

Weight Management Gynecologic Oncology Center

In the Gynecology Oncology Center, we will treat and manage your cancer closely. We also want to help you decrease your risk for cancer and other diseases. One way that you can help lower your risk and feel better is by maintaining a healthy weight.

Obesity is a risk factor for serious illnesses, including heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis and many other illnesses that affect quality of life. Being overweight or obese is also a risk factor for many cancers, such as:

- Ovarian cancer
- Breast cancer
- Colon cancer
- Kidney cancer, and
- Pancreatic cancer

Endometrial cancer has been linked to high levels of the hormone estrogen. Because fat tissue is able to change some hormones into estrogen, overweight and obese women have higher levels of estrogen. Overweight women are at higher risk of endometrial cancer, and obese women are two to four times more likely to get endometrial cancer.



Therefore, if you are overweight or obese, it is important that you lose weight and keep it off.

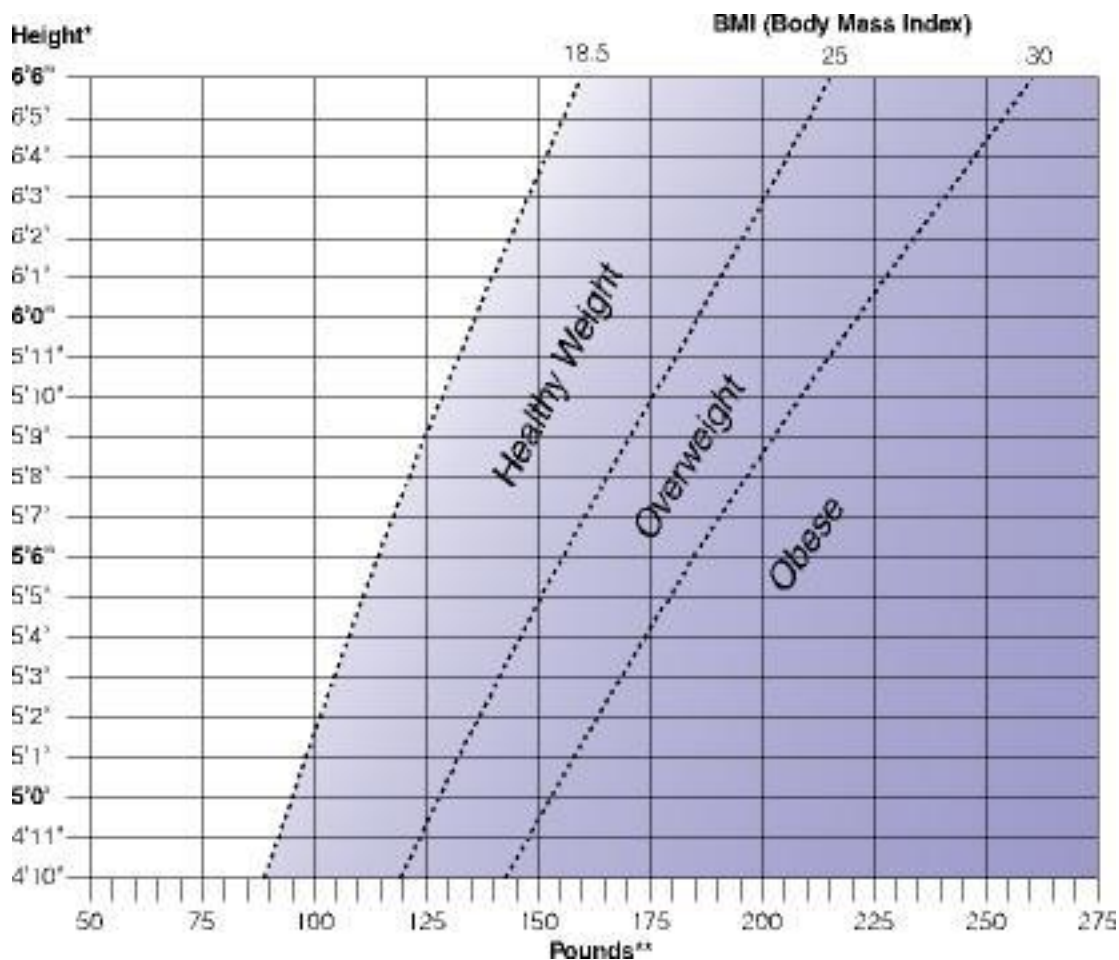
How do I know if I am overweight or obese?

Your doctor is the best resource to help you determine if you need to lose weight. Body mass index, or BMI, is a tool for measuring a person’s weight in relation to height. For women and men, a BMI between 18.5 and 24.9 is a normal, healthy weight. Narrow the range to 21 to 23 for the healthiest weight to reduce cancer risk further. If your BMI is 25 or higher, MD Anderson experts recommend losing weight. For adults over age 20, BMI falls into one of these ranges:

BMI	Weight Status
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Normal/healthy
25 – 29.9	Overweight
30 and above	Obese

To Calculate Your BMI:

You can use the graph on the next page to determine if you are in a healthy weight range. Find your weight on the bottom of the graph. Go straight up from that point until you come to the line that matches your height. Then look to find your weight group. For example, if you weigh 140 pounds and are 5 feet 6 inches tall, you are in the “healthy weight” range.



As BMI increases, so does your risk for major health problems. This includes heart disease, stroke, diabetes, gallbladder disease, sleep apnea and osteoarthritis. Additionally, obesity is linked with an increased risk of several cancers:

- Esophageal
- Pancreatic
- Colorectal
- Breast (post menopausal)
- Endometrial
- Kidney

Lifestyle Changes

The National Institute of Health reports that if you reduce your body weight by 10 percent, you can lower your risk for obesity related diseases. For many, losing weight is not easy. Try these tips to help you lose weight:

- Get support from others with similar goals. This can be in a formal group or with your friends and family.
- Make sure your goals are realistic. You have a much better chance of keeping off the weight if you lose one to two pounds a week.
- Include exercise or some sort of physical activity in your daily routine, once your doctor says it is OK.

- Have a doctor or medical professional help you with your goals.
- Keep a journal of what you eat and when you eat. This can show you patterns that you may want to work on changing.
- If you eat when you are sad, lonely, angry or bored, ask for help. Often people who struggle with their weight eat for other reasons not related to being hungry.
- Forgive yourself and get back on track if you struggle with weight loss.

MD Anderson Resources

Ask your nurse or doctor to schedule a visit with an MD Anderson dietitian to help you get started. You may also call 713-563-5167 to schedule an appointment.

Other Resources

Many weight loss programs exist, but not all programs may be right for you. Talk to your doctor before you start any weight loss program, and ask him or her about medically supervised programs.

American Institute for Cancer Research

Educates people about choices they can make to reduce their chances of developing cancer
<http://www.aicr.org>

Weight Watchers®

Weight Watchers is an international company that offers various dieting products and services to assist weight loss and maintenance.

<http://www.weightwatchers.com>

800-651-6000

Overeaters Anonymous

Overeaters Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating.

<https://oa.org/>

USDA Online Meal Planning

Choose My Plate offers guidance with meal planning.

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

To learn more about how to reduce your cancer risk, see the patient information sheets “Cancer Risk Reduction Through Nutrition” and “Physical Activity and Exercise.”