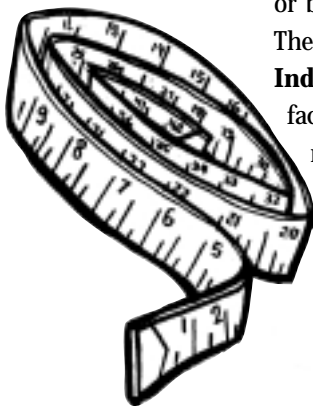


Be Weight Wise: How do you shape up?



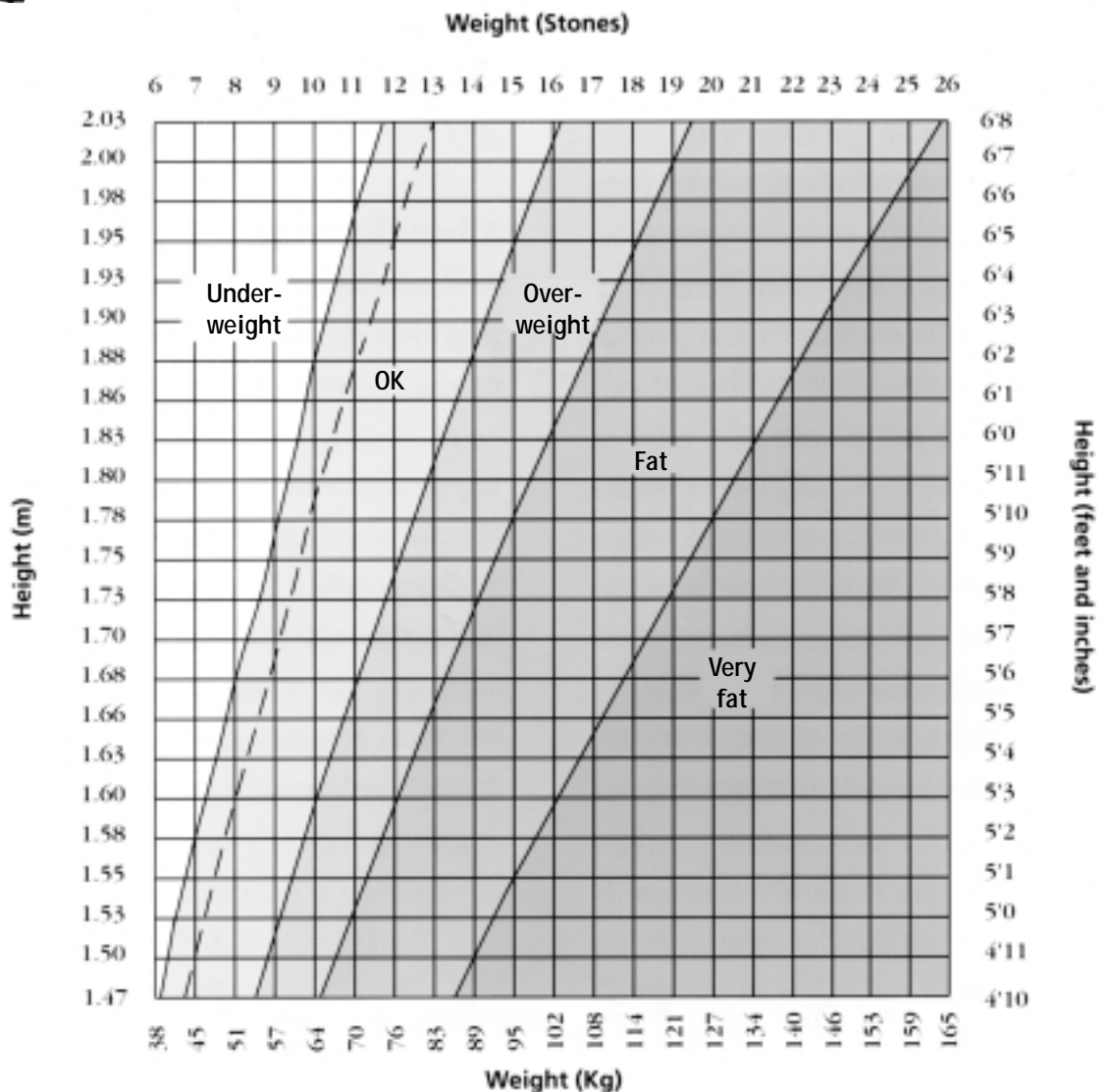
ABOUT 1 IN 5 PEOPLE in Britain today are heavy enough to be putting their health at risk, so it's very important to be able to assess your own risk. There are several simple ways of checking whether your current weight or body shape is likely to affect your health. These include calculating your **Body Mass Index** and checking your **waist size**. This factsheet explains how you can use these methods to see whether you might need to lose some weight.

