

BMI and Risks of Obesity

Body mass index (BMI) is a measure used to determine childhood overweight and obesity.



- BMI is one way to estimate a person's body fat by using a person's weight and height.
- In children and teens, BMI is used to find out if a child or teen is underweight, a healthy weight, overweight or obese.
- A child's body fat changes with age. Also, a child's body structure changes as they age and is different between girls and boys. A child's weight status is determined using a BMI number that is based on their sex and specific age, rather than the BMI groups used for adults.
- There are many BMI calculators on the Internet where you can enter your child's height and weight and the BMI will be calculated. Your child is at potential risk if the BMI falls within these ranges:
 - ✓ Overweight = BMI between the 85th and 95th percentile for the same age/sex
 - ✓ Obesity = BMI at or above the 95th percentile for the same age/sex



Children who are obese are more likely to become obese adults.

- Doctors and scientists are concerned about the rise of obesity in children and youth because obesity may lead to the following health problems:
 - ✓ Heart disease caused by high fat (cholesterol) and/or high blood pressure
 - ✓ Type 2 diabetes (the body does not use insulin properly)
 - ✓ Asthma (lung disease that makes breathing difficult)
 - ✓ Sleep apnea (pauses in breathing as you sleep)
- Social discrimination (treated differently or made fun of)
- Adult obesity is associated with a number of serious health conditions, including
 - ✓ heart disease
 - ✓ diabetes
 - ✓ metabolic syndrome and cancer



Making Sense of Food Labels

All packaged foods have food labels or nutrition facts. Here are some tips on how to read food labels and make healthy food choices.

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 cup (253 g)			
Servings Per container 4			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 260		Calories from Fat 72	
<hr/>			
% Daily Value			
Total Fat	8g	13%	
Saturated Fat	3g	17%	
Cholesterol	130mg	44%	
Sodium	1010mg	42%	
Total Carbohydrate		22%	
Dietary Fiber	9g	36%	
Sugars	4g		
Protein	25g		
<hr/>			
Vitamin A	25%	Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	6%	Iron	30%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.			
	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	
2,400mg			
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Fiber		25g	30g
<hr/>			
Calories per gram:			
Fat	9	Carbohydrate	4
		Protein	4

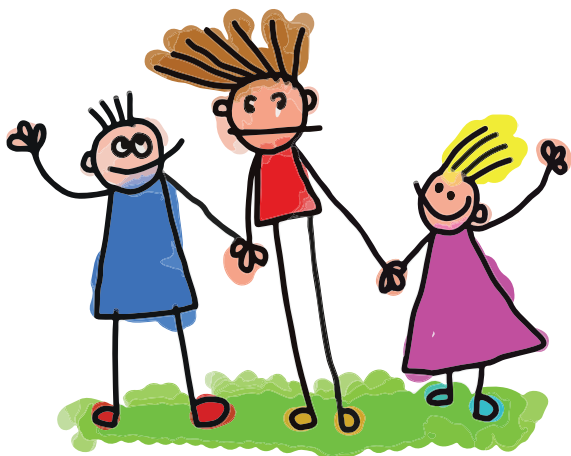
1. Serving Size – the nutritional information listed on the label is based on one serving. Servings are shown in common measurements like cups, ounces or pieces. Remember, a package may contain more than one serving. If you eat more than one serving, you're getting more calories and nutrients than what is listed on the label.
2. Calories – a single food item with 400 or more calories per serving is considered high. A moderate serving is 100 calories. If a food gets more than 30% of its calories from fat, eat sparingly.



3. List of Nutrients – a list of nutrients is provided on every label. The ones listed first are the ones we generally eat in adequate amounts, or too much. Eating too much fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium or sugar can increase your risk for chronic diseases and obesity. Most of us don't get enough fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium or iron. Look for foods that are high in fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals.
4. % Daily Value – This is based on the recommended amounts of each nutrient for people (ages four and older) to eat every day. A value of 5% or less means the amount of the nutrient per serving is low. A value of 20% or more means the amount of the nutrient per serving is high. Look for higher numbers for nutrients such as calcium, fiber, iron, protein and vitamins. Look for low numbers for nutrients such as fat, sodium, sugar and cholesterol.
5. Vitamins and Minerals – the vitamin and minerals listed won't be the same on every food label. Try to select foods throughout the day that offer a variety of different vitamins and minerals. Remember, if the number is 20% or higher, the food is a good source of that vitamin or mineral.
6. Daily Values – percent Daily Value recommendations are based on eating a 2,000 calorie per day diet. Active teens may need more calories each day. Most children, women and older adults need fewer calories each day. The amount of calories needed depends on your level of physical activity.



