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Your Health:

Excess Body Fat

How much should you weigh for good health? Body weight actually matters less than body fat for health protection. In particular, excessive abdominal fat may increase your risk for type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and coronary artery disease.

We have 2 standards for measuring excess body fat in relation to health.

1. **Body Mass Index (BMI)** – Your health care provider typically will check your weight and height at each office visit to identify BMI. Weight that is higher than what is considered healthy for a given height is considered overweight or obese.

BMI is only an estimated calculation of total body fat without regard for the individual's muscle weight or the location of fat. For example, abdominal fat is considered more harmful than fat in the hips and thighs.

2. **Waist circumference** – This measure provides an independent prediction of risk over and above that of BMI. Your waistline may say your health is at risk if you are:

A man with a waist wider than 40 inches.

A woman (non-pregnant) with a waist wider than 35 inches.

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