

# Getting Started

## What is the link between diabetes and obesity?

Being overweight or obese is a leading risk factor for type 2 diabetes. The body gets its energy from a type of sugar called glucose. Insulin, which is produced in the pancreas, is required to help your body use glucose. Type 2 diabetes develops when your body can no longer use insulin effectively, or when the pancreas cannot make enough insulin to keep blood glucose levels normal.

A healthy weight is determined by body mass index (BMI), which you can calculate by using the chart below. Overweight is defined as a BMI greater than/equal to 25; obesity is defined as a BMI greater than/equal to 30.

		Weight in Pounds															
		120	130	140	150	160	170	180	190	200	210	220	230	240	250		
Height in Feet and Inches	4'6"	29	31	34	36	39	41	43	46	48	51	53	56	58	60		
	4'8"	27	29	31	34	36	38	40	43	45	47	49	52	54	56		
	4'10"	25	27	29	31	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50	52		
	5'0"	23	25	27	29	31	33	35	37	39	41	43	45	47	49		
	5'2"	22	24	26	27	29	31	33	35	37	38	40	42	44	46		
	5'4"	21	22	24	26	28	29	31	33	34	36	38	40	41	43		
	5'6"	19	21	23	24	26	27	29	31	32	34	36	37	39	40		
	5'8"	18	20	21	23	24	26	27	29	30	32	34	35	37	38		
	5'10"	17	19	20	22	23	24	26	27	29	30	32	33	35	36		
	6'0"	16	18	19	20	22	23	24	26	27	28	30	31	33	34		
	6'2"	15	17	18	19	21	22	23	24	26	27	28	30	31	32		
	6'4"	15	16	17	18	20	21	22	23	24	26	27	28	29	30		
	6'6"	14	15	16	17	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	27	28	29		
6'8"	13	14	15	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	28			

Underweight
  Healthy Weight
  Overweight
  Obese

Note: This chart is for adults (≥ 20 years old)

## What Can You Do?

The Diabetes Prevention Program showed that losing weight and increasing activity can reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes among people who are at high risk. Participants in the study lowered their risk by losing 10-15 pounds, and participating in 30 minutes of physical activity five days a week, usually walking.

## Losing Weight

- Begin a weight-loss program with the help of your health care team.
- Ask for a referral to a dietitian who can help you find a diet you can use every day.
- Don't try to do everything at once. Take one step at a time and make changes you can stick with.

If diet and exercise are not enough to reduce your weight, your health care provider may prescribe medications that can help.

## Physical Activity

Exercise and other forms of physical activity can help you lose weight by burning calories and building muscle. Results can take time, but each activity will become easier as you get more fit. Becoming physically active can:

- Help you burn extra calories and naturally increase your glucose uptake by increasing your metabolism and muscle mass.
- Improve the body's response to insulin
- Help reduce or even eliminate your need for diabetes medication by lowering blood glucose levels if you have type 2 diabetes
- Reduce your risk for heart disease and stroke, the leading causes of death for people with diabetes

Here are some ideas to help you get started:

- Walk the dog
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Find a friend you can exercise with

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