



Weight Management

What guidelines are used to determine that a person is overweight?

Health care professionals determine a person to be overweight when they are above the 95th percentile for weight on the growth chart. Being in the 95th percentile means that a person weighs more than 95% of the people that are the same age, height, and gender. Persons that are in the greater than 85th percentile weight for their age, height and gender are considered to be at risk for being overweight. New growth charts have a rating scale called the Body Mass Index (BMI). By monitoring this scale over time, a health care professional can determine if excessive weight is being gained in comparison to a person's height. Your pediatrician determines if you are overweight. The diagnosis is based on your BMI (Body Mass Index) and/or height and weight in relation to your age (Growth Chart).

Why should I be concerned about being overweight?

Being overweight is a serious condition that can affect both your physical and emotional health. Obesity is associated with heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, some types of cancers, respiratory problems, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, depression and low self-esteem. These problems can occur in children, adolescents and adults.

What causes people to become overweight?

This condition occurs when a person consistently eats more calories than their body needs. The body stores excess calories as fat. These fat stores build over time resulting in a person becoming overweight.

Weight gain is affected by

- Heredity
- Activity level
- Eating habits
- Hormonal imbalance (rare)

Common Causes of Weight Gain

- Participating in activities that require little physical movement such as excess TV, computer, and video game use
- Eating "junk" food frequently
- Constant snacking
- Too little exercise
- Eating fast foods frequently
- Drinking too much soda and fruit juice

How can my physician help me to lose weight?

If your Pediatrician is concerned about your weight he or she with the assistance of other health care providers may want to:

- Review your medical history and health of family members.
- Perform a complete physical exam, which may include some blood tests.
- Review your daily diet to determine caloric intake and fat intake.
- Review how physically fit you are.
- Provide education on healthy eating and the importance of daily physical activity.
- Monitor your weight periodically.

The Goal

Our goal is to help you to be healthy. Increasing physical activity and improving the nature of your eating habits may help you to reach this goal. Support from your doctor, family, and friends along with a desire to improve your health, are important to your success.