



## Body Image



### Overview

What do you see when you look in the mirror? How does it make you feel? What do you think about your body? That's your "body image," and it can have a big impact on your sense of self-worth.

### Positive and negative body image

If you like the way you look, we say you have a "positive" body image. This is healthy. Unfortunately, many people don't feel this way about themselves. They may not like their height, size or shape. They may feel that some part of them is unattractive. We say this is a "negative" body image. It's destructive. A negative body image makes you fixate on what you believe to be your flaws. This can lead to harmful behavior, like extreme dieting or an obsession with cosmetic surgery.

### Improving your body image

So, if you have a negative body image, how do you turn that around? Well, remember you are a whole person, not just your appearance. Don't focus on the things you don't like, especially if you can't change them. Don't compare yourself to others or to unrealistic images you see in the media. Focus on the parts of you that make you happy. Don't talk badly about yourself. And if you do want to make positive changes, like losing some extra weight, set realistic, healthy goals.

### Conclusion

If you've tried these methods and still feel unhappy with your body, tell someone you trust. Talk to your doctor. You may benefit from counseling or some other treatment.