



Achieving a healthy weight with orthopaedic conditions

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Version 3

About this leaflet

This leaflet contains information for people who have been advised to lose weight because they have a high Body Mass Index (BMI).

BMI is a way of using your height and weight to work out if your weight is in the healthy range or not. To work out your own BMI you can use the chart below or you can search for the NHS BMI calculator online.

Your height _____ cm

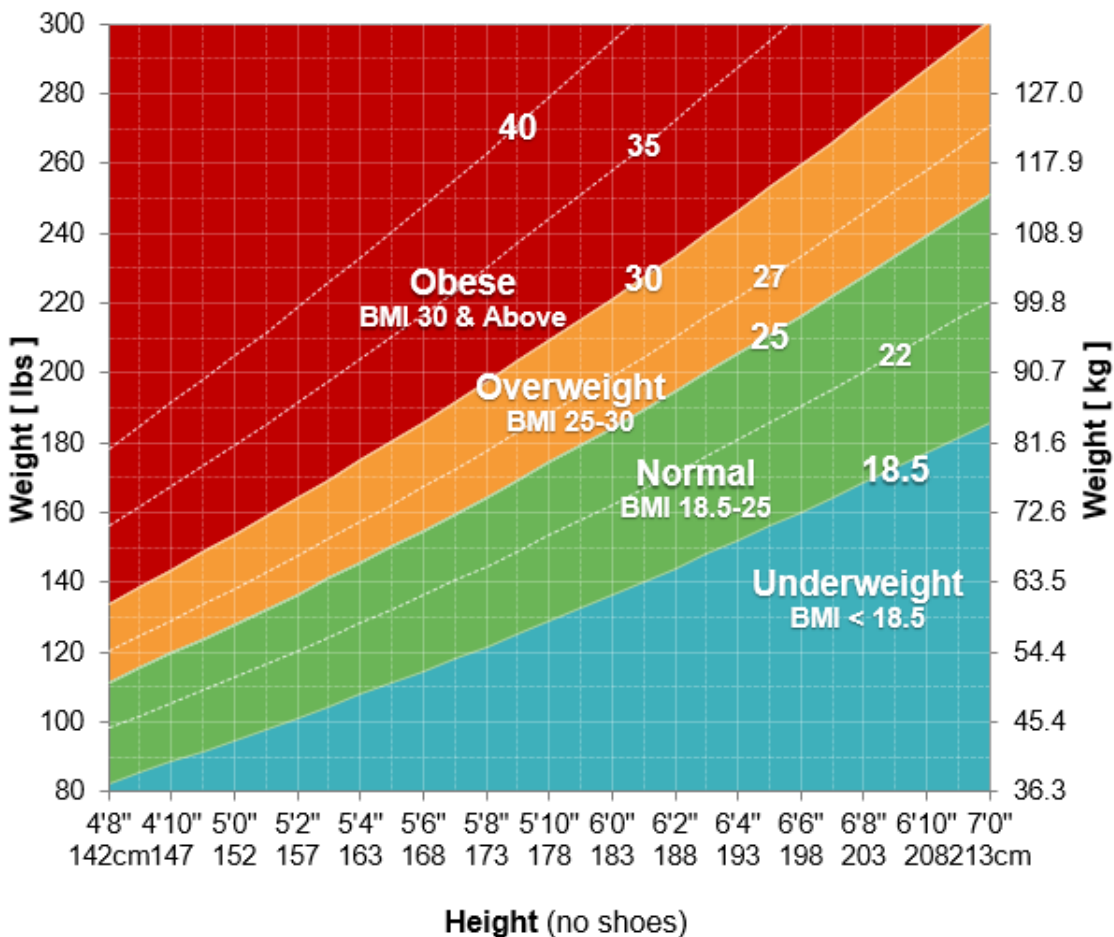
Your weight _____ kg

Your BMI _____

Target weight _____ kg

Target BMI _____

Body Mass Index (BMI) Chart for Adults



Why is BMI important for hip or knee surgery?

People with a BMI of 30 or over have an increased risk of developing serious problems after hip or knee surgery such as infection, wounds that take longer to heal, more pain and disability in the long-term and are more likely to need further surgery in the future. The operation is often more difficult and it may take longer to get back on your feet and back home for people with a BMI over 30.

For people with a BMI of 40 or over the risks increase further, which can potentially delay your surgery until you have lost some weight and your BMI is below 40.