Making Healthy Choices



People who eat healthy foods and get regular exercise usually have a lower risk of overweight and related health problems. Parents can help teach children healthy eating and fitness habits.

Physical Activity is Important

- Children need at least one hour of physical activity every day.
- Be active together. Play ball or walk the dog as a family activity.
- Encourage your child to walk or bike to school.
- Help your child find a sport to play or an exercise class to join. Make sure you take them to class or practice and stay to cheer them on!
- Go for a walk as a family after dinner instead of watching television.
- If it's too cold to go outside, find ways to be active indoors. Go to the mall to walk or move furniture at home to create an open space to be active.

Eat Healthy

- Eating a variety of healthy foods helps you and your kids get the different nutrients you need.
- Serve whole-grain bread, cereal and pasta.
- Have a fruit or vegetable at every meal and also use fresh vegetables and fruit as snacks.
- Limit fast food, sweets and junk food.



- Drink water instead of soda and other sugary drinks.
- Offer kid-sized servings at meal time.
- Don't skip breakfast.
- Eat meals as a family and with the television off.
- Try new foods as a family.
- Eat three smaller meals and two snacks each day.

Limit Screen Time

- Too much time watching TV or using a computer may mean that your kids aren't getting enough physical activity.
- Screen time for kids be limited to no more than two hours per day.
- Don't allow children to have TVs, video games, computers or cell phones in the bedroom.
- Watch TV as a family. Get up and get active during commercial breaks.
- Don't eat meals in front of the television.
- Put away electronic devices during meal time and spend time discussing the day's events.

Be a Role Model

- Pay attention to how and what you eat.
- Be active with your children.
- Be supportive, not critical of your own body and your child's body.
- Focus on health not weight. Fluctuations in body size are normal as kids grow.
- If you're concerned about your weight or your child's weight, talk to your doctor.
- Avoid going on diets or putting your child on a diet. Studies show that dieting usually doesn't work long-term and may lead to other health problems.

Learning healthy habits as a child leads to a lifetime of making healthy choices.

Healthy Foods for Preschoolers

Avoid these types of empty calories:

- **Sugars or sweeteners** in soft drinks, fruit punch, candies, cakes, cookies, pies and ice cream.
- The **solid fats** in cookies, cakes, pizza, cheese, sausages, fatty meats, butter and stick margarine.
- Some foods – such as milk, yogurt and cereals – provide important nutrients, but they can also contain some **empty calories**.
 - ✓ For example, sweetened yogurt and sweetened breakfast cereals contain added sugars. Whole milk and cheese contain solid fat. **Look for food choices that are low-fat, fat-free, unsweetened or with no-added sugars.**

Instead of...	Choose
Regular cheese	Low-fat cheese
Sweetened yogurt	Plain yogurt plus fruit
Whole milk	Fat-free or low-fat milk
Sweetened breakfast cereals	Cereals with little/no added sugar
Cookies	Graham crackers
Fried chicken or fried fish	Baked chicken or fish
French fries	Oven-baked fries
Ice cream or frozen yogurt	Frozen fruits or frozen 100% fruit bars
Soft drinks or fruit punch	Water
Potato chips	Baked chips or whole grain crackers
Butter or margarine	Trans fat-free margarine
Jam or jelly	100% fruit spread

Picky eating is a typical behavior for many preschoolers. As long as your preschooler is healthy, growing normally and has plenty of energy, he or she is most likely getting needed nutrients. It is normal for many children to show



one or more of the following behaviors for various periods of time during preschool years:

- Refusing a food based on a certain color or texture.
- Eating only certain types of foods. They may choose one or two foods and refuse to eat anything else.
- Wasting time at the table and seeming disinterested in eating or afraid to try new foods.
- Unwilling to try new foods, especially fruits and vegetables. Having your preschooler help you in the kitchen is a good way to get your child to try new foods. Kids feel good about doing something “grown-up.” Give them small jobs to do and praise their efforts.
- Children are much less likely to reject foods that they help make. - See more at:
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers-picky-eating>.

