



# How to Overcome Obesity



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**INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES**

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# Health and Healthy Life

Maintaining good health and leading a healthy lifestyle are essential for numerous reasons, spanning physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

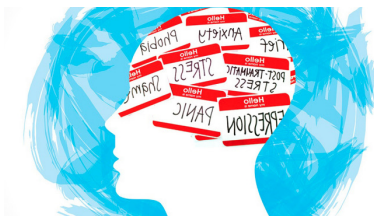
## 1) Physical Well-being

Good health allows us to carry out daily activities with ease and vitality. When we're healthy, we're more productive, efficient, and capable of enjoying life to the fullest.



It reduces the risk of developing chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and certain types of cancer. Prevention is often more manageable and less costly than treatment.

## 2) Mental Health



Physical health and mental health are closely intertwined. Regular exercise and a balanced diet not only improve physical health but also contribute to better mental health by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression.

Practicing mindfulness, meditation, and relaxation techniques fosters mental clarity, emotional stability, and resilience in the face of challenges.

## 3) Longevity and Quality of Life

Leading a healthy lifestyle increases life expectancy and enhances the quality of life in later years. Aging gracefully is often attributed to healthy habits established earlier in life, such as regular exercise, proper nutrition, and adequate sleep.

It allows us to remain active, independent, and engaged in meaningful activities well into old age, fostering a sense of fulfilment and purpose.

#### 4) Social and Emotional Well-being

Good health facilitates positive social interactions and relationships. When we feel good physically and mentally, we're more likely to engage with others, participate in social activities, and build strong support networks.

Healthy habits such as exercising with friends, cooking nutritious meals together, or joining community wellness programs can strengthen bonds and create a sense of belonging.



#### 5) Economic Impact:



Poor health imposes a significant economic burden on individuals, families, and society as a whole. Medical expenses, absenteeism from work, and decreased productivity due to illness all contribute to economic losses.

Investing in preventive health measures and promoting healthy lifestyles can alleviate this burden by reducing healthcare costs and boosting productivity in the workforce.

#### 6) Environmental Sustainability:

Adopting sustainable practices, such as consuming locally sourced and organic foods, reducing waste, and minimizing reliance on fossil fuels through active transportation, not only benefits personal health but also contributes to environmental preservation.



A healthy planet supports healthy lives by ensuring access to clean air, water, and nutritious food.

In essence, prioritizing health and embracing a healthy lifestyle is not just a personal choice but a societal imperative. It empowers individuals to live their best lives, fosters stronger communities, and contributes to a happier, more sustainable world for generations to come.





# Obesity



Obesity is a medical condition characterized by an excessive accumulation of body fat to the extent that it may have adverse effects on health. It is typically determined by measuring body mass index (BMI), which is calculated by dividing a person's weight in kilograms by the square of their height in meters ( $\text{kg}/\text{m}^2$ ). Generally, a BMI of 30 or

higher is considered obese.

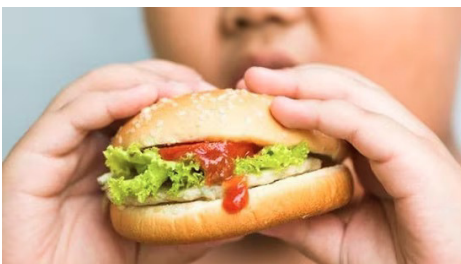
Obesity is not just a cosmetic concern but a complex medical problem that increases the risk of various health issues, including heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, certain cancers, and more. It can significantly reduce quality of life and life expectancy.

## (I) Obesity in India

In recent years, India has witnessed a significant increase in the prevalence of obesity, particularly in urban areas. According to data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) and other studies:

### 1) Prevalence

The prevalence of obesity has more than doubled in India over the past few decades. Currently, it is estimated that around 5-10% of the adult population in India is obese, with higher rates observed in urban areas compared to rural areas.



India.

### 2) Urbanization and Lifestyle Changes

Rapid urbanization, sedentary lifestyles, changes in dietary habits, and the adoption of Western diets high in calories, sugar, and unhealthy fats have contributed to the rising obesity rates in

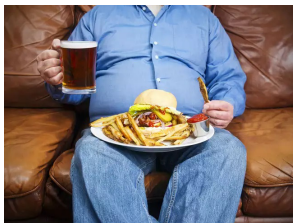
### 3) Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity is also a growing concern in India, with an increasing number of children and adolescents being overweight or obese. This can lead to early onset of obesity-related health problems and a lifelong struggle with weight management.



## (II) Reasons for Obesity

### 1) Unhealthy Diet



Consumption of calorie-dense, processed foods high in sugars, fats, and refined carbohydrates is a major contributor to obesity. Lack of access to nutritious foods and reliance on fast food and convenience foods exacerbate the problem.

### 2) Sedentary Lifestyle

Modern lifestyles characterized by desk-bound jobs, prolonged screen time, and reduced physical activity levels contribute to energy imbalance, where calorie intake exceeds expenditure, leading to weight gain.



### 3) Genetics and Biology



Genetic factors can predispose individuals to obesity by influencing metabolism, fat storage, and appetite regulation. Additionally, certain medical conditions and medications can contribute to weight gain.

