

Finding Your IDEAL Weight



How do you calculate your ideal body weight?

Here are three commonly used methods and a few herbs to help you along the way.

1. Body Mass Index (BMI)

The BMI is a method of broadly ascertaining the ideal weight of an adult – your height to weight ratio is calculated using an equation; then divide weight by height squared.

Example:

A person is 158 cm tall and weighs 54 kg.
 54 kg divided by 158 squared = 21.63
 BMI is 21.63, falling within the normal range.

- Normal = 18 – 25
- Overweight = 25 – 30
- Obese = 30 – 40
- Morbidly obese = 40+

What is the problem with BMI?

This method only gives a broad idea. It does not take into account a person's bone size or muscle mass.

For example, an elderly woman may have small, light bones and small muscles. Therefore, although her BMI is likely to categorise her as underweight, a large percentage of her body mass might be fatty tissue. On the other hand, a large boned man, who weight-trains regularly, has the weight of his bones and heavy muscles that may cause him to be 'overweight' on the BMI chart. Although the BMI does not accurately calculate fat-to-muscle ratios, it does generally indicate excessive weight and obesity – obvious high body fat mass which leads to poor health. A BMI over 30 is a health concern and it would normally indicate high body fat.

Muscle weighs more than fat

Muscle weighs 20 per cent more than fat within the same space, because muscle is denser than fat. It is the ratio between muscle and fat that makes a person look healthy, not necessarily their weight or BMI. If you exercise aerobically or lift heavy weights, you will burn fat, and tone and build muscle. Moderate, regular exercise is an important factor to improve your body composition (or muscle to fat ratio) and improve your health.

2. Waist to Hip Ratio (WHR)

The WHR is the ratio between waist and hip circumferences. Compare the narrowest point of your waist to the widest point of your hips.

Example:

If the waist measures 95 cm and the hips measure 90 cm, that person's WHR is 95 divided by 90 = 1.05.

The table below shows how WHR correlates to cardiovascular health risks.

WHR – Women	WHR – Men
Below 0.8 – good cardiovascular health	Below 0.9 – good cardiovascular health
0.8 to 0.89 – moderate cardiovascular health	0.9 to 0.99 – moderate cardiovascular health
0.9 or over – low cardiovascular health	1.0 or over – poor cardiovascular health

Compared to a person's BMI, their WHR more accurately indicates either ideal or unhealthy weight, and the risk of developing cardiovascular conditions.

What is the problem with WHR?

The WHR does not give an accurate calculation of total body composition, or the muscle-to-fat ratio. However, it is a more reliable indicator of ideal weight and health status than the BMI.

3. Bio-impedance Analysis

This uses mild electrical current to accurately assess body composition. Compared to BMI or WHR, bio-impedance is a far more reliable method of differentiating body fat from muscle and other tissue, thereby helping ascertain your ideal, healthy body weight and problem areas. To find out more about bio-impedance, I recommend Vibrant Health in Hamilton, New Zealand. ➡

Choosing a weight loss plan

Once you have decided on your fat loss goal you will need a method for the journey. There are so many options – television and magazines remind us that weight loss is an industry aimed at your desire to reduce body fat, but which to trust? There are weight loss clinics, weight loss retreats, gym hours, extreme dieting, liposuction, thermogenic capsules, health supplements and many more.



Keep it simple

A combination of diet and exercise is an obvious must. Eat whole, live foods including plenty of vegetables and healthy fats; avoid processed foods high in refined carbohydrates and trans fats. Exercise can also be simple cardio and strength training. Even if you start with walking, combined with push-ups and sit-ups at home three times a week, you will feel an improvement in your health. The plan should be easy to follow and fit into your lifestyle, natural, cost-effective and gradual, steady and achievable long-term, for a healthy life and body you feel good about.

There are many simple dietary changes, home remedies and supplements that can be used for long-term, positive changes. As always, herbs come into their own because they are the ultimate body system tonics. They provide natural chemical keys that turn the latch on a molecular level allowing the body to perform correctly.

They not only help detoxify, stimulate organ functions and boost metabolism, but they also nourish, build and stimulate vital organ and glandular functions.

