

## What is BMI?

### **BMI stands for Body Mass Index**

BMI is a numerical value of your weight in relation to your height. BMI is a good indicator of healthy or unhealthy weights for adult men and women, regardless of body frame size. It is calculated by weight in kilograms (weight x 703) is divided by height in meters squared,  $\text{kg/m}^2$ , (height x height).

- A BMI of less than 18.5 is considered underweight.
- A BMI of less than 25 indicates a healthy weight.
- A BMI of less than 18.5 is considered underweight.
- A BMI between 25 and 29.9 is considered overweight.
  - A BMI of about 25  $\text{kg/m}^2$  corresponds to about 10 percent over ideal body weight. People with BMIs in this range have an increased risk of heart and blood vessel disease.
- A BMI of 30 or higher indicates obesity.
  - A BMI of over 30 indicates that a person is about 30 pounds or more overweight. People with BMIs of 30 or more are at higher risk of cardiovascular disease.
- A BMI of over 40 is considered extreme obesity.

Some well-trained people with dense muscle mass may have a high BMI score but very little body fat. For them, the waist circumference, the skin fold thickness or more direct methods of measuring body fat may be more useful measures

### **Excess weight increases the heart's work.**

Excess weight makes the heart work harder and also raises blood pressure, blood cholesterol, triglyceride levels and lowers HDL (good) cholesterol levels. It can also increase the likelihood that diabetes will develop. Losing as few as 10 pounds can lower your heart disease risk.

### **Obesity is now recognized as a major, independent risk factor for heart disease.**

If you're overweight or obese, you can reduce your risk for heart disease by successfully losing weight and keeping it off.

### **Waist circumference and body mass index (BMI) are indirect ways to assess your body composition.**

Waist circumference is the distance around your natural waist, just above the navel. If your BMI is greater than or equal to 25  $\text{kg/m}^2$ , your goal for waist circumference is less than 40 inches if you're a man and less than 35 inches if you're a woman.

## Classification of Overweight and Obesity by BMI, Waist Circumference and Associated Disease Risks

	BMI (kg/m <sup>2</sup> )	Obesity Class	Disease Risk* Relative to Normal Weight and Waist Circumference	
			Men 102 cm (40 in) or less Women 88 cm (35 in) or less	Men > 102 cm (40 in) Women > 88 cm (35 in)
Underweight	< 18.5		-	-
Normal	18.5–24.9		-	-
Overweight	25.0–29.9		Increased	High
Obesity	30.0–34.9	I	High	Very High
	35.0–39.9	II	Very High	Very High
Extreme Obesity	40.0 +	III	Extremely High	Extremely High

\* Disease risk for type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease.

+ Increased waist circumference also can be a marker for increased risk, even in persons of normal weight.

Resources: Heart.org and National Institute of Health