### 4) Environmental Factors

Socioeconomic factors, cultural norms, food marketing, and urban design can all influence dietary choices and physical activity levels, contributing to the obesity epidemic.



### **(III) Need to Focus on Measures to Overcome Obesity**

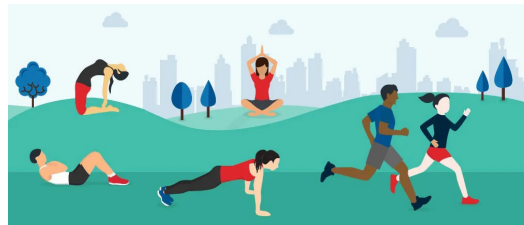
#### **1) Promoting Healthy Eating**



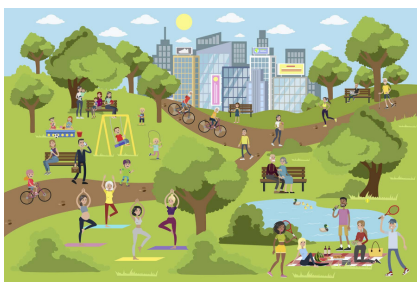
Encouraging the consumption of balanced, nutritious diets rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can help combat obesity. Public health campaigns, nutritional education, and policy interventions to improve food environments are essential.

#### **2) Increasing Physical Activity**

Encouraging regular physical activity and reducing sedentary behavior are crucial for weight management. This includes promoting active transportation, creating safe and accessible recreational spaces, and integrating physical activity into daily routines.



#### **3) Policy Interventions**



Implementing policies to regulate the food industry, such as taxation on unhealthy foods, restrictions on marketing to children, and labeling regulations, can promote healthier food choices. Similarly, urban planning initiatives that prioritize walkability, cycling infrastructure, and green spaces can facilitate active lifestyles.

#### **4) Healthcare Interventions**

Providing access to obesity prevention and treatment services, including counseling, behavioral therapy, and medical interventions when necessary, is essential for managing obesity and its associated health risks.



## 5) Community Engagement

Engaging communities, schools, workplaces, and healthcare providers in obesity prevention efforts can foster supportive environments and social norms conducive to healthy behaviors.



Addressing the obesity epidemic requires a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach that addresses the underlying determinants of obesity and promotes health and well-being across the population. By prioritizing prevention and adopting evidence-based strategies, it is possible to reverse the trend of rising obesity rates and improve the overall health of individuals and communities in India.



## Experts' Opinion

Obesity is a complex health issue with far-reaching consequences, affecting not only individuals but also entire communities and societies. In combating this epidemic, the expertise and guidance of medical professionals and specialists are invaluable. Here's why their input is crucial and some measures to address obesity:

### Medical Understanding



Experts and doctors possess a deep understanding of the physiological, psychological, and social factors contributing to obesity. Their insights help tailor interventions to individuals' specific needs, considering underlying health conditions, genetic predispositions, and lifestyle factors.

Medical professionals base their recommendations on robust scientific evidence. Their advice is grounded in research, ensuring that interventions are effective and safe. This evidence-based approach is vital in navigating the myriad of conflicting information available to the public. Obesity is not solely a matter of excess weight; it encompasses a range of health issues such as diabetes, heart disease, and mental health disorders. Doctors are trained to conduct comprehensive assessments, considering both physical and mental well-being. This holistic approach is essential for addressing obesity's multifaceted nature. Every individual's journey with obesity is unique. Experts and doctors can provide personalized care plans tailored to each person's circumstances, preferences, and goals. This personalized approach increases the likelihood of long-term success in managing and overcoming obesity.

Medical professionals play a crucial role in preventing obesity and intervening early when risk factors emerge. Through regular screenings, education, and counseling, they empower individuals to make informed choices about their health and adopt preventive measures before obesity develops or worsens.

To eradicate obesity, concerted efforts are needed at individual, community, and societal levels.

Encouraging regular physical activity and balanced nutrition is fundamental in preventing and managing obesity. Public health campaigns, educational programs, and community initiatives can raise awareness and provide resources to support healthier habits. Ensuring equitable access to healthcare services, including preventive care, screenings, and treatment options, is essential. Removing barriers such as cost, transportation, and stigma enables more people to seek help and receive timely interventions.

policies that promote healthier environments, such as regulating food advertising, improving nutritional labelling, and creating safe spaces for physical activity, can help shape behaviours and reduce obesity rates on a population level. Creating supportive environments in schools, workplaces, and communities fosters healthy behaviors and reinforces positive lifestyle choices. This includes initiatives like workplace wellness programs, school meal improvements, and urban planning that prioritizes walkability and access to recreational facilities. Addressing obesity requires collaboration among various stakeholders, including healthcare professionals, policymakers, educators, employers, and community leaders. By working together, sharing resources, and aligning strategies, we can create a comprehensive approach to tackle obesity effectively.

In conclusion, the input of experts and doctors is indispensable in addressing the obesity epidemic. Through evidence-based interventions, personalized care, and collaborative efforts, we can work towards eradicating obesity and promoting healthier, happier communities.





