Physical Wellbeing

Maintaining a healthy weight can reduce your risk of developing serious health complications, but physical wellbeing is not just about losing weight. You could have a healthy weight or BMI but not be physically fit.
Physical wellbeing is a combination of exercise and healthy eating, and should be measured using different markers including those that don't involve body weight directly.

Here, we cover key things about your physical wellbeing and its connection to your body:

- **Science behind weight**
- **Science behind hunger**
- **Measures of physical wellbeing**

Science behind weight

Bodyweight refers to a person's total body mass in kilograms. A weighing scale can tell you how much you weigh, but not what your body is made of. While a high or low bodyweight may contribute to health complications, body weight alone, is not an accurate measure of overall health.

Body Composition is just as important!
The human body is made up of two types of mass.
A healthy body composition is one that has a low percentage of body fat and a higher percentage of non-fat mass.

Body fat mass

includes fat stored in muscle tissues, under the skin or fat surrounding organs, and can be divided into two categories; essential and non-essential. Essential fat plays a major role in maintaining overall good health, protecting organs, and regulating key hormones. From your heart to bones, excess body fat can weaken several parts of your body and cause severe health complications.

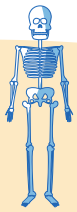
Non-fat mass

includes bone, water, muscle, organ, and tissue mass. Also known as "Lean tissue", non-fat is metabolically active, meaning it burns calories for energy, unlike body fat.

An average person's body composition looks like this:

60% of your total body weight is Water

- Total body water can be influenced by age, water intake and gender.
- **Total body water decreases with increasing non-essential fat.**
- An obese adult's body can contain water as low as 15%



7-15% of your body weight is Bone

- Your diet, lifestyle, and existing health conditions like osteoporosis can directly impact the density and strength of your bones, which may cause variations in your weight.

The remaining percentage of your body weight is muscle and fat, and varies across different individuals and body-types.

Science behind hunger

We hate to break it to you, but the reason why crazy diets or extreme exercise regimes often don't work, especially in the long-term, is because you're quite literally fighting your body.
Your body wants to get back to your starting weight.

But why would it want that? Here's how it works:

Leptin

or the "fat controller hormone" is a hormone produced by fat cells that regulates food intake in the long run & tells our brain when we are full. When we lose weight, the levels of leptin in our body fall rapidly, and our brain doesn't get the message that we are full. **As a result, we feel the constant urge to binge.**

Ghrelin

or the "hunger hormone" is produced by the stomach and is responsible for increasing appetite, promoting fat storage, and telling us to refuel. While scientists are still trying to develop the exact link, **some research has shown that ghrelin increases after weight loss** and doesn't return to baseline, at least after a one-year follow-up.

Metabolism

The internal mechanism through which our body uses up energy & burns calories is known as metabolism. It works round the clock by converting food into the energy our body needs to breathe, develop and repair cells, and do everything else. Scientists are not sure why but with **weight loss the metabolism slows down**. They think it is likely some sort of survival mechanism to hang on to the stored energy.

But there are ways to lose or maintain weight the right way.
Check out - Your Health Habits - on your Hi Jeevan profile.

Measures of physical wellbeing

Body Mass Index (BMI)

BMI is the most straightforward measure used for determining whether a person's weight is appropriate for their height. It is definitely not a perfect indicator of health when used alone. It does not measure body fat directly, and also doesn't account for body composition, body frame, age or sex. However, it's a good place to start to reduce risk of chronic health conditions.

We follow the recommended BMI guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO) which categorizes the risk of chronic health conditions for Asian populations (including Indians) as:

Less than 18.5 kg/m²: underweight
Between 18.5–23 : acceptable risk
Between 23–27.5 : increased risk
More than 27.5 : high risk

It is key to note that internationally the BMI threshold commonly used for not having a healthy weight is 25. However, for the Indian ethnic group, health institutions have found that a BMI of 23 or above could already pose higher risks of chronic health conditions.

Measures of physical wellbeing

Waist Size

Waist size, measured as circumference is considered an important measure of health risks in addition to BMI. People who carry more weight around their midsection (abdomen) are more likely to develop heart disease, type 2 diabetes than those who carry more weight in their hips and thighs, even when their BMI is healthy. An expanding waistline might be a crucial "warning sign," and should urge you to reconsider how much you eat & exercise.

We follow the recommended waist size guidelines of the International Diabetes Federation which categorises:
Healthy waist size for men as less than 35.5 (or 90 cm) inches and for women as less than 31.5 inches (or 80 cm).

Body Fat Percentage (BFP)

BFP is a measurement of body composition and indicates how much of your body's weight is made up of fat. Regardless of your body weight, the higher your body fat percentage, the more likely you are to develop obesity-related illnesses such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, etc.
While there are a number of ways to measure BFP, it is not done routinely as all the methods have margins of error.
Generally body fat around the stomach can pose a greater risk than fat around the hips, buttocks, or thighs, so waist size is an easy to check to perform.

In combination with these measures, markers such as heart rate, blood pressure, blood cholesterol levels, are a good way to know your overall physical wellbeing.

At 

, we encourage body positivity and truly believe that your body, biology, and health come before anything else. You may have a high BMI or waist size due to underlying medical conditions like :

- Thyroid disorder
- Hormone disorders like PCOS, Endometriosis
- Some cases of Menopause
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Sleep disorders
- Certain prescribed medication may cause weight gain

But, a majority of the Indians are overweight because of a sedentary lifestyle and eating increasingly processed and unhealthy food. It is important to understand that not only does obesity contribute to poor mental health and reduced quality of life, but it is a risk factor for health complications like type 2 diabetes, stroke, heart & liver disease, breast, colon, prostate cancer..... and so much more.

So do check out - Your Health Habits - on your 

profile to make sure you are exercising and eating as per recommendations.