

# BODY COMPOSITION AND YOUR HEALTH

Sadly, "obese" is a term very much used today to describe the state of health of a large percentage of adult Americans. According to the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), in 2014, the obesity rate was 35% among men and 40.4% among women. In addition, more than 5% of men and 10% of women were morbidly obese. BMI or Body Mass Index, has long been the gold standard for measuring obesity. BMI uses your height and weight in a simplistic calculation to see if you fall in the healthy range between 18.5 and 25. The problem with this formula is that it fails to account for the difference between fat mass, lean mass, visceral fat, intra and extracellular water and bone (mineral) mass. Enter the Body Composition Analysis by InBody, a technique for helping us to know exactly what your body is made up of. Why is this so important? We now know that there is more to weight loss and better health than just losing pounds on a scale. So, if your InBody results show you have a high body fat percentage, you'll probably want to increase your lean body mass and decrease your fat mass. Basically, you'll want to burn more calories than you take in each day. The best way to do this is to have an appropriate nutrition program as well as an appropriate exercise program.

Since all training/exercise programs are not created equal, you'll have to decide on a program that focuses a bit more on "bodybuilding" in which you concentrate on building larger muscles while minimizing body fat. Or, a program that involves more High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) which focuses on progression to heavier lifts and repetitive exercises to raise one's heart rate. In a recent 10 week study of bodybuilders published by the University of South Australia's Exercise Physiology Laboratory, subjects showed a 4.1% decrease in body fat with a 6.91 kg loss in body mass, of which 64% was pure fat! On the other hand, High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT), ie. CrossFit, puts the focus more on intensity, so reduction in body fat is the primary goal. In a 10 week study done at the Ohio State University, scientists found that HIIT participants had lower body fat percentages with an accompanying huge improvement in their cardiovascular system.

As a functional medicine doc who uses the InBody Analysis as one of the tools to monitor my clients' progress, I find that a large percentage of people need to lower their body fat percentage while also increasing their skeletal muscle mass. Let's see how we might do this by paying attention to 4 important factors:

**1. Nutrition.** If we want to increase muscle mass, we have to increase consumption of healthy protein and fats, as well as improve digestion of these macronutrients. This

can be done by following a modified Mediterranean diet, a Paleo diet or a Ketogenic diet. It's important to find one that fits you and your lifestyle.

**2. Resistance Exercise.** It's important to stress the muscles in order for muscle cells to repair, rebuild and grow. This is where the help of a qualified personal trainer comes to the rescue. They design programs for your body type, age and lifestyle. I work with several qualified trainers in the area, so feel free to call my office for a great referral!

**3. Hormones.** Three primary hormones that stimulate muscle growth or hypertrophy are insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1), growth hormone (GH) and testosterone. Basically, after working out, these 3 hormones signal to the muscle that it's time to repair and build.

**4. Sleep.** The typical sleep cycle consists of NREM sleep (non-REM) and REM sleep. REM sleep is associated with dreaming and increased brain activity while NREM sleep is further divided into 3 stages. Stage 3 of NREM sleep is actually the deepest sleep state and the most important state for your body composition because of the restorative benefits of sleep that occur here. Studies show that 70% of GH is secreted in Stage 3. Also, reducing the overall hours of sleep per night can lead to a decrease in testosterone. Lastly, lack of sleep can lead to an increase in cortisol, a catabolic (muscle-reducing) hormone that is released in response to stress.

When starting on any program to improve your body composition, it's important to set realistic goals and get some professional support and guidance. Remember, fad diets are meant only for short-term success while lifestyle changes can translate into permanent body composition changes and better health.



**IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH...  
IMPROVE YOUR LIFE!**

- ↓ Body Fat
- ↓ Diabetes
- ↓ Cholesterol
- ↓ Hormonal Imbalances
- ↓ Metabolic Syndrome
- ↓ Gluten Allergies
- ↓ Chronic Fatigue
- ↓ Gut Imbalances

Longevity is not a gift, it has to be earned.  
Discover a medication-free approach to better health, better energy and longevity. **ARE YOU READY?**

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