



BODY MASS INDEX (BMI)

An Important Tool for Your Patients With Diabetes

BODY MASS INDEX (BMI): AN IMPORTANT TOOL

With more than two-thirds of U.S. adults (69.2%) classified as either obese or overweight, obesity has become recognized as a national health threat and a major public health challenge.^{1,2}

As a healthcare provider, you are in an ideal position to talk to patients about weight control. Studies have shown that, by speaking with patients about weight and working with them as partners, you can play a key role in helping patients improve their health.³

BMI assessment can provide an indicator of your patients' risk for type 2 diabetes and other conditions that can occur with overweight and obesity.⁴ For adults, a healthy weight is defined as the appropriate body weight in relation to height.⁵

Additionally, in recent years, BMI quality measures for healthcare providers have emerged:

- **The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) Adult BMI Assessment⁶**
 - The percentage of adults 18 to 74 years of age who had an outpatient visit where their BMI was documented in the past two years.
- **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS)⁷**
 - Percentage of patients aged 18 years and older with a calculated BMI in the past 6 months or during the current visit documented in the medical record AND if the most recent BMI is outside of normal parameters, a follow-up plan is documented within the past 6 months or during the current visit.
- **CMS Five-Star Quality Rating System⁸**
 - Percent of plan members with an outpatient visit who had their BMI calculated from their height and weight and recorded in their medical records. Prior to calculating your patient's BMI, discuss with him or her the importance of understanding BMI and why it is an important number for patients to know.

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When assessing a patient's weight and health risk, consider the patient's BMI, waist circumference, and overall risk status.⁴
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The standard weight categories associated with BMI ranges for adults are shown in the following table.⁴

BMI	Weight Status
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Normal
25.0 – 29.9	Overweight
30.0 and above	Obese

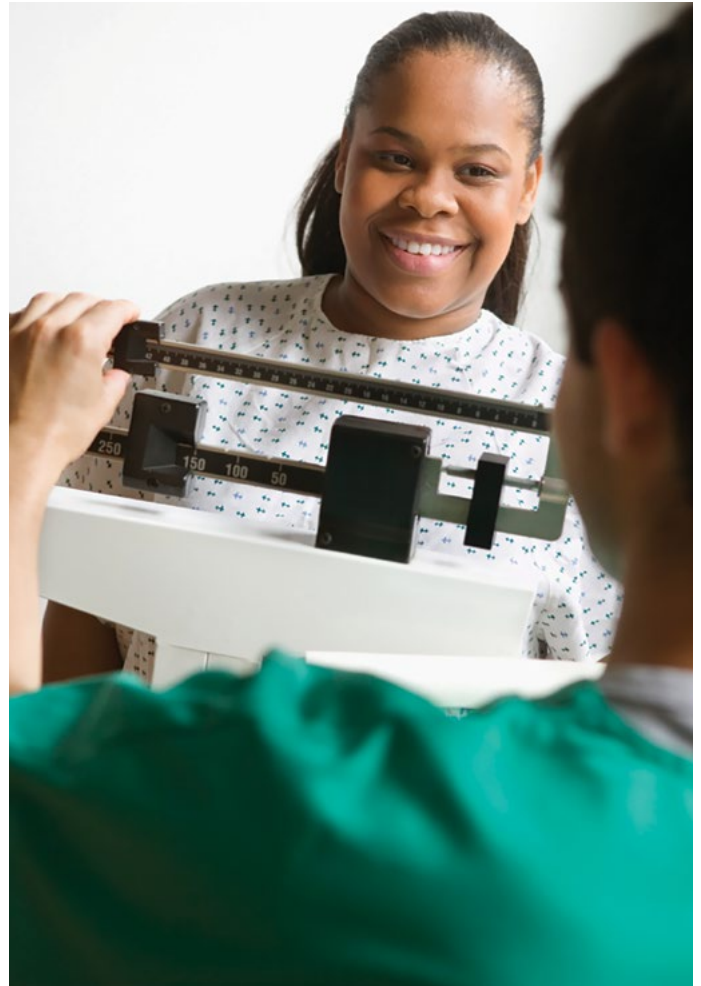
As you may know, although BMI can be used for most men and women, it does have some limits⁴:

- It may overestimate body fat in athletes and others who have a muscular build.
- It may underestimate body fat in older persons and others who have lost muscle.

USING BMI WITH PATIENTS WITH DIABETES

Prior to calculating your patient's BMI, discuss with him or her the importance of understanding BMI and why it is an important number for patients to know.

- Calculate the patient's BMI using either the BMI chart or a BMI calculator.⁹
- Classify the individual based on the BMI categories.⁹
- Educate patients about their BMI and their associated risks:
 - Remind them that being overweight or obese could make managing their diabetes more difficult.¹⁰
 - Discuss how reaching and maintaining a healthy BMI may have a positive impact on managing their diabetes, including potential improvements in their blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol.¹¹
 - Inform them that achieving and/or maintaining a BMI under 25 may help patients with diabetes reduce their risk of diabetes-related complications, including¹²:
 - Kidney failure
 - Heart disease
 - Stroke
 - Blindness
 - Amputations of legs and feet
- Remember, weight management requires a team approach:
 - Recommend clinical and community resources.
 - Foster an ongoing therapeutic relationship and follow-up with a healthcare team.



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A 5% to 10% loss of their current body weight may make a difference in your patients' diabetes management.⁹
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HOW YOU CAN HELP PATIENTS ACHIEVE A HEALTHY BMI

Talk to your patients who need to achieve a healthier BMI about how ready they are to adopt weight-loss habits such as healthier eating and increased physical activity. Engaging your patients as partners can help you both identify actions they can start to take to meet their goals. Some questions to ask include:

- What are your goals regarding your weight?
- What kinds of changes would you be willing to start with?
- What kind of help would you like from me about your weight?
- What kinds of foods do you eat on a typical day?
- What does “healthy eating” mean to you?
- How much time do you spend sitting down each day?
- Do you know how much physical activity you should do each week to stay healthy?

Remind patients that weight control is a lifelong commitment, and the healthcare team can assist them along the way.⁹



How BMI Helps You and Your Patients

Measuring and tracking BMI may help you manage patients with diabetes in a couple of ways. First, it may help you identify at-risk patients with diabetes.¹² Secondly, it can help you provide individualized solutions and services to help patients reach and maintain a healthy body weight.⁹

Together, you and your patients can monitor their BMI and weight as well as address any obstacles impeding their way to reaching and maintaining a healthy BMI.

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