



Body Mass Index & Waist Circumference

Body Mass Index (BMI)

Used to assess weight for men and women over 18 years of age:

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{weight (kg)}}{\text{height (m}^2\text{)}}$$

Table 1. Proposed classification of weight by BMI in different adult ethnic groups

	BMI (kg m ²)			Risk of co morbidities
	New Zealand European people	Pacific Island and Maori people	Asian and Indian people	
Under-	< 18.5	< 18.5	< 18.5	Low
Healthy	18.5 – 25	18.5 – 26	18.5 – 23	Average
Overweight	25 - 30	26 - 32	23 – 25	High
Obese	> 30	> 32	> 25	Very High

BMI is inappropriate for use with:

- Children or adolescents under the age of 18 years
- Very muscular people
- Pregnant women

Those who are very short (less than 150cm) or very tall (greater than 190cm)

Waist Circumference (WC)

Used to assess abdominal obesity when BMI is < 35 kg m²

	Men	Women
New Zealand European people	< 102 cm	< 85 cm
Pacific Island and Maori people	< 102 cm	< 88 cm
Asian and Indian people	< 90 cm	< 80 cm

* At higher BMI levels WC adds little to risk predictions