

Health Concepts

March 2024

Go easy on yourself. If you stray off course, don't give up.

PREFACE

The prevalence of obese children and youth is rapidly increasing in both developed and developing countries. As incomes rise and people migrate to urban areas, large shifts toward less physically demanding work have taken place worldwide. Added to this, increased consumption of more energy-rich, nutrient-poor foods with high levels of sugar and saturated fat contributes to obesity rates that have risen threefold or more during the last three decades. Automated transport, technology at home and workplace, and more passive leisure pursuits further contribute to overweight and obesity.

Asian body types are different than the rest of the world population, and so the features of obesity differ too. That is why we see the difference in the overweight limit for Asians. 3 out of 4 Indians are overweight. India's women are more likely to be obese than their male counterparts.

20% (approx.) of all non-communicable diseases, including diabetes, heart diseases, and cancer, are linked to obesity.

The issue of BMI as a predictor of morbidity and mortality is more than skin deep.

Individuals can maintain a healthy weight if they engage in regular physical activity and consume a low-fat, high-fiber, low-salt diet consisting of fruit, wholegrain, vegetables, lean meat, and fish.

Be persistent.

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NUTRITIONAL FACTS

अनार (Hindi)
மாதுளை (Tamil)
దానిమ్మ (Telugu)



POMEGRANATE

Pomegranate (*Punica granatum* L.), often referred to as the "jewel of autumn" is a nutrient-packed fruit celebrated for its exceptional health benefits. pomegranate is categorized as a berry, but it belongs to its own botanical family, *Punicaceae*. Pomegranates are low in calories and fat but high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Pomegranates are rich in antioxidants and polyphenolic compounds, including punicalagin, anthocyanins, and hydrolyzable tannins. One pomegranate has nearly about 40% of the daily recommendation of vitamin C.

Rich in antioxidants - Helps protect the cells of your body from damage caused by free radicals.

Controls inflammation Pomegranates contain compounds that may help prevent chronic inflammation associated with the disease.

Anti-cancer properties- Found to help slow tumor growth and spread and reduce inflammation.

Benefits heart health - Compounds in pomegranate may reduce blood pressure, decrease plaque buildup, and reduce chest pain.

Supports urinary health- can help regulate the concentration of oxalates, calcium, and phosphates in the blood, which are common components of kidney stones.

Antimicrobial properties - Pomegranates contain compounds that help fight off potentially harmful bacteria, fungi, and yeasts - particularly germs in the mouth that can cause bad breath and tooth decay.

Improves exercise endurance- May improve both endurance and muscle recovery.

Protects brain health- Ellagitannins in pomegranate help reduce inflammation in the brain and prevent Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

Supports digestive health - rich in fiber, serves as fuel for probiotics, and helps prevent certain digestive health conditions.

MEDICAL UPDATE

ADVANTAGES OF MAINTAINING A HEALTHY WEIGHT.

- ❑ Reduced risk of heart disease and certain cancers
- ❑ Better sleep quality
- ❑ Less muscle and joint pain
- ❑ Reduced risk of high blood pressure and diabetes
- ❑ Better regulation of bodily fluids
- ❑ Reduced burden on the heart and circulatory system
- ❑ Increased energy and ability to complete the desired activities.
- ❑ Reduced cholesterol levels
- ❑ Reduced risk of gallbladder disease.

PREVENTIVE PEARLS

VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENTATION.

Vitamin D not only helps keep bones strong but also reduces the risk of colon, ovarian, and breast cancers, and diseases such as diabetes and multiple sclerosis. Many of us don't get enough Vitamin D because of a lack of exposure to sunlight or omitting good sources of vitamin D in our daily diet.

The recommended daily amount of vitamin D varies based on age and individual needs.

If you're under 50 and you get 10 to 15 minutes of sun exposure—without sunscreen—a day, a 400 IU supplement should do you fine.

However, always follow your doctor's recommendations for personalized dosing.

"Health is not about the weight you lose, but about the life you gain".

---Dr. Josh Axe.

What is the body mass index (BMI)?