What's your Body Mass Index?

Your Body Mass Index (BMI) is one of the main ways of finding out if your weight is putting your health at risk. It is based on your height and weight and can be worked out from the chart below or by taking your weight in kilograms and dividing it by your height (in metres) squared.

Using the chart

Measure your height and weight without shoes. Draw a line across from your height and up from your weight. The point at which the two cross shows which category you are in. For example, if your height is 1.73m (5'8") and your weight is 102kg (16 stone) you are in the fat category.





Alternatively, you can calculate your BMI as follows:

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

What does your BMI mean?

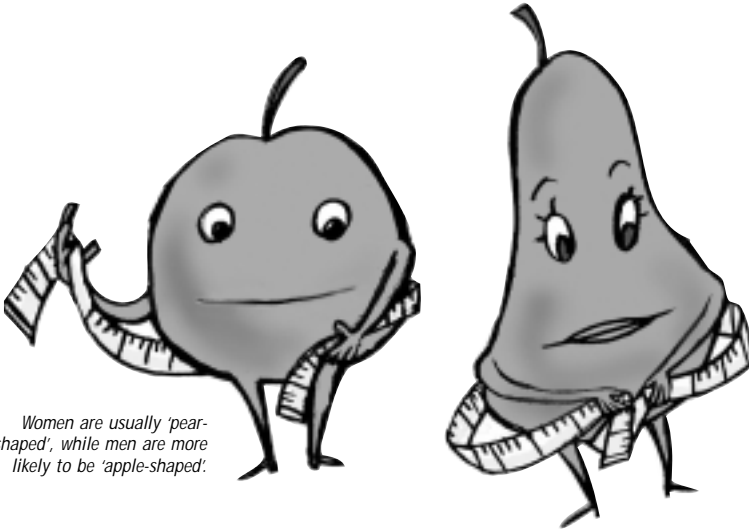
A BMI of less than 19 indicates you are **underweight** and may need to put on weight by eating more of a variety of different foods.

If your BMI is 19 to 25, this indicates you are a **healthy weight**, and should aim to stay that way.

If your BMI is 26 to 30 you are **overweight** and need to make sure at least that your weight does not continue to rise.

A BMI of over 30 (**fat** or **very fat** on the chart) means **your health is at risk** and you should follow a healthy diet and become more active in order to lose weight.

Measure your waist: Are you an apple or a pear?



Women are usually 'pear-shaped', while men are more likely to be 'apple-shaped'.

CARRYING too much weight around your middle increases your risk of developing heart disease and diabetes. People who carry excess weight around their middle are often referred to as 'apple-shaped', whereas those who carry the weight on their hips are 'pear-shaped'. Someone who is 'apple-shaped' has greater health risks than someone who is 'pear-shaped' even if they are both overweight.

MEASURING your waist is an easy way of finding out whether you are an 'apple' or 'pear'. To measure your waist find the bottom of your ribs and the top of your hips. Measure around your middle at a point mid-way between these (for many people this will be the tummy button). Use the table below to see if you are at risk of ill health.

If you are trying to lose weight, aim to lose no more than one to two pounds (half to one kg) each week.

Waist measurement for:	at risk	high risk
European men	94cm (37 inches)	102cm (40 inches)
European and Asian women	80cm (32 inches)	88cm (35 inches)
Asian men	90cm (36 inches)	

If you are at increased risk it is important to stop and think about your waist size. Perhaps now would be a good time to make healthy lifestyle changes that would prevent any further increase. If you are at high risk then losing weight and reducing your waist size would improve your health. Changing dietary habits and becoming more physically active would have many benefits.