## Questionnaire

- 1) What do you consider as the primary cause of obesity?
  - a) Genetic predisposition
  - b) Poor diet and nutrition
  - c) Sedentary lifestyle
  - d) Environmental factors
- 2) How significant is the role of genetics in predisposing individuals to obesity?
  - a) Very significant
  - b) Somewhat significant
  - c) Not very significant
  - d) Not significant at all
- 3) Which factor do you believe has the most impact on childhood obesity rates?
  - a) Unhealthy food marketing targeted at children
  - b) Lack of physical activity in schools
  - c) Socioeconomic status
  - d) Family eating habits
- 4) In your opinion, what is the most effective method for treating obesity?
  - a) Dietary changes
  - b) Increased physical activity
  - c) Medication
  - d) Bariatric surgery
- 5) How important is the role of psychological counseling in obesity treatment?
  - a) Essential
  - b) Important
  - c) Somewhat important
  - d) Not important
- 6) Which dietary approach do you believe is most effective for weight management?
  - a) Low-carbohydrate diet
  - b) Low-fat diet

- c) Mediterranean diet
  - d) Plant-based diet
- 7) What do you think is the biggest barrier to successful long-term weight loss?
- a) Lack of motivation
  - b) Unrealistic expectations
  - c) Availability of unhealthy foods
  - d) Genetics
- 8) How effective do you believe pharmacotherapy is in managing obesity?
- a) Very effective
  - b) Moderately effective
  - c) Slightly effective
  - d) Not effective
- 9) What role do you think societal attitudes towards body image play in the obesity epidemic?
- a) Significant role
  - b) Moderate role
  - c) Minimal role
  - d) No role
- 10) How important is early intervention in preventing obesity?
- a) Extremely important
  - b) Very important
  - c) Somewhat important
  - d) Not important
- 11) Which population group do you think is most at risk for obesity-related health complications?
- a) Children and adolescents
  - b) Adults
  - c) Elderly individuals
  - d) All population groups are equally at risk

- 12) How effective are public health campaigns in raising awareness about obesity and its risks?
- a) Very effective
  - b) Moderately effective
  - c) Slightly effective
  - d) Not effective
- 13) Which community-based interventions do you think are most effective in preventing obesity?
- a) Promoting physical activity initiatives
  - b) Increasing access to healthy foods
  - c) Educating communities about nutrition
  - d) Implementing policies to regulate food marketing to children
- 14) How important is it for healthcare providers to receive training in obesity management?
- a) Extremely important
  - b) Very important
  - c) Moderately important
  - d) Not important
- 15) What role do you think technological innovations can play in obesity prevention and management?
- a) Significant role
  - b) Moderate role
  - c) Minimal role
  - d) No role
- 16) How effective are workplace wellness programs in combating obesity? a)
- Very effective
  - b) Moderately effective
  - c) Slightly effective
  - d) Not effective

- 17) What strategies do you think are most effective for preventing obesity in low-income communities?
- a) Subsidizing healthy foods
  - b) Community gardening initiatives
  - c) Nutrition education programs
  - d) Increasing access to recreational facilities
- 18) How important is collaboration between healthcare providers, policymakers, and community organizations in addressing obesity?
- a) Extremely important
  - b) Very important
  - c) Moderately important
  - d) Not important
- 19) In your opinion, what role should the food industry play in combating obesity?
- a) Reformulating products to reduce unhealthy ingredients
  - b) Responsible marketing practices
  - c) Offering healthier food options
  - d) All of the above
- 20) How optimistic are you about the future prospects of reducing obesity rates globally?
- a) Very optimistic
  - b) Moderately optimistic
  - c) Neutral
  - d) Pessimistic



## Key Findings

In a concerted effort to tackle the burgeoning epidemic of obesity, 500 medical experts and doctors across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana were extensively interviewed, offering invaluable insights into the multifaceted challenge of obesity. Through a comprehensive questionnaire and rigorous analysis of their responses, a profound understanding has emerged, shedding light on the complexities surrounding this pressing health issue.

### 1) Prevalence and Trends

Over 80% of respondents expressed deep concern over the escalating rates of obesity observed in both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.



A majority of experts highlighted the alarming trend of obesity affecting individuals across all age groups, from children to the elderly.

### 2) Contributing Factors

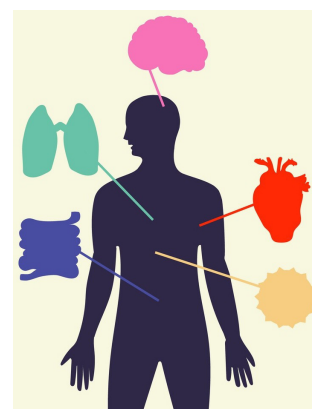
Sedentary lifestyles emerged as a prominent factor, with nearly 90% of experts attributing the rise in obesity to reduced physical activity levels.

Dietary habits were identified as a significant driver, with high consumption of processed foods and sugary beverages implicated in the obesity epidemic.

### 3) Health Implications

A unanimous consensus among experts underscored the detrimental impact of obesity on overall health, citing increased risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular ailments, and certain cancers.

Mental health ramifications of obesity, including depression and low self-esteem, were acknowledged as equally concerning by a substantial portion of respondents.



#### 4) Challenges in Management

Limited access to specialized obesity management programs was identified as a critical challenge by 75% of respondents, particularly in rural areas.



Stigma associated with obesity was highlighted as a barrier to seeking help and adhering to treatment regimens, exacerbating the issue.

