



HealthMatters

AN EVERSIDE HEALTH & WELLNESS RESOURCE | 2021

Weight management

Maintaining proper weight balance is needed to promote good health and quality of life. A healthy weight decreases the chance of developing many health conditions, including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, osteoarthritis, obstructive sleep apnea, gastroesophageal reflux disease, metabolic syndrome, and certain cancers.

Body mass index (BMI) is a calculation based upon a person's height and weight. It provides an estimate of total body fat as a proportion of total body weight and the risk of developing weight-related diseases. BMI scores fall into classifications as follows:

Classification	BMI
Underweight	Below 18.5
Healthy	18.5-24.9
Overweight	25.0-29.9
Obesity	30.0 and above

BMI is less accurate for assessing healthy weight in some groups of people because it does not distinguish between the proportion of weight due to fat or muscle.

Waist circumference is often a better estimate of visceral fat, the dangerous internal fat that coats the abdominal organs. Carrying excess body fat around your middle is more of a health risk than if weight is on your hips and thighs.

To measure your waist circumference accurately, place a tape measure directly on your skin halfway between your lowest rib and the top of your hipbone. Keep it snug, but not squeezing the skin. Breathe out normally and measure.

A lower risk waist circumference for most men is 40 inches or less. For most women, it is 35 inches or less.

Sources:

How useful is the body mass index (BMI)? - Harvard Health

Body mass index (BMI) and waist circumference | healthdirect

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Approaches to healthy weight management

Begin with a vision

Formulate (and even write down) a description of how you would like your life to be in the future, perhaps a year or two from now. Refer to this as you set goals for yourself to make sure they truly align with what's important to you and where you want to be.

Set both long- and short-term goals

Long-term goal examples:

- "I will obtain a weight of 200 pounds in 6 months."
- "I will run my first 5K on May 15."

Short-term goal examples:

- "I will take a brisk walk Monday through Friday from 7-7:30."
- "I will have a conversation this evening with an accountability partner about how specifically they can support me."

Keep a growth mindset

The wellness journey typically includes both forward steps and some backward ones. Consider them all learning experiences that make you stronger and propel you toward your goals.

Utilize social support

Think about specifically what would be helpful support from certain people. Then let your family and friends know how they can help you.

Wellness vision examples:

"I have plenty of strength and stamina so that I can play energetically with my grandchildren. I am a non-smoker, in charge of my health, and feel greater well-being and contentment."

"My wellness vision is that I have healthy eating habits and set a good example for my children. I exercise regularly so that I am delaying aging and preserving my ability to function well in my older years. I look better and feel youthful."

Address all significant health behaviors that affect weight management:

Physical activity

Physical activity and exercise promote calorie burn. Exercise can also impact other factors that impact weight, such as the type and amount of food we eat, the quality and duration of sleep, and our stress management and mental health.

Nutrition

Emerging research suggests that some foods and eating patterns may make it easier to keep calories in check, while others may make people more likely to overeat. Therefore, it is not only the number of calories we take in that is important, but also the type of food and drink.

Sleep

Lack of sleep changes hormones in our body that increase our appetite and decrease our satiety, or feeling of fullness. Lack of sleep also decreases energy for physical activity and increases the opportunities to eat.

Stress

Cortisol is a hormone that is associated with stress. It is also a significant appetite stimulant. In addition, this weight gain tends to accumulate around the middle of our bodies. Stress management also helps us sleep soundly and protects our energy level so we can be active.

Want to learn more?

Connect with your Everside healthcare team to ensure you are approaching weight management in a manner that is healthy. The team is eager to provide information, help you set goals, and provide support and accountability.

Sources:
Health Information and Medical Information - Harvard Health
Trusted Health Advice | healthdirect

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