

The Risks of Being Overweight

Gaining weight doesn't happen overnight.

"You know as you go through life and the years come on a little bit more and more, pounds have been going up a little bit."

The ability to gain weight was once key for our survival. In times of famine, being able to maintain your weight when you didn't have any food to eat, allowed you to survive. But today, the extra food you eat never gets used. Instead, it gets stored as fat.

"Because I had a broken bone in my foot, I stopped walking. And when I stopped walking, the weight came on."

Being overweight puts a person at increased risk for a whole bunch of health issues including: Type 2 Diabetes, Cancer, Heart Disease, Heart Attack, Stroke, and more.

"I had high blood pressure; I was taking medication for that. I had high cholesterol; I was taking medicine for that. I had sleep apnea and I was sleeping with that mask on, and I had acid reflux."

Work with your healthcare provider to reduce your risk for these health issues in order to feel better. A tool your healthcare providers will use is the Body Mass Index or BMI. Looking at both your height and weight, they will find where you fit on the BMI chart. If your BMI is between 25 and 29.9 you are considered overweight. If your BMI is higher than 30 on the chart, you have obesity.

The size of your waist is another way to figure out if you are overweight or have obesity. If you are a man and your waist measures greater than or equal to 40 inches, you are overweight. For women who are not pregnant, if your waist is greater than or equal to 35 inches you are overweight. This measurement is smaller if you are Asian. For Asian women, a waist that measures greater or equal to 31 inches is overweight and for men it's 35 inches.

Your healthcare provider will help you to determine if you are overweight or have obesity. What you need to think about is your goal, reaching and maintaining a healthy weight for you. Work with your healthcare provider on ways you can lose weight and lessen your risks.