Overweight and obesity are both ranges of weight that are greater than what is generally considered healthy for a given height. Overweight and obesity develop when the energy intake from food consumption is greater than the energy expenditure through the body's metabolism. The prevalence of overweight and obesity has been shown to increase the likelihood of non-communicable diseases [NCDs] like cardiovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus, stroke, infertility, liver disorders, respiratory ailments, and certain cancers. An increase in weight is the result of many factors. These factors include environment, socioeconomic status, family history and genetics, metabolism, behavior or lifestyle habits, and more. The modern environment has been labeled 'obesogenic' or obesity-causing, making it difficult for individuals to maintain healthy status. Most of these causative factors are modifiable, and a positive change in them will bring about a healthy life. Even a modest amount of weight loss can help reduce the health risks. The best chance of losing weight or controlling it is to be committed to a change in lifestyle.

For adults, the most useful measure of overweight or obesity is the Body Mass Index (BMI). The BMI is calculated from an individual's height and weight.

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{weight [kg]}}{\text{height}^2 [\text{m}^2]}$$

The body mass index (BMI) is a measure that uses your height and weight to determine if your weight is healthy.

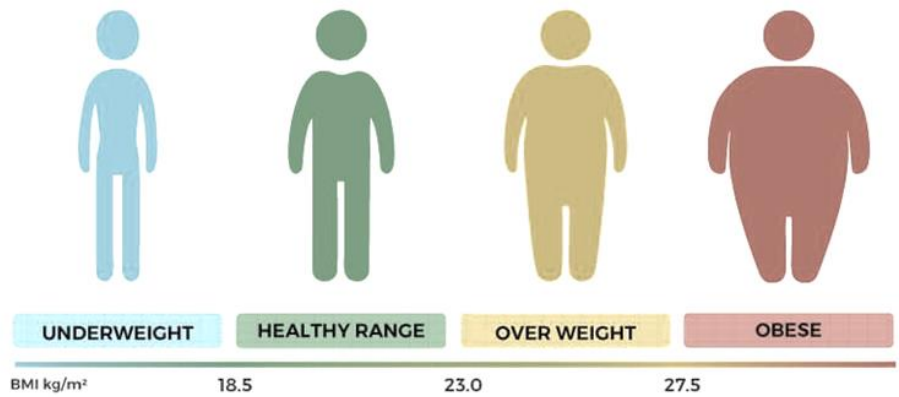


Fig.: WHO Asian BMI classification

The BMI standards in kg/m² are; underweight < 18.5, normal 18.5-24.9, overweight 25-29.9, obesity 30-39.9, and morbid obesity ≥ 40.

The WHO expert consultation group recommends trigger points for public health action for adults of Asian origin as 23 kg/m² for increased risk and 27.5 kg/m² for high risk because of differences in body shape and fat distribution.

BMI does not account for muscle mass or bone density. As a result, athletes or individuals with higher muscle mass may have a higher BMI, even though they are healthy.

While a higher BMI is associated with increased health risks, it's not a precise predictor for an individual.

While the concept of BMI increasing by a fixed rate every decade isn't universally applicable, it is worthwhile noting that on average, BMI increased by approximately 1.06 kg/m² (± 3.8).

Coupled with BMI, the measures of waist circumference [WC] and waist-hip ratio [WHR] may eliminate the inconsistencies of the BMI. These measures indicate how weight is distributed in the body. Central obesity does not pose the same serious consequences as abdominal obesity.

A WC of < 90cm and a WHR of ≤ 0.9 for men and a WC of < 80cm and a WHR of ≤ 0.8 for women are considered healthy. A WHR >1 is considered obese. The likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes and hypertension rises steeply with increasing body fat. Approximately 85% of people with diabetes are type 2 diabetics, and of these, 90% are obese or overweight.

While genes are important in determining a person's susceptibility to weight gain, energy balance is determined by calorie intake and physical activity. Regular health check-ups and maintaining a balanced diet are crucial for overall well-being.

END NOTE

Even small reductions in BMI can significantly reduce the risk of conditions like diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

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