



Information on BMI (Body Mass Index)



Body mass index is a calculation that uses your height and weight to estimate how much body fat you have. Too much body fat is a problem because it can lead to illnesses and other health problems. BMI, although not a perfect method for judging someone's weight, is often a good way to check on how a kid is growing.

How BMI Can Change

It's important to remember that BMI is interpreted differently for adults. There are separate charts for men and women, but they don't use percentiles at all. There are just number ranges that are considered underweight, normal weight, overweight, or obese (which means very overweight). That's because adults have stopped growing and their age is no longer a major consideration when it comes to weight. Kids, on the other hand, are growing. And it's common for kids to gain weight during certain times in childhood, such as puberty. The charts take growth into account.

Calculating BMI

The best way to determine your BMI is to have your doctor do it for you. That way, you'll know the number is accurate and your doctor can discuss the result with you. (Or use the link at the bottom of this article to calculate your own)

Where BMI Can Fall Short

BMI is not the whole story when it comes to someone's weight. A more muscular kid may have a higher weight and BMI but not have too much body fat. Also, a smaller kid could have an ideal BMI, but might have less muscle and too much body fat. Because of these and other considerations, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor if you have questions about whether you are at your ideal weight.

If your doctor tells you your BMI is high, don't let it get you down. Instead, talk to your doctor about what you should do to lower your BMI. Unlike adults, kids don't usually need to diet. But by eating healthier and getting more exercise, a kid can improve his or her BMI. Controlling a weight problem while you're still a kid can help you avoid becoming an overweight adult and developing health problems like diabetes and heart disease. With a little effort, your BMI will be **JWIOTB** — just where it ought to be!



Non-sport activities:

Walking

Yard work

Cleaning a room

Jumping Rope

Dancing

Playing

Yoga

Swimming

Pilates

Find a nature trail

Visit a museum, science center, zoo, or gardens

More information at:

<http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/exercise/weight/bmi.html>



“It takes an entire village to raise a child.”

~Author Unknown

