



What is obesity?

Obesity is when you have more body fat than is healthy. Having too much body fat can cause serious health problems. It can even shorten your life. There are many factors that play a role in how much you weigh.

These include:

- The types of food you eat
- How active you are
- Your family history
- Your sleep habits
- Taking certain medications
- Feeling stressed or having depression
- Certain health problems

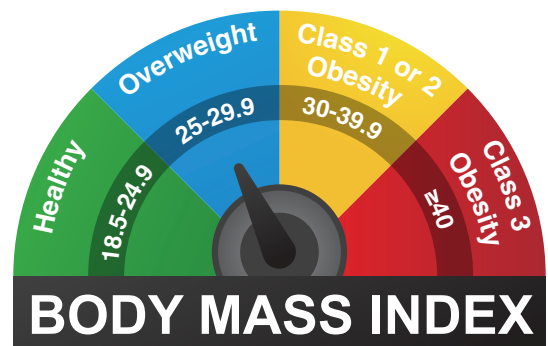
How does obesity affect my health?

Having obesity can cause:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Sleep apnea
- High blood pressure
- Aching joints
- Trouble breathing
- Less energy

How is it diagnosed?

- Your doctor will ask you about your health and weight history. This may include questions about your eating habits, activity level, and previous weight-loss attempts.
- Your doctor will measure your weight and height in order to calculate your body mass index (BMI).



If you are in the red zone, treatment and potential surgery could be lifesaving.

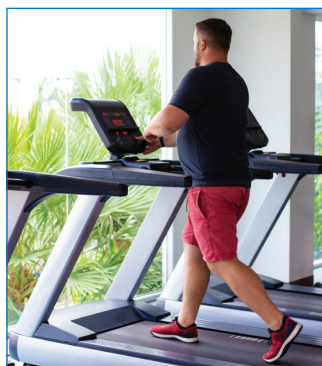
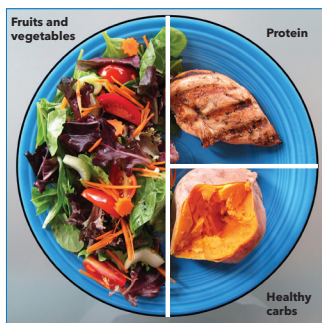
- Your doctor will perform a physical exam.
- You may have simple blood tests drawn.

How is it treated? Your doctor will talk with you about how you can lose weight. They will review any medications you take to see if any of them might be causing weight gain. They will also rule out other causes of obesity that may be treatable, like thyroid disease.

Even a small amount of weight loss can improve your health and lower your risk for complications like diabetes. Together, you and your doctor will agree on a weight-loss goal and a plan that is right for you.

Some strategies include:

- Eating a reduced-calorie diet that includes plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- Limiting red meats, processed foods (chips, cookies, sugary cereals), and sugar-sweetened beverages like soda and juice.
- Eating out less often.
- Slowly increasing physical activity. Start small, and work up to 150 minutes per week (about 30 minutes a day, most days of the week). Include muscle-strengthening activities at least 2 days a week.
- Finding a support network. There are many online and in-person weight-loss groups and apps, like Weight Watchers.
- Making sure to get more than 6 hours of sleep each night.



thing is finding a plan that is easy for you to stick with and makes you feel good about yourself. Many popular diets are similar in that they recommend lean proteins, vegetables and fruits, and some healthy fats (nuts, avocados) while limiting refined carbohydrates (sugar, most bread, white rice, and snack foods). Alternative diets include meal replacement diets and intermittent fasting.

Will I need medication or surgery to lose weight?

If you are not able to lose enough weight through diet and exercise alone, your doctor may talk to you about medication to help you lose weight. There are several different kinds available. If you are very obese and have other health problems because of it, surgery may be an option. Surgery can lessen the amount of food your body can take in and help you eat less.

Questions for my doctor:

- How much weight should I lose?
- How many calories should I eat to lose weight?
- How can I become more active?
- Where can I find weight-loss support?
- I can't seem to stop eating—what should I do?
- Are any of the medications I take causing me to gain weight? Are there alternatives?
- Should I consider taking medications to help me lose weight?
- Should I consider weight-loss surgery?

Notes:

What diet is best for long-term weight loss?

Research shows that there is not much difference in long-term weight loss between different eating plans. The most important

For more information, visit:

Medline Plus: medlineplus.gov/obesity.html

BMI Calculator: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm