



## WHAT IS A HEALTHY WEIGHT?

BY MARTA BORKOVA

At the beginning of the year, many people will make one or more New Year's resolutions - and they often center around the idea of losing weight in an effort to become more healthy. But what exactly is a healthy weight? And should your weight really be your focus on your journey towards better health?

### A Piece of the Puzzle

When we think about weight impacting health, we often focus on two things: diet, and exercise. In the holistic model of health however, your health is comprised of physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual factors. Each of these influence the other, and fit together like a puzzle to result in an optimal state of health, or well-being. Emotions are closely linked to weight as many people eat in response to underlying depression, stress, or anxiety.



Think of the example of a heavily overweight, single, working parent who is strapped for time, energy, and possibly even finances. Although weight loss may be a goal for this person in order to become more healthy, it will likely take a multifaceted approach, with more focus on social and emotional factors, than purely on diet and exercise. Conversely, think of a person who has strong pillars of health (diet, exercise, sleep) but appears slightly overweight. For this person, losing weight may not be much of a concern. Weight is only one piece of the overall picture of good health.

### A Healthy Gauge

Your ideal weight range is determined by your height, weight, body type, age, and physical goals. The body mass index, or BMI, is often used as a general gauge of weight and health. It is calculated by dividing your weight in kilograms by your height in meters squared. However, where your body fat is distributed around your body may be a better predictor of disease risk.

Body fat, which makes up a part of your body weight, can be a better way to determine if you are in a healthy range than body weight or BMI alone.



### Where to Start?

When you think about your health, it may be easy to focus on your weight first. After all, in our image-driven culture, we are faced on a daily basis with unrealistic body image standards. With roughly 40% of Americans affected by obesity, there's no denying that many of us should consider weight loss as part of our journey to better overall health.

If you are concerned about your weight, take a step back and try to look at a holistic view of your health. What do you think is driving your weight issues? Reach out to your injury prevention specialist, or another trusted healthcare professional, who will help you make specific, measurable goals - and support you on your journey to reaching them. Like any worthwhile goal, there will be setbacks and obstacles. Having support and guidance along the way is essential to success.



#### About Marta Borkova, PT, DPT

Marta Borkova is a Physical Therapist in Spokane, WA. In and out of the clinic she loves exploring the themes of holistic health and wellness, and sharing what she's learned. When she's not onsite providing injury prevention services, she spends most of her time trying to keep up with her two little boys!

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