Staying physically active helps your preschooler learn healthy habits.

- Engage your preschoolers to get active play several times daily. Getting the physical activity they need will help them maintain a healthy weight, develop muscles and strong bones and reduce their risk of developing chronic diseases such as Type 2 diabetes.
- Make sure your preschoolers gets some quiet time, but make sure they are not inactive for too long. Quiet time is best before naps or bed.
- Limit TV and screen time to less than two hours daily, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Encourage reading or crafts rather than TV time.
- Be a role model and limit your own inactivity. Manage the time you spend watching TV or using mobile devices. Your preschooler will learn that being physically active is part of a healthy life.
- Look for childcare settings that engage children in active play and regular physical activity.
- Encourage your child to become active after 60 minutes of inactivity (such as watching TV).
- Avoid having the TV on during mealtimes. Don't put a TV in your child's bedroom.

Limit Screen Time

Limit Screen Time

Children spend on average almost 45 hours per week with media – including TV, computers and video screens. That's more time than they spend with their parents! Even kids under age two watch one to two hours of television per day.

- Ungluing your kids from the TV set and other screens may help prevent and treat weight problems. Though TV and other screen time can be entertaining and even educational, too much is associated with being overweight or obese.
- Chances are good that your kids are in front of screens more than you are aware. Do they watch TV while getting dressed, eating breakfast or waiting for the school bus? Do they play handheld video games before dinner?
- Talk to your kids about their screen time. You may be surprised to learn how much additional time they spend with media - even when they are in school.
- Be sure to keep the TV off during dinner too. The whole family should focus on the food and the conversation. Studies have shown that families that eat dinner together at least three to four times per week are healthier and maintain a better weight.

These guidelines will help your family maintain just the right amount of screen time:

- Limit TV and other media to less than two hours per day for kids ages two and older. Do not allow television viewing for children less than two years of age, according to recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Keep TV out of the bedrooms.
- With the exception of an occasional family movie and pizza night, keep television sets off while eating.
- Sit down with your kids to help them select the specific TV shows they'll watch, giving them some control and helping them make decisions. Watch with them when you can.

Avoid Energy Drinks and Sodas

Energy Drinks

Energy drinks can be especially dangerous for children. They are loaded with caffeine and should be consumed with caution.

- Stimulating properties of energy drinks can:
 - ✓ Boost the heart rate and blood pressure (sometimes to the point of palpitations)
 - ✓ Cause the body to lose water (dehydrate)
 - ✓ Prevent sleep
- Energy drinks should not be used while exercising. The combination of fluid loss from sweating and the increased urine produced by the caffeine can lead to severe dehydration.

Sodas

Over time, drinking sodas and other sugary drinks can lead to obesity. This, in turn, can lead to type 2 diabetes and heart problems.

- Sodas (and even energy drinks) are packed with sugar in various forms, but the body responds to any form of sugar in the same way.
- Avoid drinking sugary beverages as much as possible.
- If your child or teen drinks sweetened sodas or energy drinks, consider these “think before you drink” tips:
 - ✓ Cut down the quantity over time. Each week, have your child cut back until they drink one serving or less a day. The daily limit should be no more than 12 ounces – or better yet, none at all!
 - ✓ Diet sodas are a better choice than regular sodas, but water is the healthy choice and the best way to satisfy thirst.
 - ✓ Serve water or low-fat or fat-free milk at meals instead of soft drinks or sugary beverages.

Beware of Sugar

- High sugar intake has been linked to everything from dental cavities, obesity, Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and other health conditions – many of which last into adulthood.
- Reducing added sugar is a priority for many parents, but it's not as simple as trading cookies and soda for fruit and water.
- Added sugar can be found in many foods where you may not expect it, such as:
 - ✓ Whole-grain cereals and granola
 - ✓ Instant oatmeal
 - ✓ Frozen foods
 - ✓ Granola bars, protein bars and cereal bars
 - ✓ Pasta
 - ✓ Dried fruit, canned fruit, applesauce and fruit juices
 - ✓ Baby food
 - ✓ Spices and sauces such as ketchup and salad dressings