Herbs, supplements and some kitchen pantry items to get you started

- 1. Barley grass** (*Hordeum vulgare*) and wheat grass (*Triticum species*)
Rich source of high quality protein! Contains B vitamins that strengthen the nervous system and reduce stress. Vegetarian source of vitamin B12. Rich in chlorophyll and magnesium. Probiotic (supports growth of beneficial bacteria). Anti-inflammatory, alkalising, nourishing and enlivening.
- 2. Bitter orange** (*Citrus aurantium*)
Increases metabolism and fat burning. Best taken in synergy with other supportive foods and herbs for stability.
- 3. Caralluma** (*Caralluma fimbriata*)
Gives a sense of fullness that curbs cravings. Better than Hoodia, which is endangered, plus it does not cause nausea as Hoodia does.
- 4. Cayenne** (*Capsicum annuum*) and ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)
Improves digestion, circulation, blood flow and vascular perfusion aiding assimilation of nutrients and detoxification.
- 5. Chamomile** (*Matricaria recutita*)
Digestive tonic; source of magnesium (involved in sugar metabolism); reduces stress.
- 6. Chromium**
Vital mineral for insulin and glucose uptake. Helps metabolise cholesterol. Lacking in food as soils are deficient. A healthy gut is necessary for chromium absorption.
- 7. Cinnamon** (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*)
Aids in blood sugar regulation.
- 8. Dandelion** (*Taraxacum officinale*)
Great for liver and gall bladder, digestion, kidneys, detoxifying.
- 9. Garcinia** (*Garcinia cambogia*)
Inhibits fat tissue production; lowers total cholesterol, but raises HDL (so-called good cholesterol); reduces excess appetite; improves mood.
- 10. Gymnema** (*Gymnema sylvestre*)
Excellent blood sugar stabiliser, pancreatic tonic.
- 11. Fenugreek** (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*)
For blood sugar balancing – remember that to balance blood sugars is to reduce fat production and storage.
- 12. Green tea** (*Camellia chinensis*)
Mild blood sugar balancer. High in antioxidant polyphenols for reducing the oxidative effects of fat burning during a fat loss programme. Lowers cholesterol.
- 13. Kelp** (*Macrocystis pyrifera*) or other **Seaweeds**
Iodine, iron, magnesium, selenium, potassium – important for the thyroid and metabolic function.
- 14. Korean ginseng** (*Panax ginseng*)
Blood sugar balancer; hormone regulator; improves energy and improves uptake of zinc which is involved in carbohydrate metabolism.
- 15. Milk thistle** (*Silybum marianum*)
Liver and digestive support, aids toxin clearance and nutrient assimilation.
- 16. Nettle** (*Urtica dioica*)
Stinging nettle is mineral rich, high in iron, blood sugar stabiliser; a wonderful energising and balancing herb useful for far more than simply weight loss.
- 17. Onion** (*Allium sepa*) and garlic (*Allium sativa*)
Lowers cholesterol and blood glucose levels. Cardiovascular tonics; antioxidant.
- 18. Red clover** (*Trifolium pratense*)
Detoxifying, nutrient rich, blood sugar balancing.

Feeling good

Feeling good about yourself is fundamental to your wellbeing. The media has long portrayed thin models as the ideal, creating an unrealistic goal that is not based on an individual's genetic body type.

Okay, we agree most of us would like to look fabulous, but let's face facts – 99 per cent of us do not have the striking good looks or bone structure of an air-brushed model. We will probably not be on the cover of a fashion magazine.

Beauty really does come from inner health. With pure water, and air, health giving nutrients and medicinal herbs, along with a positive and happy nature, a person of what may be considered average physical looks can be attractive because of the health that shines from within them.

More important than looks is more energy, a sense of wellbeing, reduced inflammation, enhanced immune function, improved digestive function, better sleep and greatly reduced risk of serious health conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, arthritis and cancer.



An enjoyable, gradual and steady improvement in health is better than a stressful, rushed and yo-yo effect. Whatever you do, find a long-term solution rather than a quick fix. Rome wasn't built in a day, so lighten up on yourself and remember to enjoy the process. Meditate – go to a night class

if you don't know how to; breathe deeply and naturally, have relaxing pastimes to de-stress. Stress upsets many functions of your body including fat-burning. You will be better off if you find happiness during the journey and not only the destination. ✨

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