Some health conditions such as Type 2 diabetes and sleep apnoea can improve with weight loss and should be reviewed before surgery.

Other reasons for losing weight

Losing weight has a number of benefits - even a small weight loss can help to improve mobility and reduce pain in people with knee osteoarthritis.

Weight loss can also help to:

- ease lower back and joint pain
- reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke
- reduce your risk of depression
- reduce your risk of developing some types of cancer and diabetes
- improve lung disease
- lower your blood pressure
- lower your cholesterol
- increase your self confidence
- increase energy levels
- Help you become more active

What should I aim for?

You should aim for a weight loss of 10% of your body weight, this will be worked out for you and written on the front of this leaflet.

Your current BMI and your target weight will be based on height and weight measurements taken today in clinic, these measurements might be slightly different to measurements taken at home or at your GP surgery. If it is decided that surgery is an option for you you may be asked to reach your target weight prior to planning this.

It is best to lose weight gradually over three months through a healthy diet and gentle exercise. Half a pound to two pounds is a good weekly target, this can add up to a total weight loss of six-and-a-half pounds to 26 pounds (3-12kg) over the three-month period.

What is the best way to lose weight?

The best way to lose weight is to do it slowly, keeping yourself healthy. We don't advise to try a quick fix such as liquid diets, starving yourself or fad diets which restrict you to just a few foods. If you lose weight too quickly you will be far more likely to put the weight back on again. A combination of diet, physical and behavioural therapy is more effective for achieving weight loss compared to diet alone. This beneficial effect may last up to two years or longer. If you are not sure where to start, please speak to your GP for further advice.

Healthy eating plan

Losing weight may not require major changes as small ones can make a big difference in the long term. One pound of fat contains 3,500 calories, so to lose one pound a week you need to eat 500 calories a day less than you use. This means cutting out 500 calories from your diet every day.

Below is a list of some popular foods we commonly eat to give you an idea of the number of calories in these foods. You can also find out more from online shopping websites or checking labels on food packets:

- Small bar of chocolate: 200 calories
- Piece of chocolate cake: 300 calories
- Scone with butter and jam: 400 calories
- Cheeseburger and chips: 700 calories
- Two chocolate digestives: 170 calories
- Glass of wine: 130 calories
- Pint of beer: 200 calories
- Takeaway fish and chips: 800 calories
- Square sausage roll: 350 calories

It's easy for your weight to creep up over a long time. If you eat 100 extra calories more than you need each day (the equivalent of one and a half plain digestive biscuits) over 12 months, you could gain up to 5kg or 11lb.

The NHS and British Dietetic Association (BDA) have together developed a 12-week weight loss plan that provides dietary and exercise advice to help weight loss. The plan is designed to help you lose weight at a safe rate of 0.5kg to 1kg (1lb to 2lb) each week by sticking to a daily calorie allowance.

The weight loss plan has already been downloaded over four million times and contains a range of useful information including:

- diet plans;
- exercise plans to help you lose weight;
- information on healthier food choices;
- support from an online community;
- weekly progress charts; and
- skills to prevent weight regain.

This weight loss plan can be accessed at:

www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/start-the-nhs-weight-loss-plan/

Exercise

Exercise can significantly aid weight loss and improve general physical and mental health. For example, walking 1 mile on flat ground burns approximately 70-120 calories for an average person. To stay healthy, it is recommended that adults are active each day and should complete at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity per week, such as walking or cycling.

In patients who are not exercising at all, it is advisable to gradually increase activity levels, starting with 10-20 minutes of physical activity every other day to minimise muscle soreness and fatigue.

Physical activity can be built up over the course of the day in a few small sessions (of at least 10 minutes' duration) and does not need to be performed in one go.

If joint problems make walking difficult, low impact activities can be chosen instead:

- swimming or exercise in water;
- riding a bicycle or using a stationary bicycle;
- lifting weights or using resistance bands while seated;
- yoga, pilates or Tai Chi;
- stretching exercises for joint flexibility; and
- using a hand bike.

More detailed advice on increasing activity levels may be provided by hospital or community physiotherapists. Useful apps and websites can also be found at the end of this leaflet.

Further information

NHS guidance on healthy eating:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide/>

NHS guidance on exercise and physical activity:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/>

NHS healthy weight calculator:

www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/

British Nutrition Foundation advice on healthy eating and exercise: <https://www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/healthydiet/eatwell.html>

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