Do you know OBESE when you see it?

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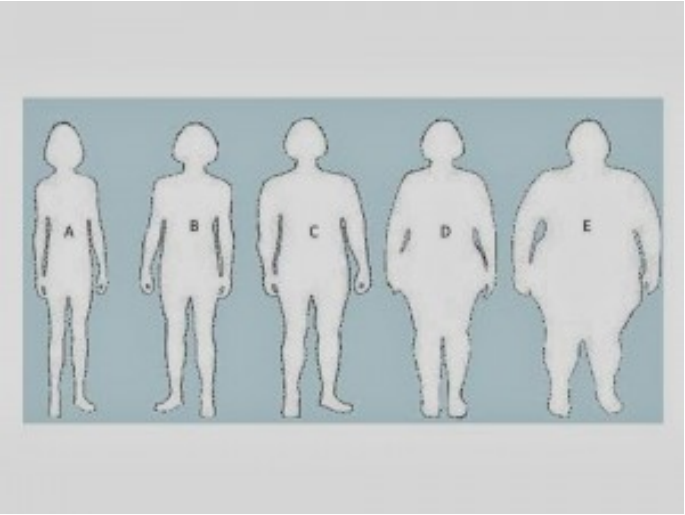
I'm Not Obese!

"I just went to the Doctor and he told me I'm obese! Can you believe that? I may need to lose some weight but I'm certainly not obese!" Curiously I've heard this conversation more than once and sometimes the "I" is replaced with "my husband", or "my wife", or "my friend". I might laugh it off except a couple of years ago I was in a doctor's waiting room and happened to peruse a Body Mass Index chart posted on the wall. When I traced my height and weight to find my BMI (body mass index) I was shocked to find I was in the obese category. When I told my wife, she said "You may need to lose some weight but you're certainly not obese!" Sound familiar?

An Obesity Epidemic

The CDC states that 34% of American adults over 20 years of age are obese. If one in three of us are obese, you'd think we would have a pretty good idea what obese looks like. Try this test; look at A through E below and identify under weight, normal weight, and obese?



Using the Body Mass Index

Body mass index is defined as body weight divided by the square of height. While the BMI has been in existence since the eighteen hundreds, it came to prominence in the early 70's as concerns about increasing levels of obesity became prominent. While not a perfect measurement, it has been found to be the most accurate of the simple body fat measurements. It's even easier to use by referring to a table like the one below. Find your height in the left column, and trace horizontally to find your weight. Straight up from your weight, at the top of the chart will be your BMI number.

The BMI scale breaks down as follows a BMI of 19 to 24 is normal weight, a BMI of 25 to 29 is overweight, a BMI of 30 to 39 is obese, a BMI over 40 is extremely obese, sometimes referred to as morbidly obese.

	NORMAL						OVERWEIGHT					OBESE										EXTREME OBESITY		
BMI	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Height (feet-inches)	Weight (Pounds)																							
4'10"	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167	172	177	181	186	191	196	201
4'11"	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	129	134	139	143	148	153	158	163	168	173	178	183	188	193	198	203	208
5'00"	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179	184	189	194	199	204	209	215
5'01"	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185	190	195	201	206	211	217	222
5'02"	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191	196	202	207	213	218	224	229
5'03"	107	112	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	174	180	185	191	197	203	208	214	220	225	231	237
5'04"	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	175	180	186	192	198	204	209	215	221	227	232	238	244
5'05"	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210	216	222	228	234	240	246	252
5'06"	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216	223	229	235	241	247	253	260
5'07"	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223	230	236	242	249	255	261	268
5'08"	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	204	210	216	223	230	236	243	249	256	262	269	276
5'09"	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	210	216	223	230	236	243	250	257	263	270	277	284
5'10"	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	223	229	236	243	250	257	264	271	278	285	292
5'11"	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222	229	236	243	250	257	265	272	279	286	293	301
6'00"	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228	235	243	250	258	265	272	279	287	294	302	309
6'01"	144	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235	242	250	257	265	273	280	288	295	303	310	318
6'02"	148	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241	249	256	264	272	280	287	295	303	311	319	326
6'03"	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279	287	296	303	311	319	327	335
6'04"	156	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254	263	271	279	287	295	304	312	320	328	336	344

Adapted from George Bray, Pennington Biomedical Research Center, *Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults: The Evidence Report*, National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, September 1998.

How to Move from Obese to Normal without a Diet

I feel I can fairly answer this question because I was able to move from the obese category to the normal category and have remained there for over a year. Please know that I've had my share of yo-yo diets. I’ve lost and regained 30 lbs a half dozen times in my life. Maybe that’s

why I decided to do something different. Take a look at what I did.

- Take a vow to never diet again.

- *Think about this. How would you eat if you were never going to diet ever again? ·*

- Put no time limit on achieving your healthy weight.
  - *It took me two years to lose 50 lbs. The slower the better. Slower means you're developing real habits.*

- Eliminate hydrogenated oil, high fructose corn syrup, and artificial sweeteners (diet soda) from your diet.
  - *Make one small change to your diet at a time. Once you're used to that change, make another small change.*

- Commit to eating real food and forget calories; salad and fruit daily, grass fed beef, free range eggs
  - *Your body wants nutrients, not calories. Again, just make one small change to your diet at a time.*

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- Get the preservatives, GMOs, and toxins out of your diet and the toxic emotions out of your head.
  - *If you can't pronounce it or don't know what it is, don't eat it. If something is bothering you, deal with it, don't ignore it.*

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So how did you do on the test? Body image A is "normal Weight". There is no underweight image on the chart. Body image B is overweight. Body image C is obese. That's right, body image C is obese. The truth is body image C can easily have an extra 50 lbs of fat. I know because I was body image C and I had 50 lbs of extra fat. I'm guessing you know a lot of people who fit body image C. Body image D is severely obese, and body image E is morbidly obese.

It doesn't matter where you are on the chart today. What matters is where you're going on the chart. The only thing separating you from your healthy weight is knowledge. Your body is your ally. Work with it and achieve the health you deserve. Feed the body well and the body will be well!

This post is part of Fight Back Friday, Monday Mania, and Real Food Wednesday.

Written by Peter Wright