

Healthy Words of Wisdom

Is Your Weight Affecting Your Health?



Obesity

The prevalence of obesity continues to be a health concern for adults, children and adolescents in the United States. Obesity increases the risk of many diseases and health concerns. These include:

- High Blood Pressure
- High Total Cholesterol
- High Triglycerides
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Coronary Heart Disease
- Stroke
- Gallbladder Disease
- Sleep Apnea and Respiratory Problems
- Some Cancers (Endometrial, Breast, Colon)

Waist circumference is an indirect indicator of abdominal fat. A large waist circumference is associated with an increased risk for Type 2 Diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease.

To measure your waist circumference, use a tape measure. Start at the top of

the hip bone, then bring the tape all the way around – level with your navel. Make sure it is not too tight and that it is parallel with the floor. Do not hold your breath while measuring!

You are at increased risk for health problems if you are:

- A man with a waist measurement greater than 40 inches.
- A woman with a waist measurement greater than 35 inches.

BMI stands for Body Mass Index and is a number calculated using a person's weight (which includes both muscle and fat) and height. BMI is a screening tool used for indicating weight status that may lead to health problems. BMI is not a diagnostic tool, so a health care provider would need to perform further assessments to determine if excess weight is a health risk. These assessments might include skinfold measurements (to determine percentage of body fat vs. muscle) and evaluations of diet, physical activity, family history and other appropriate health screenings.

What is healthy weight loss?

Studies show that people who lose weight gradually (about ½ – 2 pounds per week) are more successful at keeping weight off long term. Healthy weight loss isn't just about a "diet." It is about developing and sticking to an ongoing lifestyle that includes healthy eating habits and regular physical activity.

The good news is that no matter what your weight loss goal is, even a 5-10% weight loss of your total body weight is likely to produce health benefits. These include improvements in blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood sugar. This modest weight loss can decrease your risk factors for chronic diseases related to obesity.

Please consult with your physician to discuss an appropriate weight loss goal and strategy.

Tips to Lose Weight

- Write down your goals. Start with small, short and easy goals.
- Reduce calories by 100 calories per day. This will equal about 10 pounds of weight loss per year.
- Strive for 5 or more servings of a combination of fruits and vegetables each day. Fruits and vegetables are good sources of fiber, nutrients and antioxidants. Many are also low fat and low calorie.
- Reduce intakes of red meat, fried foods, and high fat products. Aim to include more healthy protein sources such as fish, skinless chicken, turkey, beans, or nuts.
- Aim for 30 minutes or more of moderate activity on 5 or more days per week. Break this up into three sessions if time is tight.
- Incorporate a minimum of 2 days per week of strength training to protect and build lean muscle mass.

Eat Mindfully:

Mindful eating can be a key to reaching a healthy weight.

Eating a healthy, balanced variety of foods in moderation is more satisfying and easier to maintain than following a strict weight loss diet. Dieting can leave you feeling deprived and hungry. Learn to eat foods that are nutritious and enjoy your food by eating mindfully. Before every meal, pause and ask yourself: How hungry am I? Rate your hunger on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being totally full. Aim to eat when you are hungry and stop when you are satisfied, but not full. Slow down and enjoy the taste of your food.



Resources: www.diabetes.org; www.americanheart.org; www.eatright.org; www.webmd.com; www.myplate.gov

BMI/Risk Status:

Normal/Healthy
18.5 – 24.9
Overweight
25.0 – 29.9
Obese
30.0 – Above

Your Results:

My present weight: _____

My present BMI: _____

Waist circumference: _____

Goal: _____