

## Physical Activity

Physical activity can help you lose weight by burning calories and building muscle. As with changes in diet, it can take some time to see results from increasing your physical activity level. But as you get more fit, each level of activity will become easier.

Exercise can also help you handle stress and boost your outlook on life. And regular physical activity can reduce your risk for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and heart disease. So, walk the dog. Wash your car. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. It all counts towards the 30 minutes of physical activity you need five days a week.

## To Learn More

This brochure provides an overview of the link between diabetes and your weight. You can learn more about this and related topics from the American Diabetes Association (ADA):

- For general information visit [diabetes.org](http://diabetes.org), call 1-800-DIABETES (342-2383), or email [AskADA@diabetes.org](mailto:AskADA@diabetes.org).
- Visit Weight Loss Matters online at [diabetes.org/wlm](http://diabetes.org/wlm).
- Learn more about exercise and join our online walking group at [diabetes.org/exercise](http://diabetes.org/exercise).
- Visit our Virtual Grocery Store and find recipes online at [diabetes.org/recipes](http://diabetes.org/recipes).
- Learn more about your risk for diabetes with Diabetes PHD (Personal Health Decisions): [diabetes.org/phd](http://diabetes.org/phd).
- Diabetes Forecast is the magazine of the American Diabetes Association. Call 1-800-806-7801 for subscription and membership information.
- The ADA publishes many books for people with or at risk for diabetes. Visit our online store at [store.diabetes.org](http://store.diabetes.org) or call 1-800-ADA-ORDER for a catalog.



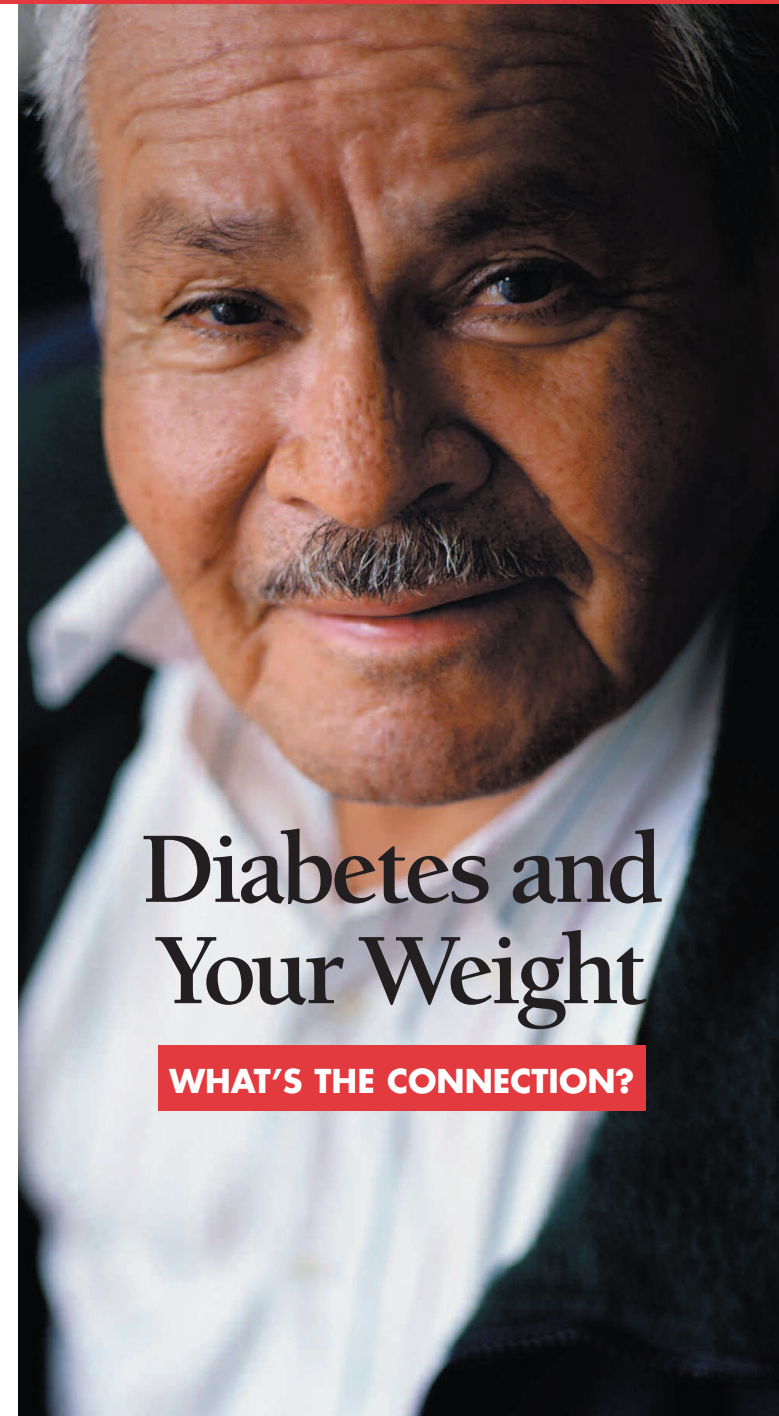
**1-800-DIABETES  
(1-800-342-2383)**

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# Diabetes and Your Weight

**WHAT'S THE CONNECTION?**

## What is the link between diabetes and obesity?

Being overweight or obese is a leading risk factor for type 2 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes, typically affecting middle-aged and older adults. Every cell of the body needs energy to survive. Cells need the hormone insulin in order to use blood glucose for energy. In type 2 diabetes, the body doesn't make enough insulin, the insulin it does make does not work well, or both. Instead of being used by cells, glucose builds up in the blood. Over time, high blood glucose levels can cause serious complications such as kidney disease, blindness, and nerve damage.