#### 5) Strategies for Intervention

Comprehensive public health campaigns promoting physical activity and healthy dietary habits were recommended by the majority of experts as essential interventions.

Integration of obesity prevention and management into primary healthcare services garnered widespread support, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach.

The insights gleaned from the perspectives of 500 medical experts and doctors across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana underscore the urgent need for concerted action to address the obesity epidemic. By leveraging these findings, policymakers, healthcare providers, and communities can collaborate to develop tailored strategies that prioritize prevention, early intervention, and holistic management approaches. Only through collective effort can we hope to stem the tide of obesity and foster healthier, more resilient societies in our region.





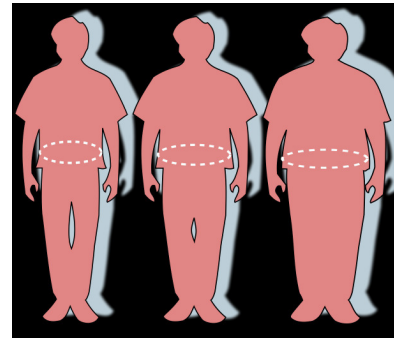
## Chapter 1

# The Obesity Epidemic: Unravelling its Origins and Impact

## Introduction

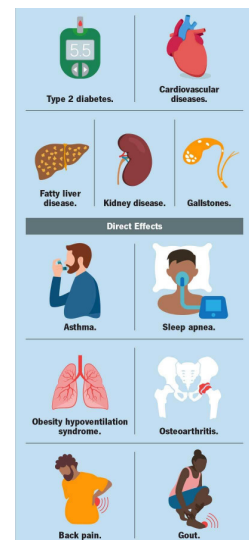
### Obesity and Weight Gain

Obesity is defined as an unhealthily large or incorrect accumulation of fat that may be dangerous. When a person's body mass index (BMI) exceeds 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or more, they are classified as severe or class III obese by the World Health Organization (WHO). This term is also used to describe individuals with significant comorbidities who have a BMI between 30 and 39.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>. Every person who has a BMI of 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or higher is deemed obese. An abundance of hormones and cytokines are secreted by fat, which serves as the primary source of stored energy. There is a link between higher risk of morbidity and mortality and excess central fat deposit.



### Problems Arising out of Obesity

- Comorbidities like type 2 diabetes mellitus
  - Heart disease
  - Respiratory issues
  - Infertility
  - Some types of cancer
  - Psychological issues
  - Social problems are linked to an increased risk of being
- Weight Gain.

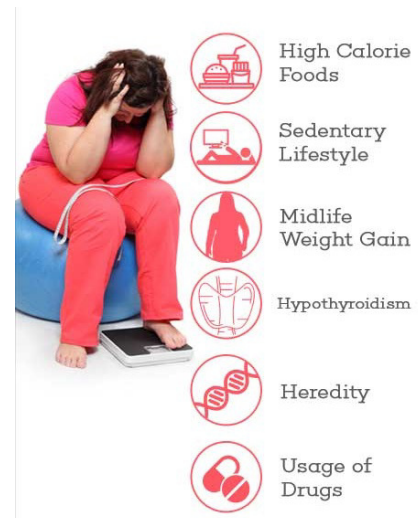


Furthermore, the risk of these comorbidities rises noticeably with each additional BMI increase. The health system is being severely strained by the expense of treating obesity and its related comorbidities. The failure rate of conservative treatment is rather high. The principal goal of bariatric surgery is weight loss, but it also resolves or remits related comorbidities.

## Causes of Obesity

Obesity is a complicated issue with many contributing factors. It comes from the body turning extra calories into fat.

If you don't burn off a significant amount of the excess energy you consume through physical activity, it will be stored as fat in your body, especially from foods heavy in sugar and fat.



## Main Factors which Lead to obesity are-

**Calories** - Calories are the units used to measure the energy worth of food. To maintain a healthy weight, the average physically active male needs roughly 2,500 calories per day, while the average physically active woman needs roughly 2,000 calories per day.

Although this seems like a lot of calories, if you eat particular kinds of food, it can be simple to meet your goal. For instance, consuming a big takeout burger, fries, and a milkshake in one sitting can add up to 1,500 calories. See our guide on understanding calories for more details.

Furthermore, a lot of people don't exercise to the required amount for adults, which means that extra calories are stored as fat in the body

**Diet** - Weight Gain and obesity are conditions that are influenced by lifestyle choices and diet. Among the most typical ones are:

- Consuming a lot of processed or fast food, which is heavy in fat and sugar, and drinking a lot of alcohol, which is high in calories
- Eating a lot of restaurant meals, which may have higher levels of fat and sugar
- Overindulging in quantities
- Consuming an excessive number of sugar-filled beverages, such as fruit juice and soft drinks



- **Comfort eating:** People who indulge in comfort food may do so for a variety of other reasons, such as low mood or low self-esteem.

Maintaining a healthy diet has also become more challenging due to societal changes. Food that is high in calories is now more affordable, easier to find, and widely advertised.

**Lack of Physical activity** - Insufficient physical activity is a significant contributing factor to obesity. A lot of people work in occupations where they spend the majority of the day at a desk. In addition, they depend more on their cars than on cycling or walking.



