

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{Weight (kgs)}}{[\text{Height (m)}]^2}$$

EATING 101 RU DINING HEALTHY?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE RU HEALTHY DINING TEAM
A Joint Program Between Rutgers Dining Services and The New Jersey Institute for Food, Nutrition, and Health



Advantages and Limitations of BMI

Have you ever utilized body mass index (BMI) as a measure of health? BMI is a tool healthcare providers use to determine degree of obesity and estimate body fat using your height and weight. While it is a widely used and beneficial tool, it is important to know that there are some limitations to this health indicator. There are many factors that determine your overall health, in which BMI does not consider. BMI can be used as a valuable tool in managing your health, along with other measures recommended by your health care provider. Read below to *weigh* the advantages and limitations of using BMI to help you follow a *balanced* lifestyle!

Advantages

- **User friendly:** BMI is easy to interpret and can be used as a starting point to make healthy changes. **Scan the QR code below** to calculate your BMI, then refer to the chart to see which range you fall under.
- **Accessible:** BMI is a simple, free, and convenient tool that is available to everyone. This estimate is a non-invasive substitute measure of body fat in contrast to other invasive methods.
- **Correlates with future health risk:** Studies have shown high BMI levels can be associated with increased risk for health-related diseases.

CDC BMI Ranges

Underweight: ≤18.4 kg/m ²
Normal weight: 18.5 to 24.9 kg/m ²
Overweight: 25.0 to 39.9 kg/m ²
Obese: ≥40.0 kg/m ²

Limitations

- **Missing factors:** BMI does not factor in muscle mass, bone density, or body composition.
- **Indirect measure:** BMI can indicate a person's relative amount of body fat but does not directly calculate body fat percentage.
- **Beyond the number:** BMI is only one part of your health picture. Individual BMI values should be viewed in the context of trends over time. If you have questions or concerns, please speak with your health care provider.

BMI sets the baseline

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References: *Body Mass Index: Considerations for Practitioners*. Available at:

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