



## Overweight & Obesity

# Defining Adult Overweight and Obesity

**COVID-19: Severe Obesity (a BMI of 40 or Higher) May Raise Risk of Severe Illness**

Weight that is higher than what is considered as a healthy weight for a given height is described as overweight or obese. Body Mass Index, or BMI, is used as a screening tool for overweight or obesity.

## Adult Body Mass Index (BMI)

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters. A high BMI can be an indicator of high body fatness.

To calculate BMI, see the [Adult BMI Calculator](#) or determine BMI by finding your height and weight in this [BMI Index Chart](#).

Visit the [Adult BMI Calculator](#) to calculate BMI (for adults 20 years and older)

- If your BMI is less than 18.5, it falls within the underweight range.
- If your BMI is 18.5 to <25, it falls within the normal.
- If your BMI is 25.0 to <30, it falls within the overweight range.
- If your BMI is 30.0 or higher, it falls within the obese range.

Obesity is frequently subdivided into categories:

- Class 1: BMI of 30 to < 35
- Class 2: BMI of 35 to < 40
- Class 3: BMI of 40 or higher. Class 3 obesity is sometimes categorized as "extreme" or "severe" obesity.

**Note:** At an individual level, BMI can be used as a screening tool but is not diagnostic of the body fatness or the health of an individual. A trained healthcare provider should perform appropriate health assessments in order to evaluate an individual's health status and risks. If you have questions about your BMI, talk with your health care provider.

See the following table for an example.

### Adult Body Mass Index (BMI)

Height	Weight Range	BMI	Considered
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5' 9"	124 lbs or less	Below 18.5	Underweight
	125 lbs to 168 lbs	18.5 to 24.9	Healthy weight
	169 lbs to 202 lbs	25.0 to 29.9	Overweight
	203 lbs or more	30 or higher	Obese
	271 lbs or more	40 or higher	Class 3 Obese

Adult Body Mass Index (BMI)

BMI does not measure body fat directly, but research has shown that BMI is moderately correlated with more direct measures of body fat obtained from skinfold thickness measurements, bioelectrical impedance, underwater weighing, dual energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) and other methods <sup>1,2,3</sup>. Furthermore, BMI appears to be strongly correlated with various adverse health outcomes consistent with these more direct measures of body fatness <sup>4,5,6,7,8,9</sup>.

For more information about BMI, visit [Body Mass Index](#).

## Definitions for Children and Teens

- Visit the [Child and Teen BMI Calculator](#) or [Basics About Childhood Obesity](#).

### References

<sup>1</sup>Garrow, J.S. & Webster, J., 1985. Quetelet's index (W/H<sup>2</sup>) as a measure of fatness. *Int. J. Obes.*, 9(2), pp.147-153.

<sup>2</sup>Freedman, D.S., Horlick, M. & Berenson, G.S., 2013. A comparison of the Slaughter skinfold-thickness equations and BMI in predicting body fatness and cardiovascular disease risk factor levels in children. *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.*, 98(6), pp.1417-24.

<sup>3</sup>Wohlfahrt-Veje, C. et al., 2014. Body fat throughout childhood in 2647 healthy Danish children: agreement of BMI, waist circumference, skinfolds with dual X-ray absorptiometry. *Eur. J. Clin. Nutr.*, 68(6), pp.664-70.

<sup>4</sup>Steinberger, J. et al., 2005. Comparison of body fatness measurements by BMI and skinfolds vs dual energy X-ray absorptiometry and their relation to cardiovascular risk factors in adolescents. *Int. J. Obes.*, 29(11), pp.1346-1352.

<sup>5</sup>Sun, Q. et al., 2010. Comparison of dual-energy x-ray absorptiometric and anthropometric measures of adiposity in relation to adiposity-related biologic factors. *Am. J. Epidemiol.*, 172(12), pp.1442-1454.

<sup>6</sup>Lawlor, D.A. et al., 2010. Association between general and central adiposity in childhood, and change in these, with cardiovascular risk factors in adolescence: prospective cohort study. *BMJ*, 341, p.c6224.

<sup>7</sup>Flegal, K.M. & Graubard, B.I., 2009. Estimates of excess deaths associated with body mass index and other anthropometric variables. *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.*, 89(4), pp.1213-1219.

<sup>8</sup>Freedman, D.S. et al., 2009. Relation of body mass index and skinfold thicknesses to cardiovascular disease risk factors in children: the Bogalusa Heart Study. *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.*, 90(1), pp.210-216.

<sup>9</sup>Willett, K. et al., 2006. Comparison of bioelectrical impedance and BMI in predicting obesity-related medical

conditions. *Obes. (Silver Spring)*, 14(3), pp.480–490.

Page last reviewed: April 3, 2020

Content source: [Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#)