Many people rarely engage in regular exercise as a form of relaxation and instead choose to watch TV, browse the internet, or play computer games.

Because you won't be using the energy from your diet, if you don't exercise enough, your body stores the extra energy you consume as fat.



**Genetics** - Obesity and Weight Gain are linked to certain genes. Certain people's bodies' ability to retain fat and convert food into energy can be influenced by their genes. Genes can influence a person's lifestyle decisions as well.

Additionally, some uncommon genetic diseases like Prader-Willi syndrome can result in obesity.

Losing weight may be more challenging if you have certain hereditary features from your parents, such as an excessive appetite, but it is still doable.

**Medical reasons** - Underlying medical issues might occasionally be a factor in weight gain. Among them are:

- Hypothyroidism, a condition in which your thyroid gland does not generate enough hormones, is an underactive thyroid gland
- A rare condition known as Cushing's syndrome results in an excess of steroid hormones.

But if ailments like these are identified and treated appropriately, they ought to be less of an obstacle to losing weight.

Weight gain can be caused by a number of medications, including certain steroids, diabetic and epilepsy medications, and some antidepressants and schizophrenia meds used to treat mental illnesses.

One of the occasional negative effects of quitting smoking is weight gain.

The truth is that in order to address this issue globally, changes must be made to contemporary eating practices and food culture.

Food manufacturers want you to think that everything is the result of a lack of willpower so they can carry on with their marketing without interference.



## Chapter 2

### Weight gain - Unintentional

#### Introduction



When you gain weight without intending to and without increasing your intake of food or liquids, it's known as unintentional weight gain.

The heart works harder and faster than usual to push blood through it during aerobic activity. Quicker respiration results from the need to oxygenate blood more quickly as it is pumped more swiftly. Exercise that is aerobic in nature improves cholesterol levels while strengthening the heart. Exercises that are low impact include swimming and walking. High impact aerobics include dancing, running, and tennis.

Exercise that is isometric strengthens bones and works muscles. Gaining muscular mass increases metabolism, which accelerates the burning of fat. Because it doesn't require greater oxygen generation, strength training is also referred to as anaerobic exercise instead of aerobic exercise.

The fundamental energy unit found in food is called a calorie. Your body uses the calories you eat to produce energy. The body stores the remaining energy as fat after using what it can. Whether it's from a plate of raw broccoli or a brownie, a calorie is a calorie. The quantity of calories, nutrients, fat, and other elements in a standard serving determines how they differ from one another.

#### Causes of Unintentional Weight Gain

Unintentional weight gain might stem from a variety of factors. As you age, your metabolism slows down. Consuming the incorrect meals, eating too much, or not getting enough exercise might result in weight gain.

- Birth control pills
- Corticosteroids
- Some medications used to treat depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder

- Some medications used to treat diabetes are among the medications that might induce weight gain.

Medical issues or hormonal fluctuations might sometimes result in inadvertent weight gain. The following conditions could be the cause of this -

- Polycystic ovarian syndrome
- Cushing syndrome
- Hypothyroidism, or underactive thyroid
- Menopause
- Pregnancy



Weight gain may result from bloating, or swelling brought on by an accumulation of fluid in the tissues. Menstruation, cardiac or renal failure, preeclampsia, or medications you take could be the cause of this. Rapid weight increase could indicate risky fluid retention.

Giving up smoking may cause weight gain. Within six months of giving up, the majority of smokers gain 4 to 10 pounds (2 to 4.5 kilos). Some might gain up to 25–30 pounds (11–14 kg). Eating more is not the only reason behind this weight increase.

## Home Care

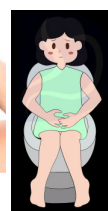
Keeping a healthy weight can be achieved with exercise and a good diet. Speak with a dietician or your healthcare professional about creating a healthy eating plan and establishing reasonable weight targets.

Consult your healthcare physician before stopping any medications that might be the source of your weight gain.

## When to Speak with a Medical Expert

If you have any of the following weight gain symptoms, get in touch with your doctor:

- Constipation
- Excessive weight gain with no apparent explanation
- Hair loss
- More frequently than not, feel cold





- Breathlessness and swollen feet
- An insatiable appetite coupled with sweating, trembling, and palpitations
- Modifications in vision

### **What to anticipate during your visit to the office**

After a physical examination, your healthcare professional will determine your body mass index (BMI). The examiner could also inquire about things like:

- What is the weight gain that you have experienced? Did you gain the weight rapidly or gradually?
- Are you nervous, depressed, or stressed? Have you previously dealt with depression?
- Which drugs are you now taking?
- Do you experience any additional symptoms?
- Do you suffer from any other symptoms?

### **These tests could be administered to you**

- Blood tests
- Hormone levels checks
- Nutritional assessment



Your doctor might advise you to follow a diet and exercise regimen or put you in touch with a dietitian. Counselling may be necessary if stress or depression are the cause of weight gain. In the event that a physical ailment is the cause of weight gain, the underlying cause will be treated, if any.



## Chapter 3

### What causes rapid weight gain?

Changes in lifestyle, such as giving up smoking, may result in rapid weight gain. It might also, however, be a sign of an underlying medical issue, such as cirrhosis, sleeplessness, or kidney illness.