Being inactive also contributes to type 2 diabetes, and not just because it goes hand in hand with being overweight. Physical activity by itself helps the body keep blood glucose levels in check.

A study called the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) proved that type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed by managing weight and increasing physical activity. DPP participants were adults who were clearly headed toward type 2 diabetes. The study found that the participants who increased their physical activity and lost just 5-7% of their body weight (10-15 pounds) reduced their risk for diabetes by 58%.

Most people with type 2 diabetes are overweight. A healthy weight is measured by your body mass index (BMI). Use the chart on the right to check your BMI. A BMI of 25 or more is considered overweight. A BMI of 30 or more is obese.

## Calories Count

No matter what you hear about special diets — low carb diets, grapefruit diets, liquid diets — weight loss is all about calories. When you take in fewer calories than you use through physical activity, you lose weight. The key is to find a plan that helps you get to and maintain a healthy weight long term, not just for a few weeks or months.

If you have diabetes, losing weight can help you manage your diabetes. In many cases, when people with type 2 diabetes lose weight and get active their blood glucose levels go down. Some people with diabetes are even able to decrease their diabetes medications.

## Body Mass Index (BMI)

|                           |       | Weight in Pounds |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|---------------------------|-------|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|                           |       | 140              | 150 | 160 | 170 | 180 | 190 | 200 | 210 | 220 | 230 | 240 | 250 | 260 | 270 | 280 | 290 | 300 |
| Height in Feet and Inches | 4'6"  | 34               | 36  | 39  | 41  | 43  | 46  | 48  | 51  | 53  | 56  | 58  | 60  | 63  | 65  | 68  | 70  | 72  |
|                           | 4'8"  | 31               | 34  | 36  | 38  | 40  | 43  | 45  | 47  | 49  | 52  | 54  | 56  | 58  | 61  | 63  | 65  | 67  |
|                           | 4'10" | 29               | 31  | 34  | 36  | 38  | 40  | 42  | 44  | 46  | 48  | 50  | 52  | 54  | 57  | 59  | 61  | 63  |
|                           | 5'0"  | 27               | 29  | 31  | 33  | 35  | 37  | 39  | 41  | 43  | 45  | 47  | 49  | 51  | 53  | 55  | 57  | 59  |
|                           | 5'2"  | 26               | 27  | 29  | 31  | 33  | 35  | 37  | 38  | 40  | 42  | 44  | 46  | 48  | 49  | 51  | 53  | 55  |
|                           | 5'4"  | 24               | 26  | 28  | 29  | 31  | 33  | 34  | 36  | 38  | 40  | 41  | 43  | 45  | 46  | 48  | 50  | 52  |
|                           | 5'6"  | 23               | 24  | 26  | 27  | 29  | 31  | 32  | 34  | 36  | 37  | 39  | 40  | 42  | 44  | 45  | 47  | 49  |
|                           | 5'8"  | 21               | 23  | 24  | 26  | 27  | 29  | 30  | 32  | 34  | 35  | 37  | 38  | 40  | 41  | 43  | 44  | 46  |
|                           | 5'10" | 20               | 22  | 23  | 24  | 26  | 27  | 29  | 30  | 32  | 33  | 35  | 36  | 37  | 39  | 40  | 42  | 43  |
|                           | 6'0"  | 19               | 20  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 26  | 27  | 28  | 30  | 31  | 33  | 34  | 36  | 37  | 38  | 39  | 41  |
|                           | 6'2"  | 18               | 19  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 26  | 27  | 28  | 30  | 31  | 32  | 33  | 35  | 36  | 37  | 39  |
|                           | 6'4"  | 17               | 18  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 26  | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 32  | 33  | 34  | 35  | 37  |
|                           | 6'6"  | 16               | 17  | 19  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25  | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 31  | 32  | 34  | 35  |
| 6'8"                      | 15    | 17               | 18  | 19  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25  | 26  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 31  | 32  | 33  |     |

Underweight
  Healthy Weight
  Overweight
  Obese

This chart is for adults (20 years and older).

## What Can You Do?

- Decide whether you are overweight. Use the BMI chart to find out.
- If you are overweight or obese, calculate 5% of your body weight. If you weigh 150 pounds, 5% is 7.5. If you weigh 200, 5% is 10 pounds.
- Set a goal to lose 5% of your current body weight.
- Make a plan. Your plan should include a healthy diet and physical activity. Take it slow and make steady lifestyle changes that you can keep for years and years.
- Visit [diabetes.org/wlm](http://diabetes.org/wlm) for more great weight loss tips.

## Losing Weight

Losing weight and keeping it off is a real challenge for most people. That's why it's important to begin a weight-loss program with the help of your health care team, including, if possible, a dietitian. A dietitian can help you find ways to lower calories but still eat foods you enjoy. And they can suggest strategies to help you change old habits for new ones.

It's important to remember that losing even a small amount of weight can make a big difference in lowering your risk for diabetes and other serious conditions. Every pound you lose, and keep off, is a very positive step.