

Parent Handout #1: Your child's BMI

We are concerned about your child's weight. We have found your child has a Body Mass Index (BMI) percentile that is higher than at least 85 percent of children your child's age and gender.

What is Body Mass Index (BMI) percentile?

- Body Mass Index (BMI) is a number found using a person's weight and height. For children and teens, the age and gender of the child is also used to figure out BMI percentile. BMI percentile is a good way to measure body fatness for most children and teens. Too much body fat is a problem because it can lead to illnesses and other health problems.

What is BMI percentile used for?

- Doctors use BMI percentile to find children and teens in weight categories that may lead to health problems in childhood and adulthood. BMI is used to see if a child is underweight, healthy weight, overweight, or obese.

Weight Category	Percentile Range
Underweight	Less than the 5 th percentile
Healthy weight	5 th percentile to less than the 85 th percentile
Overweight	85 th to less than the 95 th percentile
Obese	Equal to or greater than the 95 th percentile

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/index.htm>

Why are we worried about your child's weight?

- The way your children will eat and the amount of exercise your children will get as adults is being determined now. Those who are overweight as children and teens have more risk for ongoing health problems as adults. Weight problems can also hurt health by leading to diabetes, high cholesterol, sleep apnea and other medical issues, as well as hurting self-image, and as a result, self-esteem.
- BMI percentile is really useful for figuring out which children are at risk for becoming overweight as they get older. If doctors can find these at-risk children early on, they can watch their weight more closely and maybe prevent adult weight problems through changes in eating and exercise habits.

What you can do to help your child reach a healthy weight status?

Eating Suggestions:

1. Five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day
2. No sugar-sweetened beverages such as juice and soda pop

Physical Activity Suggestions:

1. Two or fewer hours of screen time per day, and no television in the room where the child sleeps. Screen time is any time spent in front of a screen such as watching television, playing videogames, and working/playing on a computer.
2. One hour or more of daily physical activity

The Goal: To bring your child's BMI below the 85th percentile.

REMEMBER: Your Follow-up Visit next month. See you then!