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While many of us could do to increase the amount of exercise we take, how do we know if we need to lose weight? Here, the Sugar Bureau answers this question:



Do I need to lose weight?

Being overweight or obese is associated with increased risk of developing diabetes, Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) and stroke. Losing weight could therefore drastically improve the health and quality of life of someone who is overweight. On the other hand, if you are already slim losing more weight can be very bad for your health. People with an ideal weight should concentrate on increasing their activity levels and improving their diet to improve fitness and general health.

The Waistline Test

You may decide to lose weight for the sake of your looks or health, but first check that you really do need to. Measure around your waist. Check where you are in the chart below and see what action, if any, you need to take.

The location of fat on your body is very important. Central obesity (the apple shape) is associated with greater health risks than more peripheral obesity (pear shape). Therefore, a simple measure of waist circumference can perhaps reveal more information in terms of health risk. Measuring waist circumference is a simple and quick way of assessing fat distribution.

Woman's Waist Measurement	Man's Waist Measurement	Action Needed
Less than 80cm or 31.5 inches	Less than 94cm or 37 inches	Your weight is within the healthy range. If you need to shape up, exercise is the key. Check you are eating a healthy, balanced diet (see <i>Wellbeing</i> at the link below).
80 to 88cm or 31.5 to 34.5 inches	94 to 102cm or 37 to 40 inches	Try to lose some weight. Adapt your diet for steady weight loss and long term results. Get more active in your daily routine (see <i>Wellbeing</i>).
Over 88cm or 34.5 inches	Over 102cm or 40 inches	Take action to lose weight now. Adapt your diet for steady weight loss and long term results. Try being a bit more active in your daily routine (see <i>Wellbeing</i>).



For more information on changing your lifestyle to maximize health, visit www.sugar-bureau.co.uk/wellbeing/index.html