



The Body Mass Index (BMI)

The BMI is a calculation to estimate how much fat is on your body; the calculation factors your height and your weight. This is only an estimate and is not always an accurate measurement of one's body fat percentage. BMI does not distinguish between different types of body mass. BMI doesn't distinguish between fat, muscle and skeletal tissue, or fluid weight. There are many things that are associated with fitness and good health that would make someone's weight higher; muscle is an example; someone who is very muscular may classify as "overweight" or "obese" on the BMI Index because muscle tissue weighs more than fat tissue.

That being said; if a person is not an athletic or muscular individual, the BMI can give them a baseline easy to calculate and obtain number and use that as a guide to improve upon.

The formula used to obtain the BMI

Metric BMI Formula; $BMI = \text{weight (kg)} / [\text{height (m)}]^2$

Imperial BMI Formula; $BMI = 703 \times \text{weight (lbs)} / [\text{height (in)}]^2$

If one does not like math, there are plenty of online and app-based BMI calculators that will do the math and produce the BMI number.

BMI Categories

BMI	Category
< 15	Extremely Underweight
< 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Healthy Weight
25 – 29.9	Overweight
30 – 34.9	Obese (Class I)
35 – 39.9	Severely Obese (Class II)
> 40	Morbidly Obese (Class III)



Waist Circumference

Measuring waist circumference is another way to predict risk for disease. This stems from the fact that excess adipose tissue (fat) in the abdomen is generally thought to be worse than accumulating fat elsewhere. This is because abdominal obesity correlates with an increased risk for not only cardiovascular disease, but also metabolic syndrome, hypertension, and diabetes.

How to do this:

1. Using a non-elastic measuring tape, wrap the tape around your abdomen at the smallest point at or near the navel (belly button).
2. Pull the tape tight enough to keep it in position, but not so tight as to create an indentation in the skin.

One will be at a higher risk for cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome, hypertension, diabetes, and other health issues if you are male, and have a waist circumference greater than 40 inches (102 cm); and if females, a waist circumference greater than 35 inches (86 cm)

Waist-to-Hip Ratio

Another way to assess if one is at a higher risk for health issues is the waist-to-hip calculation which is one of the better assessments.

How to do this:

1. Measure at the smallest point. Wrap a tape measure around your waist at the smallest point, usually around your belly button. ...
2. Measure your hips. Next, wrap the tape measure around your hips at the widest part. ...
3. Divide. Use a calculator to divide your waist size by your hip size.

In women, the waist-to-hip ratio should be 0.8 or less, and in men, it should be 1.0 or less. In women, the waist should be narrower than the hips, and in men, the waist should be narrower or the same as the hips. If the ratio is higher than the stated norms, one could be at higher cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome, hypertension, diabetes, and other health issues

The waist-to-hip ratio is helpful because in smaller people waist circumference alone may underestimate risk. By comparing waist circumference to hip circumference, you can get a better indication of abdominal obesity.