

BODY COMPOSITION



In fitness and weight loss circles, people often talk about **body composition**. But what is body composition and why does it matter? Your body is made up of fat mass and fat-free mass. Fat-free mass includes lean muscle, bones, organs, tissue and water. You can't change the part of your body that is bone, tissue and organs, but you can change the ratio of fat to muscle with good training and proper diet.

It is not only important to improve the ratio of fat to fat-free mass on one's body, but to also understand the impact that fat placement has on health. Let's break it down...

Overweight and **obesity** are primary risk factors for many chronic health conditions, including hypertension, high cholesterol, Type II Diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea, respiratory problems, and certain types of cancer. Historically, the question has been **"How much do you weigh?"**



And then **"is this weight right for you?"**

WOMEN				MEN			
Height Ft. In.	Frame Size			Height Ft. In.	Frame Size		
	Small	Med.	Large		Small	Med.	Large
4'10"	102-111	109-121	118-131	5'2"	128-134	131-141	138-150
4'11"	103-113	111-123	120-134	5'3"	130-136	133-143	140-153
5'0"	104-115	113-126	122-137	5'4"	132-138	135-145	142-156
5'1"	106-118	115-129	125-140	5'5"	134-140	137-148	144-160
5'2"	108-121	118-132	128-143	5'6"	136-142	139-151	146-164
5'3"	111-124	121-135	131-147	5'7"	138-145	142-154	149-168
5'4"	114-127	124-138	134-151	5'8"	140-148	145-157	152-172
5'5"	117-130	127-141	137-155	5'9"	142-151	156-160	155-176
5'6"	120-133	130-144	140-159	5'10"	144-154	151-163	158-180
5'7"	123-136	133-144	143-163	5'11"	146-157	154-166	161-184
5'8"	126-139	136-150	146-167	6'0"	149-160	157-170	164-188
5'9"	129-142	139-153	149-170	6'1"	152-164	160-174	168-192
5'10"	132-145	142-156	152-173	6'2"	155-168	165-178	172-197
5'11"	135-148	145-159	155-176	6'3"	158-172	167-182	176-202
6'0"	138-151	148-162	158-176	6'4"	162-176	171-187	181-207

In June 1998, in an effort to make sure doctors, researchers, dietitians, and government agencies were all on the same page in answering these questions, the National Institutes of Health announced its BMI guidelines. They replaced the old life insurance tables (as seen above) as the method to gauge healthy weight. **Body Mass Index (BMI)** is a measure of one's weight in relation to one's height. BMI provides a quick snapshot of body composition and is now used by most insurance companies and physicians.

Here are the **categories of BMI**:

Healthy	Overweight	Obese
18.5-24.9	25-29.9	30+

What is your BMI? In which category do you fall?



BMI is often confused with **Body Fat Analysis** but they are not the same. BMI measures total height against total weight. Body fat Analysis actually differentiates between the lean tissue and fat tissue on the body (rather than lumping all tissues together). To measure actual body fat, one needs special equipment such as calipers or a bioelectrical impedance device. Measuring one's body fat is important especially if someone is particularly light or heavy on the scale in relation to their weight. An example would be an athlete of average height but above average muscle mass. A BMI scale would categorize them as overweight but going one step further in Body Fat Analysis, we would find them to have far more lean healthy vs. fat tissue – a good thing to have. Most gyms will have someone trained to measure body fat using either calipers or bioelectrical impedance.



Waist Circumference, on its own, is highly correlated with obesity related diseases and is now a standard predictor of chronic conditions. Waist Circumference related to both BMI and Body Fatness. Bodies come in all different **shapes** and, unfortunately, some shape put you at **additional risk** of disease.

Body **fat distribution** (where the fat is stored on your body) is an important risk factor for obesity-related diseases. Excess abdominal fat (also known as central or upper-body fat) is associated with an increased risk of cardio-metabolic disease. For a more in-depth understanding of the impact of waist circumference on disease, click [HERE](#). In the meantime, grab that tape measure and determine your risk.



	Men	Women
High Risk	>40 inches	>35 inches

Achieve a healthy body composition by:



- Exercising 30 minutes or more on most days of the week AND incorporate physical activity into your daily routine (take the stairs, park further away).



- Eating 5 smaller meals spaced evenly throughout the day rather than 2 or 3 large meals.



- Increasing consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats; limiting consumption of alcohol, fried foods, and simple sugars.



- Keeping it simple and being consistent.

For help in meeting your BODY COMPOSITION goals, contact your on-site Wellness Coordinator, a Cigna Health Coach at 800-244-6224, or call 800-244-6224 to enroll in a Cigna online health program such as ***Work Toward a Healthy Weight, Improve your Nutrition, or Exercise for Better Health.***

