

Weight Management Gynecologic Oncology Center

In the Gynecology Oncology Center, your cancer is priority and treated and managed closely. The goal is to help you decrease your risk for cancer and other diseases that may affect your treatment. One way that you can help lower your risk and feel better is by maintaining a healthy weight.

Obesity is a risk factor for serious illnesses, including heart disease, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, gall bladder disease, diabetes, arthritis and many other illnesses that affect quality of life. Being overweight or obese is also a risk factor for many cancers, including:

- Ovarian cancer
- Breast cancer
- Colon cancer
- Kidney cancer
- Pancreatic cancer
- Uterine (endometrial) cancer

Endometrial cancer has been linked to high levels of the hormone estrogen. Because fat tissue is able to change some hormones into estrogen, overweight and obese women have higher levels of estrogen, even after menopause. Overweight women are at higher risk of endometrial cancer and obese women are 2 to 4 times more likely to get endometrial cancer.



If you are overweight or obese, it is important that you consider lifestyle changes that can help you lose weight and keep it off.

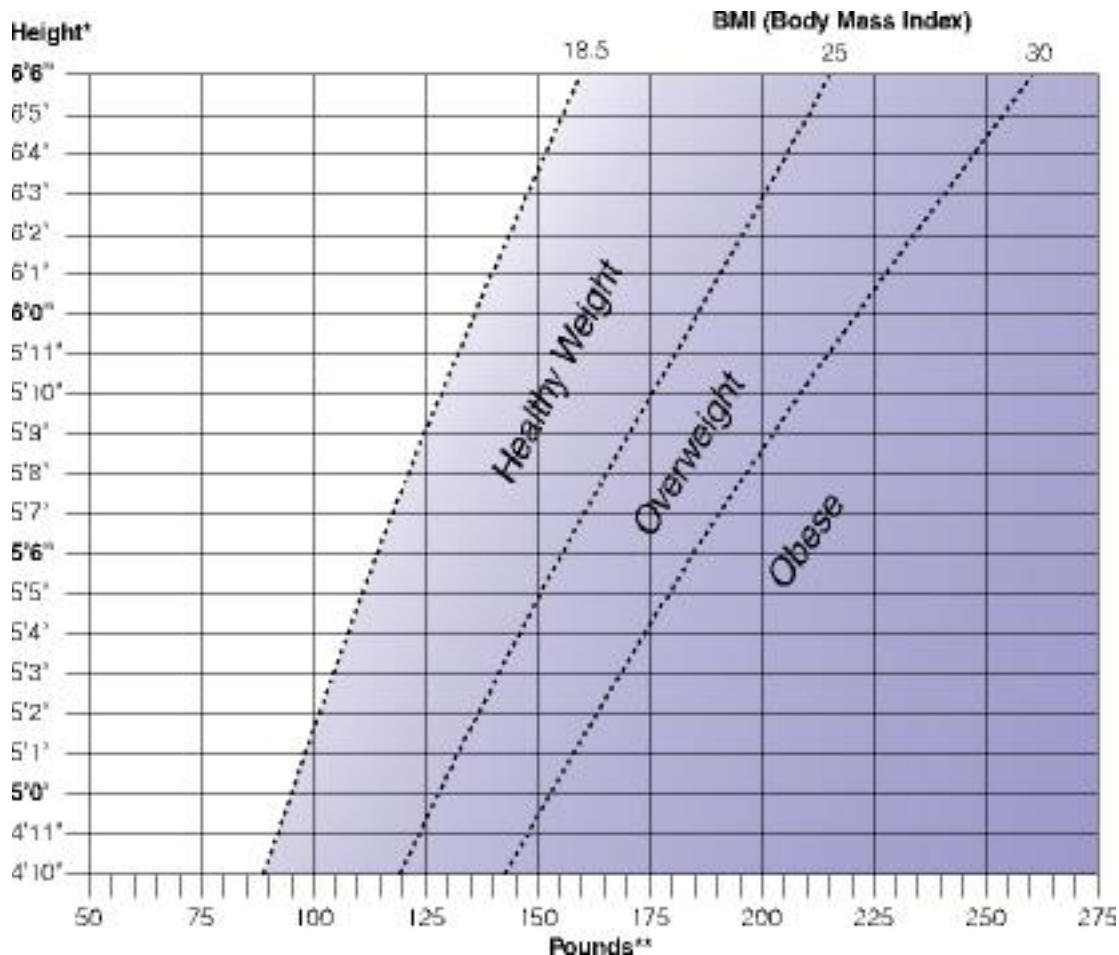
Body Mass Index (BMI)

