

# BMI – Body Mass Index: What Does This All Mean?

## **BMI is not the only indicator of health risk.**

BMI is just one of many factors related to developing a chronic disease (such as heart disease, cancer, or diabetes). Other factors that may be important to look at when assessing your risk for chronic disease include:

- Diet
- Physical Activity
- Waist Circumference
- Blood Pressure
- Blood Sugar Level
- Cholesterol Level
- Family History of disease

BMI	Weight Status
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Normal
25.0 – 29.9	Overweight
30.0 and Above	Obese

All persons who are obese or overweight should try not to gain additional weight. In addition, those who are obese or who are overweight with other risk factors should consider losing weight. A complete health assessment by a physician is the best way to decide the right steps for you.

Whatever your BMI, talk to your doctor to see if you are at an increased risk for disease and if you should lose weight. Even a small weight loss (just 10% of your current weight) may help to lower the risk of disease.

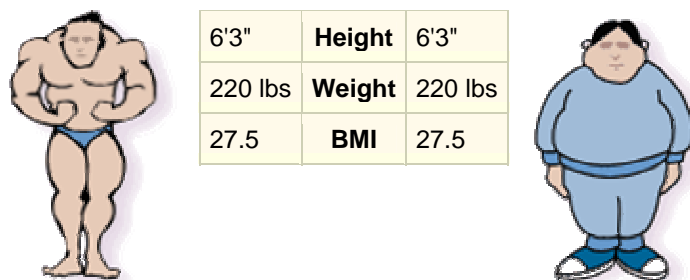
Physical activity and good nutrition are key factors in leading a healthy lifestyle and reducing risk for disease.

## Common Myths

### **Myth: BMI Measures Body Fat**

Two people can have the same BMI, but a different percent body fat. A bodybuilder with a large muscle mass and a low percent body fat may have the same BMI as a person who has more body fat because BMI is calculated using weight and height only.

These men have the same height, weight, and BMI, but may have different percent body fat.



This is a good reminder that BMI is only one piece of a person's health profile. It is important to talk with your doctor about other measures and risk factors. (e.g., waist circumference, smoking, physical activity level, and diet.)

### **Myth: BMI is a diagnostic tool**

BMI alone is not diagnostic. It is one of many risk factors for disease and death. As a person's BMI increases, the risk for many diseases increases as well.