

Q. Does being just a little overweight really matter?

A. Probably more than you realize. And it has nothing to do with how you look in a swimsuit or feel in that suit or dress.

Being a little overweight puts your health at risk. Excess weight is a risk factor for a long list of health problems and conditions such as:¹

- High blood pressure
- High blood sugar levels
- Fatty liver disease
- Certain types of cancer
- High cholesterol levels
- High blood fat levels
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Diabetes

Do you need to lose weight?

Think you might need to lose a few pounds? You're not alone. About 73.6 percent of all adults in the United States are overweight or obese.² And if you do need to lose a few pounds, chances are pretty good you already know you should.

2 simple ways to check your weight

There are two simple ways to find out if you might benefit from losing a few pounds:

1. Calculate Body Mass Index (BMI)³

- Use this simple tool to calculate your BMI: <https://tinyurl.com/zlcvdf>



- You'll need to know your height and weight.
 - If your BMI is 25 or higher, you may be overweight or obese.
 - Keep in mind BMI doesn't always tell the whole story, like the difference between fat and muscle, bone density, and fat distribution.
- #### 2. Measure waist size
- Here's another way to determine if you may be overweight or obese. Grab a tape measure.
 - Measure around your middle, using your belly button as a guide.
 - If your waist size is 40 inches or more (men), or 35 inches or more (women), you may need to lose a few pounds.⁴

Just a couple pounds can make a difference

If you do need to lose weight, start with simple changes to your diet and lifestyle.

- Eat more whole foods: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts & seeds and legumes.
- Exercise at least 30 minutes a day.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Aim to get 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night.

In a recent study, people who lost 5 to 10 percent of their body weight, cut their risk for health problems by 22 percent. And people who lost 20 percent body weight or more cut their risk by 53 percent.⁵

If you're overweight or obese, even a little weight loss can make a big difference to help you feel better, be healthier and live longer.

References

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