

BMI BODY MASS INDEX

Although body mass index (BMI) isn't perfect, it is the tool weight loss experts use most. To calculate BMI: divide your weight by your height squared (in inches) and multiply that number by 703.

Example: If you are 5'5" tall and weigh 140 lbs you would calculate 140 divided by 4255 (which is 65 inches x 65 inches) and then multiply the answer by 703, giving you a BMI of 23.1

BMI of 30 or above:

Aim to lose 10%. That means 19 pounds if you are 190. You'll drop a few sizes and lower your risk of diabetes, heart attack and stroke. If you can maintain that for at least a month, then set another 10% goal. Continue this step by step approach until you are satisfied with your weight or your BMI drops below 30. Then access your waistline by following the guidelines below.

BMI of 25 to 29.9:

Measure your middle. Evidence suggests that where you carry excess weight is more important than how much you lug around and belly weight is the most dangerous. A waist that is more than 35 inches (40 for men) means too much belly fat – a risk factor for heart disease and diabetes. If you're in the danger zone, try to lose 5 – 10% of your body weight and also shrink your waistline.

Exercise will help.

If your waistline is less than 35 inches, your biggest health benefit will come from exercising and maintaining your current weight.

BMI below 25:

Check your waistline. Slim people can have too much belly fat. If you do, your goal should be regular exercise, not to lose weight.

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