

## What is BMI?

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a number that is calculated for children and adults using height and weight measurements. For children (ages 2-20), this number is plotted on the CDC growth charts to compare BMI with other children of the same age and gender.

If you want to determine BMI, use the calculation below:

Weight (lb) / Height (in) / Height (in) x 703

## What is Body Mass Index?

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a number that is calculated for children and adults using height and weight measurements. For children (ages 2-20), this number is plotted on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) growth charts to compare with other children of the same age and sex.

## How should I interpret my child's BMI?

The curved lines on the CDC growth chart show how your child's BMI ranks compared to other children his or her age and sex. For example, if a child is plotted on the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile line for BMI-for-age, it means that 75 of 100 children (75%) of the same age and sex have a **lower** BMI-for-age. It also means that 25 of 100 children (25%) of the same age and sex have a **higher** BMI-for-age.

According to the CDC, children with a BMI:

- Between the 85<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentile are **at risk for overweight**
- Greater than the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile are **overweight**.

## How is BMI decreased?

Body Mass Index will decrease if:

- Height is gained and weight remains the same
- Height is gained and weight is lost
- Height remains the same and weight is lost

It is not necessary to focus on weight. As children grow, if they are able to maintain their weight, their BMI will eventually decrease. This will reduce the risk of future health implications that are related to being overweight as a child. If your child is considerably overweight, they will work with their dietitian or health care provider to lose weight at a healthy rate. Eating smart and moving more are two important goals to build on as your child moves toward achieving a healthier weight.

It is important to keep track of your child's measurements at each doctor's office visit. This helps you see if there are any big changes in your child's growth. If your child's BMI changes a lot in one year, you should talk with your doctor about it.