

# Body Mass Index and Your Lifestyle for Adults

Your Body Mass Index (BMI) is a measurement that allows you to reliably assess any risks that you may have for medical problems due to excess body weight. If your BMI is over 25, you are at increased risk for developing some health problems. If your BMI is over 30, your health risks are significant. It is important to know what your BMI is so you can adapt your lifestyle changes to prevent further weight gain *before* you develop medical complications.

**How to find your BMI: Match your weight on the top row with your height on the far left column and locate the corresponding BMI value on the chart.**

BMI TABLE		WEIGHT (lbs.)																					
		120	130	140	150	160	170	180	190	200	210	220	230	240	250	260	270	280	290	300	310	320	330
HEIGHT (ft. & in.)	4' 5"	30	33	35	38	40	43	45	48	50	53	55	58	60	63	65	68	70	73	75	78	80	83
	4' 6"	29	31	34	36	39	41	43	46	48	51	53	56	58	61	63	65	68	70	72	75	77	80
	4' 7"	28	30	33	35	37	40	42	44	47	49	51	54	56	58	61	63	65	68	70	72	75	77
	4' 8"	27	29	31	34	36	38	40	43	45	47	49	52	54	56	58	61	63	65	67	70	72	74
	4' 9"	26	28	30	33	35	37	39	41	43	46	48	50	52	54	56	59	61	63	65	67	69	72
	4' 10"	25	27	29	31	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50	52	54	57	59	61	63	65	67	69
	4' 11"	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	43	45	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	61	63	65	67
	5' 0"	23	25	27	29	31	33	35	37	39	41	43	45	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	61	63	65
	5' 1"	23	25	27	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	45	47	49	51	52	55	57	59	61	62
	5' 2"	22	24	26	27	29	31	33	35	37	38	40	42	44	46	48	49	51	53	55	57	59	60
	5' 3"	21	23	25	27	28	30	32	34	36	37	39	41	43	44	46	48	50	51	53	55	57	59
	5' 4"	21	22	24	26	28	29	31	33	34	36	38	40	41	43	45	46	48	50	52	53	55	57
	5' 5"	20	22	23	25	27	28	30	32	33	35	37	38	40	42	43	45	47	48	50	52	53	55
	5' 6"	19	21	23	24	26	27	29	31	32	34	36	37	39	40	42	44	45	47	49	50	52	53
	5' 7"	19	20	22	24	25	27	28	30	31	33	35	36	38	39	41	42	44	46	47	49	50	52
	5' 8"	18	20	21	23	24	26	27	29	30	32	34	35	37	38	40	41	43	44	46	47	49	50
	5' 9"	18	19	21	22	24	25	27	28	30	31	33	34	36	37	38	40	41	43	44	46	47	49
	5' 10"	17	19	20	22	23	24	26	27	29	30	32	33	35	36	37	39	40	42	43	45	46	47
	5' 11"	17	18	20	21	22	24	25	27	28	29	31	32	34	35	36	38	39	41	42	43	45	46
	6' 0"	16	18	19	20	22	23	24	26	27	29	30	31	33	34	35	37	38	39	41	42	43	45
6' 1"	16	17	19	20	21	22	24	25	26	28	29	30	32	33	34	36	37	38	40	41	42	44	
6' 2"	15	17	18	19	21	22	23	24	26	27	28	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	39	40	41	42	
6' 3"	15	16	18	19	20	21	23	24	25	26	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	38	39	40	41	
6' 4"	15	16	17	18	20	21	22	23	24	26	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	35	37	38	39	40	
6' 5"	14	15	17	18	19	20	21	23	24	25	26	27	29	30	31	32	33	34	36	37	38	39	
6' 6"	14	15	16	17	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	27	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	36	37	38	
6' 7"	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	35	36	37	
6' 8"	13	14	15	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	
6' 9"	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	
6' 10"	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	

## If your BMI is...

- 19 – 24  **LESS RISK:** Your weight is probably within a healthy range. It is important for you to maintain and not gain weight. If you have started to gain weight and your BMI is getting close to 25, you may want to consider some lifestyle changes such as those recommended on the back of this page. However, a BMI of less than 19 may not be healthy, and you may wish to discuss with your health care professional what weight is right for you.
- 25 – 29  **MORE RISK:** Your weight may put you at risk for developing some medical problems, especially if you are not physically active. Take steps now to better manage your weight. Look at the back of this page for some suggestions. A small amount of weight loss can make a big difference to your health.
- 30 and above  **HIGHEST RISK:** Your weight greatly increases your risk for serious medical problems, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, arthritis, breathing and sleeping problems, some types of cancer, and even depression and other mental conditions. Talk to your doctor or other health care professional today about how to get started with lifestyle changes to better manage your weight.

## A few words about lifestyle and weight management

Unfortunately, there is no magic way to lose weight. Research shows that fad diets, prescription medications, herbal supplements, and starvation do *not* work in the long run.

### Research shows that people who are successful at losing weight and keeping the weight off for the long run do the following:

1. Become more physically active.
2. Develop healthy eating habits.
3. Adapt healthy behaviors little by little and stick with them over time.

### How can I become more physically active?

Too much inactivity contributes to weight gain. Small increases in physical activity over time can make a big difference. Here are some things that you can do to get moving:

- ❖ **Aim for 30 minutes of consistent physical activity on most days.**
  - Make physical activity a family and friend affair. Go for walks or bike rides with family and friends.
  - Try walking instead of driving. Take the stairs instead of the elevator at work or while shopping.
  - Play sports or join a local gym. Start dancing or swimming.

### How can I develop better eating habits?

Eating too many foods that are high in fat and sugar instead of foods that are high in fiber (such as fruits and vegetables) can lead to weight problems. Small changes in what you eat make a big difference over time. Here are some helpful and healthful suggestions:

- ❖ **Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day. (One serving size is <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> to 1 cup.)**
- ❖ **Eat more often . . .**
  - Chicken, turkey, fish, beans, peas
  - Baked, boiled, broiled or steamed foods
  - Nonfat milk, nonfat yogurt, nonfat cheese
  - Whole grain breads and rice
- ❖ **Eat less often . . .**
  - High fat dairy foods, such as whole milk, cheese, cream, and ice cream
  - Butter, margarine, gravy
  - Pastries, french fries, chips, crackers
  - Pan fried or deep-fat fried foods
  - Sodas, juice, and drinks high in sugar

### What if this is not working for me?

- It is normal to feel frustrated and emotional when making changes, especially if you are not seeing results.
- If you feel that you are making changes and not seeing results, talk to your doctor or other health care professional. We are here to help you be successful.
- Try not to get frustrated. Stick with the lifestyle changes you've committed to (eating and physical activity).

For more information about lifestyle and weight management classes and programs offered at Kaiser Permanente, please contact your Health Education Center or Department. For additional health information,

- ❖ Visit your personal physician's online Home Page. Connect to your practitioner's page either through [members.kp.org](http://members.kp.org) or [permanente.net](http://permanente.net).
- ❖ For personalized online programs to help you and your family stay healthy, visit [kp.org/10000steps](http://kp.org/10000steps), a program designed to help you increase your physical activity; and [kp.org/healthylifestyles](http://kp.org/healthylifestyles) strategies to help you manage your weight through lifestyle changes.
- ❖ Check your *Kaiser Permanente Healthwise Handbook*.
- ❖ Listen to Kaiser Permanente Healthphone messages by calling 1-800-332-7563. The TTY (hearing impaired) Healthphone number is 1-800-777-9059.

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other medical professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have further questions, please consult your doctor.