

## Why is Body Composition Analysis (BCA) important for weight loss?

Posted by The PlainSmart Team on Jan 27, 2017 8:50:24 AM



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**Your body composition – both lean tissue and body fat – changes over time. Body Composition Analysis measures this.**

The human body consists of both lean tissue and body fat. Lean tissue is non-fat components such as body water, muscles, and bones and minerals. We all need a certain amount of body fat to survive because body fat is broken down to provide energy whenever our energy supply from food intake is not enough. Subcutaneous fat is located beneath the skin, and visceral fat is around our abdominal organs. Reducing the amount of visceral fat is vital for good health.

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Healthy people maintain a balance of lean tissue and body fat composition, but when this proportion is out of balance, we are more likely to experience obesity, malnutrition, osteoporosis, diabetes, and other disorders. Regular Body Composition Analysis tracks results and how they change over time.

In this post, we'll answer some of your questions about why BCAs are important for weight loss and weight management, as well as overall health and wellness.

### 1. Why is Body Composition Analysis useful?

Body Composition Analysis (BCA) measures the proportion of fat – including the dangerous visceral fat – in our bodies to our lean tissue, which is known as metabolically active tissue. Lean tissue burns calories all day, while body fat is a storage of energy that usually has a very low calorie demand, so it takes more activity to burn off body fat. Your BCA results enable nutrition professionals, like our PlainSmart Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs), to understand your individual body composition and design nutrition programs unique to you.

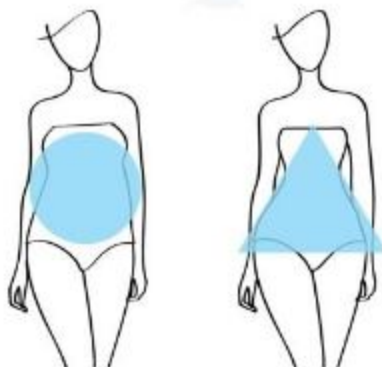
### 2. How is obesity identified in a BCA?

The key factor in obesity assessment is the amount of fat accumulated in the body. In general, obesity is defined as the state of not only excessive weight compared with height, but also excessive body fat compared with weight. BCAs identify these factors, as well as your waist-to-hip ratio.

### 3. What is a waist-to-hip ratio?

Your waist-to-hip ratio shows the distribution of fat in your abdomen and hips, and is a simple but effective way to assess body fat distribution. That's because body fat is stored in two distinct ways, often categorized as "apple" and "pear" body types. "Apple" types have a wider girth at the waist than at the hip. "Pear" types are bigger around at the hip than at the waist. If visceral body fat in your abdomen is on the increase, your risk of disease such as cardiovascular problems and diabetes also increases.

- "Apple" shape
  - More fat above the waist
  - More visceral fat – lies in the abdominal cavity
- "Pear" shape
  - More fat below the waist
  - More subcutaneous fat – exterior and can be pinched



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Your body fat consists of subcutaneous fat – fat that is beneath the skin – and visceral fat, stored within the abdominal cavity around important internal organs such as the liver, pancreas, and intestines. Too much visceral fat can interfere with your liver function, and disrupt normal hormonal connections between your vital organs.

Visceral obesity is considered to be a critical risk factor, along with percentage of body fat, for heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and insulin resistance, which is the precursor to diabetes. Visceral fat is optimally 10% to 20 % of your total body fat.

Visceral fat is more common in men than in women, and tends to increase as we all get older. The good news is that because visceral fat tends break down more easily than subcutaneous fat, visceral fat can be reduced with a healthy diet and regular exercise.



#### 5. Does my BCA take my age into account?

Yes, your BCA uses your biological age, your gender, and the results of the assessment to arrive at your Age Matched to Body. This is calculated by comparing the optimal body composition noted on your report (based on your gender and biological age) with your actual analyzed BCA results.

#### 6. How are BCA results used for weight loss and weight management?

Along with percentage-specific measurements, your BCA provides overall information such as Body Type and Total Physical Score.

Your Body Type is determined from your Body Mass Index and your Percent Body Fat results, which are compared with optimal body composition for a person of your age and gender. We also use Segmental Analysis information to evaluate the results of your exercise, as well as weight loss, through the percentages of soft lean mass and mass of body fat in your trunk, arms, and legs.

Along with Age Matched to Body, your BCA provides a Total Physical Score based on your analysis results and your biological age. On the basis of 100 points, people in the balanced standard body type score around 80 points.



Combined with nutrition counseling – and a comprehensive Genetic Profile, if you choose – our RDNs use your BCA metrics to tailor your program according to your unique metabolism, habits, and lifestyle for weight loss and lifetime weight management and wellness.

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