

OTs Walk with NAMI

Measuring Tape Position for Waist (Abdominal) Circumference

How to Measure Your Waist Size

To accurately measure your waist circumference, follow these steps:

1. Stand upright and relax your abdomen.
2. Locate the top of your hip bones (iliac crest) and position the measuring tape just above this point, around your bare abdomen.
3. Ensure the tape measure is snug but not tight enough to compress the skin.
4. Keep the tape parallel to the floor for accuracy.
5. Exhale naturally and then take the measurement.

Why Waist Size Matters

Excess fat in the abdominal area—even in individuals with a normal weight—can increase the risk of health conditions such as:

- ✓ Type 2 diabetes
- ✓ High cholesterol and triglycerides
- ✓ High blood pressure
- ✓ Heart disease and stroke

The general guidelines for waist circumference and health risk:

- **Men:** A waist size greater than **40 inches (102 cm)** is associated with increased health risks.
- **Women:** A waist size greater than **35 inches (88 cm)** is linked to higher health risks.

If your waist measurement exceeds these limits, you may benefit from adopting a healthier lifestyle, including diet and exercise adjustments.

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Understanding Healthy Weight & BMI

A common tool to assess weight status is the **Body Mass Index (BMI)**, which categorizes individuals as underweight, normal weight, overweight, or obese.

- **Underweight:** BMI below **18.5**
- **Healthy weight:** BMI **18.5 – 24.9**
- **Overweight:** BMI **25 – 29.9**
- **Obese:** BMI **30 and above**

You can use online BMI calculators or charts to determine where you fall within this range. However, BMI alone doesn't account for muscle mass, fat distribution, or overall health, so it's important to consider waist circumference as well.

Waist Circumference vs. BMI

While BMI provides a broad measure of weight-related health risks, **waist circumference is an independent predictor of disease risk, especially for individuals classified as normal weight or overweight.**

However, for individuals with a BMI of **35 or higher**, waist circumference adds little additional predictive value, as excess weight alone is already a significant risk factor.

Maintaining a Healthy Waist Size

If your waist circumference is above the recommended range, consider:

- ✓ Increasing physical activity (at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week)
- ✓ Eating a balanced diet rich in whole foods, lean proteins, and fiber
- ✓ Managing stress and getting adequate sleep
- ✓ Reducing sugary and processed foods

Monitoring your waist size regularly can help you track progress and maintain a healthier lifestyle.