Your doctor is the best resource to help you determine if you need to lose weight. Body mass index, or BMI, is a tool for measuring a person's weight in relation to height. For women and men, a BMI between 18.5 and 24.9 is a normal, healthy weight. Aim for a range between 21 and 23 (the healthiest weight) to further help to reduce your cancer risk. If your BMI is 25 or higher, MD Anderson experts recommend losing weight. For adults over age 20, BMI falls into one of these ranges:

| BMI | Weight Status |
|--------------|----------------|
| Below 18.5 | Underweight |
| 18.5 – 24.9 | Normal/healthy |
| 25 – 29.9 | Overweight |
| 30 and above | Obese |

Calculate Your BMI

You can use the graph below to determine if you are in a healthy weight range. Find your weight on the bottom of the graph. Go straight up from that point until you come to the line that matches your height. Then look to find your weight group. For example, if you weigh 140 pounds and are 5 feet 6 inches tall, you are in the “healthy weight” range.



Lifestyle Changes

The National Institute of Health reports that if you reduce your body weight by 10 percent, you can lower your risk for many obesity related diseases. For many, losing weight is not easy. Try these tips to help you lose weight:

- Get support from others with similar goals. This can be from a formal group or with your friends and family.
- Make sure your goals are realistic. You have a much better chance of keeping off the weight if you lose no more than 1 to 2 pounds a week.
- Make lifestyle changes you can continue after you lose weight. This is more effective than short term dieting.
- Include exercise or physical activity in your daily routine, after your doctor says it is OK. Exercise for at least 150 minutes a week in 30-minute sessions 5 times a week.

- Sit less. Get up every 30 minutes and stretch or walk around. Use stairs whenever you can.
- Have a doctor or medical professional help you with your goals.
- Be mindful of when you eat. It is best not to eat in front of TV.
- Consider keeping a journal of what you eat and when you eat. This can show you patterns that you may want to work on changing.
- If you eat when you are sad, lonely, angry or bored, ask for help. People who struggle with their weight often eat for other reasons not related to being hungry.
- Forgive yourself and remind yourself of why you want to lose weight.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables. Cover at least 2/3 of your plate with fruits and/or vegetables.
- Look for easy “wins” such as cutting out sugary drinks.

MD Anderson Resources

Ask your nurse or doctor to schedule a visit with:

- An MD Anderson dietitian. You can also call 713-563-5167 to schedule an appointment.
- The Integrative Medicine Center

Other Resources

Many weight loss programs exist, but not all programs may be right for you. Talk with your doctor before you start any weight loss program and ask about medically supervised programs.

American Institute for Cancer Research

Educates people about choices they can make to reduce their chances of developing cancer. The AICR often lists healthy recipes.

<http://www.aicr.org>

Weight Watchers®

Weight Watchers is an international company that offers various dieting products and services to assist weight loss and maintenance.

<http://www.weightwatchers.com>

800-651-6000

Overeaters Anonymous

Overeaters Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating.

<https://oa.org/>

USDA Online Meal Planning

Choose My Plate offers guidance with meal planning.

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

To learn more about how to reduce your cancer risk, see the patient information sheets **Cancer Risk Reduction Through Nutrition and Physical Activity and Exercise**.