

Body Weight Management

Being overweight or obese puts you at risk of developing heart disease as well as many other chronic illnesses such as hypertension, diabetes, and cancer. Losing weight can help prevent and control these diseases.

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) guidelines propose that body mass index (BMI) be used to assess weight management because the index is simple, correlates to fatness, and applies to both men and women. Calculate your BMI by visiting the NHLBI website at: http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/obesity/bmi_tbl.htm.

Waist circumference can also be used to assess abdominal fat content. A healthy body weight is associated with a reduction in risk factors (such as elevated blood pressure and LDL cholesterol) for heart disease and stroke.

How can you lose excess weight?

- Eat healthy and cut out foods high in saturated fat, total fat, cholesterol, calories, and simple sugars.
- Start a physical activity program that consists of mostly aerobic fitness such as running, walking, bicycling, or swimming.
- Ask your doctor about treatment for weight loss and weight maintenance.

Goals:

- Body Mass Index (BMI) = 18.5 - 24.9 kg/m²
- Waist circumference < 35 inches (women) and < 40 inches (men).



This resource provides brief, general information about this health care topic. It does not take the place of the instructions you receive from your health care providers. Discuss the risks and benefits of therapies with your doctor and always take medication as prescribed. For answers to other questions talk to your health care provider.

For more information or a referral, please call the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital Preventive Cardiology Program at (212) 305-4866 or visit our website at:

<http://www.hearthealthtimes.com>.

