

Healthy Body Fat Range

	Under 30 years old	Over 30 years old
Men	14%-20%	17%-23%
Women	17%-24%	20%-27%

Studies show being overweight increases our risk of heart disease, hypertension, certain cancers, diabetes, joint disorders—the list goes on and on.

How can you lose weight and fat without losing muscle?

Drastically reducing calories (“crash dieting”) may result in weight loss but of muscle not fat.

Weight loss from crash dieting is seldom permanent. Proper weight loss has two sides:

modifying eating patterns and committing to a regular, but reasonable, exercise program.

Body fat versus weight

A person may have an acceptable weight and figure, but if their body contains too much body fat, their health could be at risk. By comparison, someone who exercises most every day may weigh the same weight, but because their body is composed of dense, lean muscle, they may be “thinner.” You can be thin or fat at the same weight—depending on your individual fat-to-muscle content.

Three simple steps to good health

1. Eat Right

Most countries recommend that no more than 30% of your total daily caloric intake consist of fat, with no more than 10% of it saturated fat. (1)

Saturated fat does the most damage to health and, naturally, is the most difficult to burn. Also we must the number of calories, regardless of the source, to what we need for good overall weight. Calories not used are stored in the body as fat.

The Food Pyramid is an excellent guide to picking different food types. Choose the majority from the lower portion of the food pyramid. Grains, fruits, and vegetables supply low fat, moderate calories with high nutrient fiber content. The longer you practice a low-fat diet, moderate calorie diet, the quicker you are going to see results as you monitor your progress.

2. Exercise Regularly

Even if you consumed no fat in your diet (a near impossibility), you still wouldn't reduce your current body fat percentage. In fact, as we age we loose about 250 grams (½ pound) of muscle each year while we gain 750 grams (1 ½ pounds) of fat. Only as we exercise regularly do we burn excess calories, fat, and build lean body mass—muscle.

3. Monitor Your Program

A method gaining wide support by medical and fitness experts is bioelectrical impedance analysis (BIA). This technology is incorporated into a simple bathroom scale. When you step bare-foot onto the scale (available at several booth locations), a very safe, low electrical current is passed through the body and body fat percentage is calculated based on the amount of impedance. Current passes much faster through lean muscle than it does through fat. In just seconds you will learn both your current weight and your body fat percentage