripled in the last thirty years. Risks for continuing overweight into adulthood increase as one or both parents are overweight. Possible psychological and physical consequences may make life difficult as well. Generally, parents of children under age two should not be concerned if their child appears to be overweight.

Ask your child’s MD about the BMI table for children. Do not use the adult BMI scale for their weights.

You are a vital role model. Maintenance of your healthy weight and your enjoyment of physical activity play a huge role in your child’s lifestyle choices.



Offer active alternatives to TV and computer games.

Serve your child fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Offer alternatives to sweet foods. Introduce water as the thirst-quencher it is instead of juice or soda pop.

What should I drink?

Water is the beverage of choice for all, 8–12 cups per day. Caffeinated drinks and alcoholic drinks may not provide the liquid you expect because of their diuretic effect.

Sweetened non-caffeinated beverages, including flavored, sweetened milks provide fluid replacement but their extra calories must be considered in a total diet.

Are snacks good for us?

Fruits and vegetables, whole grain breads and crackers, low-or nonfat dairy products, water or vegetable juices make excellent snacks. Typical, commercial snack foods usually add calories without offering much nutrition. A recent study showed that “grazing” or snacking between meals does not reduce the amount people eat at regular mealtimes. Thus, snacking can be a weight gain measure. Athletes, growing children, and active adults may need the healthful extra calories and energy that snacks provide to maintain their healthy weights.