A change in diet or lifestyle may be the source of the brief weight fluctuations that many people experience, ranging from 1-2 kg over the course of three days. Rapid weight gain, meanwhile, can also be an indication of a number of underlying medical disorders that need to be treated.

Conversely, rapid weight gain may also be a sign of several underlying medical conditions that require medical attention.

#### 1. Medication

- Antipsychotics
- Antidepressants
- Corticosteroids
- Antihypertensives, like those for hypertension, and antihyperglycemics, such as those for diabetes



Not all of the drugs in these categories will make you gain or lose weight. But before stopping them altogether, it's crucial that someone see a doctor if they gain weight quickly.

#### 2. Insomnia

Children, adolescents, and adults who suffer from insomnia may gain weight as a result.

A person's circadian cycle can be impacted by sleep deprivation, and this can cause weight gain by altering their:

- Hormones that control appetite.
- Energy requirements
- the cost of food options



### 3. Quitting smoking

Initially, some people who quit smoking tobacco products may gain weight.

Cigarettes and other tobacco products include nicotine, which can speed up metabolism and decrease appetite. A person may feel hungrier and eat more after quitting smoking, which could result in weight gain.

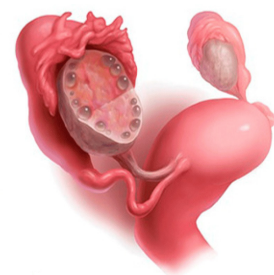


However, each person experiences weight changes after quitting differently. It was discovered that 65% of smokers who stopped did not gain any weight or only maintained it.

### 4. Polycystic ovary syndrome

An endocrine system condition known as polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) affects individuals whose ovaries are still in their reproductive years.

There are several hormonal anomalies that define it. Insulin resistance is common in PCOS patients, which can lead to weight gain.



Polycystic Ovary Syndrome

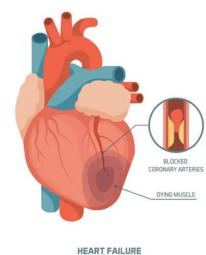
High cholesterol and type 2 diabetes are more likely to strike those who have this illness.

Although there isn't a cure for PCOS, a person's weight can be decreased and insulin resistance can be improved with a healthy diet and frequent exercise.

### 5. Heart failure

Fluid retention can cause edema, or swollen parts of the body, or rapid weight gain.

It was found, people whose weight increase of more than 2-3 pounds (lb) in a 24-hour period or 5 lb in a week may indicate heart failure.



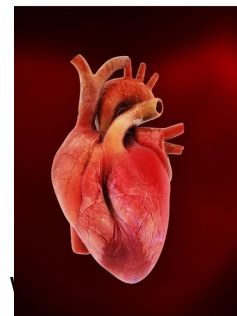
The other main organs in the body are impacted if there is a delayed blood flow to and from the heart. Fluid thus builds up in the tissues, potentially leading to weight gain and swelling in the following areas:

- Stomach area
- Ankles
- Legs
- Feet

A person's weight typically varies throughout the course of a day by a few pounds. The transient increase might have been brought on just by bloating and fluid retention if their weight returns to normal and they do not experience any other symptoms.

**Here are a few more heart failure symptoms and indicators:**

- Fluid collecting inside the lungs (pulmonary edema)
- Frequent coughing
- Feeling breathless when resting
- Loss of appetite
- Trouble falling asleep or staying flat

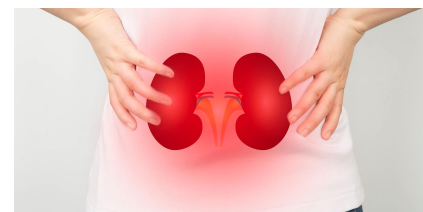


If a person experience any of these symptoms together with rapid weight gain, they should consult a physician.

## **6. Kidney problems**

Nephrotic syndrome or renal failure are two examples of kidney diseases that can cause sudden weight gain or edema in the legs, ankles, or feet.

The kidneys are in charge of eliminating waste materials and liquids from the body. In the event that they sustain damage, the body can retain fluid and fail to appropriately eliminate these, leading to weight gain.



**Additional signs that could point to a kidney issue include:**

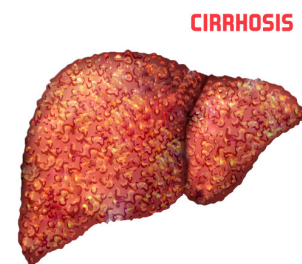
- Fatigue
- Trouble sleeping
- Dry, itchy skin

- Bloody or foamy urine
- Frequent need to urinate
- persistent puffy eyes
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle cramps

## 7. Cirrhosis

A degenerative disease called cirrhosis causes the liver's healthy tissue to be replaced by scar tissue. This could result in an accumulation of fluid in the abdomen (ascites), which could:

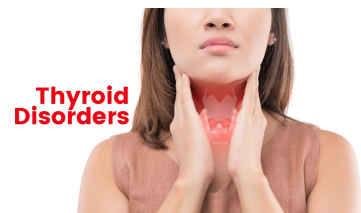
- Weight gain
- Breathing difficulties
- Swollen ankles
- Abdominal pain
- Umbilical or Inguinal hernias



If a person experience any of these symptoms in addition to rapid weight gain, they should consult a physician.

