

Understanding BMI and Your Health

During your medical assessment today, your body mass index (BMI) was calculated using your height and weight.

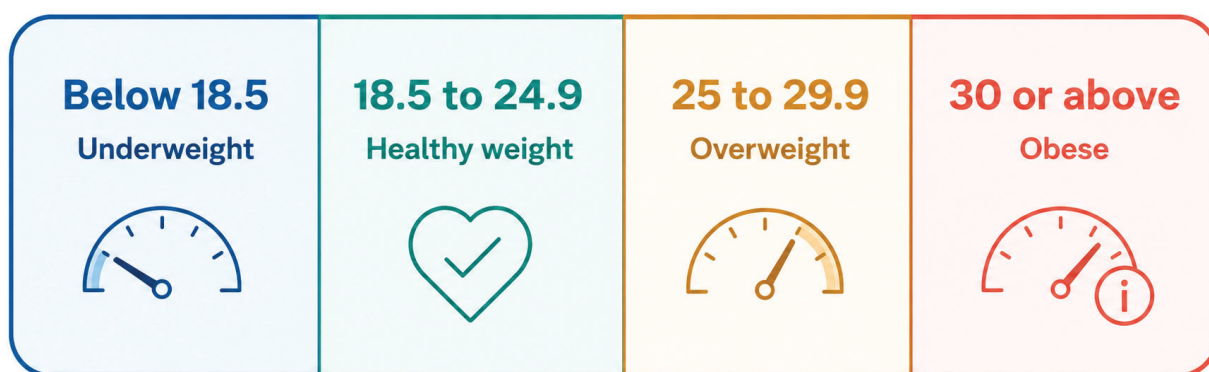
This leaflet explains what your BMI result may mean and provides practical guidance on maintaining or working towards a healthy weight.

What is BMI?

BMI provides a general indication of whether your weight is within a healthy range. However, it is only a screening measure and should be considered alongside other factors, such as your build, general health and medical history.

BMI is calculated by dividing your weight in kilograms by your height in metres squared.

For most adults, the result is grouped into four general ranges:



These ranges are intended as a general guide and do not provide a diagnosis.

Understanding your result

BMI does not distinguish between body fat and muscle. People with a muscular build may therefore have a higher BMI without carrying an unhealthy amount of body fat.

Your BMI result should be considered alongside other relevant information gathered during your medical assessment. It provides a useful general guide but does not, by itself, give a complete picture of your health.

A result outside the healthy range does not necessarily mean that you have a health problem, but it may indicate that further consideration or advice would be helpful. Changes to your diet, activity levels or wider lifestyle may help to support your health and wellbeing.

Remember

BMI is a useful general guide, but it does not give a complete picture of your health and should be considered alongside your build, general health and medical history.

Turn over for practical guidance on maintaining or working towards a healthy weight, and when to seek further medical advice.

Why a healthy weight matters

Living with excess weight can increase your risk of:

- type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke
- some types of cancer and fatty liver disease
- osteoarthritis and joint pain

If you are above a healthy weight, losing around 5% to 10% of your body weight may improve your health.

Working towards a healthy weight

Small, realistic changes are usually easier to maintain:

- Eat a balanced diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables, while reducing foods and drinks high in fat, sugar or calories.
- Be physically active regularly, reduce long periods of sitting and limit your alcohol intake.
- Aim for gradual, sustainable changes, setting realistic goals and monitoring your progress.
- Ask for professional support if you are finding it difficult to manage your weight.

When should I seek medical advice?

Speak to your GP if:

- you would like support to lose or gain weight safely
- you have a condition linked to weight, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, joint pain, sleep apnoea or cardiovascular disease
- your weight has changed unexpectedly, medication or a medical condition may be affecting it, or you are concerned about your eating habits

Your GP can discuss suitable support and check whether any medical factors may be affecting your weight.

Remember

BMI is only one measure of health. Sustainable changes to your eating habits and physical activity can improve your health and wellbeing, even if your BMI changes gradually.

Focus on realistic changes that you can maintain rather than rapid or restrictive approaches.

This leaflet provides general guidance following your workplace medical assessment and does not replace advice from your GP or another qualified healthcare professional. Information based on current NHS guidance. Review date: July 2026.



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