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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/obesityinchildren.html>

Obesity in Children

Obesity [<https://medlineplus.gov/obesity.html>] means having too much body fat. It is different from being overweight, which means weighing too much. Both terms mean that a person's weight is greater than what's considered healthy for his or her height. Children grow at different rates, so it isn't always easy to know when a child has obesity or is overweight. Ask your health care provider to check whether your child's weight and height are in a healthy range.

If a weight-loss program is necessary, involve the whole family in healthy habits so your child doesn't feel singled out. Encourage healthy eating by:

- Serving more fruits and vegetables
- Buying fewer soft drinks and high-fat, high-calorie snack foods
- Making sure your child eats breakfast every day
- Eating fast food less often
- Not using food as a reward

Physical activity is also very important. Kids need about 60 minutes each day. It does not have to happen all at once. Several short periods of activity during the day are just as good.

NIH: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

Start Here

- **Helping Your Child Achieve a Healthy Weight** [<https://familydoctor.org/child-healthy-weight/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/sobrepeso-y-obesidad-en-la-ninez/?adfree=true>]
- **Helping Your Child Who Is Overweight** [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/helping-your-child-who-is-overweight>]  (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/control-de-peso/ayudar-su-hijo-controlar-exceso-peso>]
- **Overweight and Obesity (For Parents)** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/overweight-obesity.html?ref=>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/overweight-obesity.html>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- **Child and Teen BMI Categories** [<https://www.cdc.gov/bmi/child-teen-calculator/bmi-categories.html>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Also in Spanish [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/spanish/assessing/bmi/childrens_bmi/acerca_indice_masa_corporal_ninos_adolescentes.html]
- **How Are Obesity and Overweight Diagnosed?** [<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/obesity/conditioninfo/diagnosed>]  (Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development)
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.nichd.nih.gov/salud/temas/obesity/informacion/diagnosticar>]
- **Obesity Screening** [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/obesity-screening/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/evaluacion-de-obesidad/>]

- Stature-for-Age and Weight-for-Age Percentiles: Boys, 2 to 20 Years
[<https://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/data/set1clinical/cj41c021.pdf>] (National Center for Health Statistics) - **PDF**
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/data/Spanishpdf95/co06l021.pdf>]

- Stature-for-Age and Weight-for-Age Percentiles: Girls 2 to 20 Years
[<https://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/data/set1clinical/cj41c022.pdf>] (National Center for Health Statistics) - **PDF**
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/data/Spanishpdf97/co06l030.pdf>]

Prevention and Risk Factors

- Balance Food and Activity [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/healthy-weight-basics/balance.htm>]  (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/espanol/pesosaludable.htm>]
- Families Finding the Balance: A Parent Handbook
[https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/downloads/parent_hb_en.pdf]  (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute) - **PDF**
Also in Spanish [https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/heart/parent_hb_sp.pdf]
- Help Your Child Stay at a Healthy Weight [<https://odphp.health.gov/myhealthfinder/health-conditions/obesity/help-your-child-stay-healthy-weight>] **Easy-to-Read** (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion)
Also in Spanish [<https://odphp.health.gov/espanol/myhealthfinder/problemas-salud/obesidad/ayude-hijos-mantenerse-peso-saludable>]
- Obesity Prevention: AAP Policy Explained [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/obesity/Pages/obesity-prevention-aap-policy-explained.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)

Treatments and Therapies

- Weight Control: MedlinePlus Health Topic [<https://medlineplus.gov/weightcontrol.html>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/weightcontrol.html>]
- Weight Loss Surgery: An Option for Teens? [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/obesity/Pages/Weight-Loss-Surgery.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/health-issues/conditions/obesity/paginas/weight-loss-surgery.aspx>]

Living With

- Emotional Toll of Obesity [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/obesity/pages/The-Emotional-Toll-of-Obesity.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/health-issues/conditions/obesity/paginas/the-emotional-toll-of-obesity.aspx>]

Specifics

- Weight Management and Healthy Living Tips [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/community-health-outreach/healthy-living-tips>]  (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)

Genetics

- Proopiomelanocortin deficiency: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/proopiomelanocortin-deficiency>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Health Check Tools

- Child and Teen BMI Calculator [<https://www.cdc.gov/bmi/child-teen-calculator/index.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/bmi/es/child-teen-calculator/index.html>]

Statistics and Research

- Childhood Obesity Facts [<https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood-obesity-facts/childhood-obesity-facts.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

- FastStats: Obesity and Overweight [<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/obesity-overweight.htm>] (National Center for Health Statistics)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Obesity in Children [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=obesity&aggFilters=ages:child,status:not%20rec>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Access to translated invitations online increases involvement of linguistically diverse households... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40738940>]
- Article: The effectiveness of MyBFF@school intervention program in reducing emotional and behavioral... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40721745>]
- Article: Effects of different game-based physical activity programs on body composition in... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40703174>]
- Obesity in Children -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Pediatric+Obesity%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+child+%5Bmh%5D+OR+%22Obesity%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+child+%5Bmh%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22%22+5Bedat%5D+AND+%28patient+education+handout%5Bpt%5D+OR+guideline%5Bpt%5D+OR+clinical+trial%5Bpt%5D%29++NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- Find a Nutrition Expert [<https://www.eatright.org/find-a-nutrition-expert>] (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)
- KidsHealth [<https://kidshealth.org/>] (Nemours Foundation)
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov>] 

Children

- What Being Overweight Means (For Kids) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/overweight.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/overweight.html>]

Teenagers

- Dealing With Feelings When You're Overweight (For Teens) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/feelings-overweight.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/feelings-overweight.html>]

Patient Handouts

- Growth chart [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001910.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001910.htm>]
- Obesity in children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007508.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007508.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Growth chart [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001910.htm>]

Obesity in children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007508.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Body Weight [<https://medlineplus.gov/bodyweight.html>]

Child Nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/childnutrition.html>]

High Cholesterol in Children and Teens [<https://medlineplus.gov/highcholesterolinchildrenandteens.html>]

Obesity [<https://medlineplus.gov/obesity.html>]

Weight Control [<https://medlineplus.gov/weightcontrol.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Obesity in Children* is the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov>]

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