

2.4: Overweight

In this Section,
you will learn about:

- Causes of becoming Overweight.
- Risks Associated with being Overweight.
- Measurement of Waist Circumference.
- Benefits of Reducing Weight in a Healthy Manner.

You have read in the earlier chapters that we are seeing changes in life style related to eating habits, increasing consumption of tobacco, alcohol and reduced physical activity. This has affected the nutritional status leading to individuals becoming overweight.

However, we also continue to see under nutrition not just among children but among adult women and men as well in many parts of the country. In your own area, you will see that there are both undernourished individuals and people who are overweight.

The common perception is that Non-Communicable Diseases occur only in overweight individuals. However, undernourished women are more likely to have low birth weight babies, who are at increased risk of developing Non-Communicable Diseases when they grow into adults. We have discussed this earlier.



Causes of becoming Overweight

If the weight of an individual goes above a certain level, the person is referred to as being overweight. This is defined as having too much body fat in the body, which can lead to health problems.

The main causes of becoming overweight are:

- Family history.
- Eating an unhealthy diet.
- Lack of physical activity.
- Presence of psychological factors - Depression, anxiety, stress, and low esteem can result in over eating.
- Hormonal imbalance in the body.

You can see that some of these factors are preventable.

Risks Associated with being Overweight

Being **overweight** can result in health problems, such as:

- Cardiovascular diseases (mainly heart diseases and stroke).
- High blood fat levels (Eg. cholesterol).