## 8. Thyroid disorder

A person with hypothyroidism does not create enough hormones from their thyroid gland. Numerous bodily processes could be impacted by this, including the metabolism.



Hypothyroidism symptoms include:

- Putting on weight
- Feeling cold
- Excessive exhaustion
- Dry skin and hair
- Depression
- Stiff joints and aching muscles
- Constipation

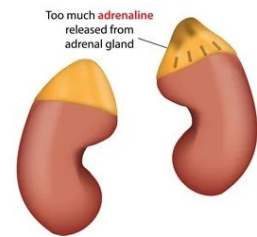
## 9. Cushing's syndrome

Cushing's illness is brought on by the overproduction of cortisol, a hormone that aids in the body's response to stress.

It is rare for someone to have Cushing's syndrome without an external source. It is most often a side effect of glucocorticoids, which are drugs that are taken to treat conditions like:

- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Asthma
- Systemic erythematosus of the lupus

Cushing's Syndrome



Symptoms of Cushing's syndrome could include the following:

- Gaining weight, especially around the stomach, neck, face, and upper back
- Having skinny arms and legs
- Being easily bruised
- Exhaustion
- Weakness in the muscle
- Irregular menstrual cycle
- Erectile dysfunction

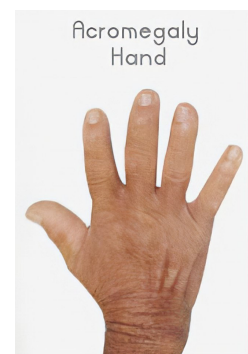
Consult a doctor about available treatment options if a medication is aggravating Cushing's syndrome.

## 10. Acromegaly

A hormonal disorder known as Acromegaly develops when the pituitary gland overproduces growth hormone.

**Acromegaly symptoms can include:**

- Alterations in bone, especially in the jaw, nose, and teeth; hurting joints; enlargement and swelling of the feet, hands, lips, tongue, and nose; greasy, coarse, or thick skin





- Alterations in bone, especially in the teeth, nose, and jaw
- Throbbing joints
- Issues with vision
- A richer tone
- Tags on the skin
- Excessive perspiration
- Prevents apnea as you sleep.
- Snoring

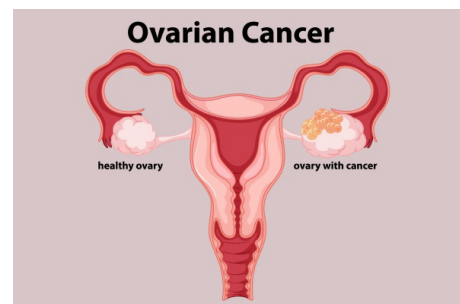
A benign tumour on the pituitary gland may need to be removed by radiation therapy or surgery in people with acromegaly.

## 11. Ovarian cancer

Any cancer that starts in the ovaries is referred to as ovarian cancer.

Early on, some people might not have any symptoms. But when the illness worsens, ovarian cancer patients may gain weight in addition to other symptoms like:

- Discomfort in the pelvis or abdomen
- Inability to fall asleep
- Frequent or urgent urination
- loss of appetite or rapid feeling of fullness
- irregular menstrual cycle
- indigestion



Those who experience unusual pain in the pelvic area should consult a physician as ovarian cancer frequently progresses undetected to later stages. A better prognosis is typically associated with an earlier cancer diagnosis.

### When to consult a doctor?

People ought to consult a physician if they are gaining weight quickly and unintentionally without a known reason.

Inquiries on the patient's medical history and any further symptoms will be made by the physician. They might perform blood tests and a physical examination, or they might recommend that the patient see a specialist.



## Chapter 4

### Reasons Might Be Inadvertently Gaining Weight

#### 9 Potential Causes of Your Inadvertent Weight Gain

Unintentionally consuming certain foods and beverages, like those high in sugar, can lead to weight gain. However, there are situations where underlying medical conditions might lead to weight gain.



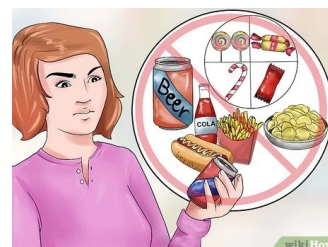
Gaining weight can be very irritating, particularly if you're unsure of the cause.

Although nutrition usually has the most impact on weight gain, other elements including stress and sleep deprivation may also be involved.

#### These are the top 9 inadvertent causes of weight gain:

##### 1. A diet high in processed foods is too common.

A lot of nutritious foods are just lightly processed, like yogurt, frozen fruit, and oats.



However, foods that have undergone extensive processing, such as microwave dinners, fast food, and sugary cereals, contain a variety of unhealthy substances in addition to added sugars, preservatives, and fats.

Highly processed foods are usually high in calories but low in fiber and other vital elements that help you feel full.

People eating roughly 500 more calories daily from an ultra-processed diet than from an unprocessed diet.

As a result, you ought to think about giving up packaged meals and snacks in favor of whole foods.

## **2. You consume excessive sugar.**

Consuming sugar-filled meals and drinks on a regular basis, such as cakes, candies, soda, sports drinks, ice cream, iced tea, and coffee drinks with added sugar, will quickly increase your waist size.



Numerous studies show that eating sugar increases the chance of developing chronic illnesses including type 2 diabetes and heart disease in addition to making people gain weight.

Specifically, sugar-filled drinks account for the majority of added sugar consumption in the US and are closely linked to weight gain.

To make the procedure easier, you could consider cutting back on your sugar intake gradually.

## **3. The way you live is sedentary.**

Weight gain and chronic disorders are commonly linked to inactivity.

Sedentary activities include things like driving, watching TV, using a computer or phone, and working at a desk.



It was found people who were overweight or obese sat for an average of 6 hours per day on non-workdays and 6.2 hours on workdays. The biggest contribution was finishing work-related duties, which was followed by watching TV.

Modest lifestyle adjustments, such as increasing physical activity and reducing sitting time, can have a significant impact.

Studies have also linked increased screen time to unintended weight gain.

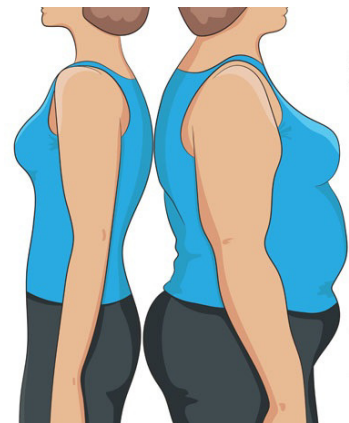
Weight gain can be avoided with even modest changes, such riding your bike to work, working out or going for a walk during your lunch break, getting a standing or treadmill workstation, or going for a walk after supper instead of watching TV.

#### **4. You follow a yo-yo dieting.**

Dieters who cycle through periods of deliberate weight loss and inadvertent weight gain are known as yo-yo dieters.

Interestingly, over time, this tendency has been associated with a higher risk of weight gain.

Dieters within the past year had higher body weights and waist circumferences than non-dieters in research involving 2,785 participants.



Dieting and restricting your food intake can cause you to gain weight in the future because these actions alter your body's physiological reactions, which include hormones that regulate hunger and fullness.

Furthermore, the majority of people who lose weight through rigid diets gain it all back within five years.

If your goal is to lose weight, you should focus on sustainable, long-term lifestyle changes. Among them are getting regular exercise, staying away from processed and sugary foods, and eating nutrient-dense, complete foods that are high in fiber and protein.

#### **5. You suffer from an unidentified medical condition.**

Unintentional weight gain may be caused by a variety of lifestyle choices, but certain medical issues may also be involved. Among them are:

- **Hypothyroidism:** This thyroid-related disorder can make it difficult to lose weight or result in weight gain.

- **Depression:** Obesity and weight increase are associated with this prevalent mental illness.
- **PCOS (polycystic ovarian syndrome):** Hormone abnormalities are the hallmark of PCOS in fertile women. It could make weight growth and weight loss more challenging.
- **Binge eating disorder (BED)** - One of the main characteristics of BED is frequent periods of excessive overeating, which can result in weight gain as well as other health issues.

Obtaining a correct diagnosis from your physician is crucial because weight gain is linked to various medical conditions such as diabetes and Cushing's syndrome.

Furthermore, gaining weight is a possible side effect of some medications, such as antipsychotics and antidepressants. If you think that taking your medication is causing you to gain weight, talk to your doctor.

## 6. You don't get enough sleep

It's essential for overall health and wellbeing to get enough sleep.

A lack of sleep can have detrimental repercussions, including making you gain weight.



People who slept for five hours a night lost five percent of their body fat and sixty percent of their muscle mass.

Therefore, getting more sleep could help you lose weight.

Getting seven or more hours of sleep every night increases the chance of losing weight by 33% when compared to getting less than seven hours.

Try cutting back on your caffeine intake, sleeping at a regular hour, and minimizing screen time before bed if you have trouble getting a good night's sleep.

A simple and efficient method to encourage weight loss and enhance numerous other elements of your health is to transition from a diet heavy in processed foods to one higher in whole foods if you consume them on a regular basis.

In actuality, selecting whole, less processed foods is the most crucial component in weight loss.

It doesn't have to be hard to include entire foods in your diet. Increase the amount of nutrient-dense whole foods in your meals and snacks gradually by starting with fruits, vegetables, beans, eggs, nuts, and seeds.

## **8. You are under a lot of pressure.**

One common issue that might have an impact on your weight is chronic stress.

It has been demonstrated that elevated levels of the stress hormone cortisol can lead to weight gain by enhancing appetite and the desire for extremely appetizing, high-calorie foods.

Furthermore, research suggests that cortisol levels are higher in obese individuals than in non-obesity individuals.

Remarkably, stress reduction may encourage weight loss.

Try adding evidence-based relaxation techniques to your routine to help your de-stress. These include of doing yoga, going outside, and meditating.

## **9. You consume too much calories**

Overeating remains one of the main contributors to weight gain.

If your daily caloric intake exceeds your energy expenditure, weight growth is probable.



Overeating is encouraged by calorie-dense, nutrient-poor food choices, frequent snacking, and mindless eating.

It could be difficult for you to figure out how many calories you need on your own if you struggle with overeating. Speak with a certified nutritionist for advice.

Simple strategies to prevent overeating include drinking water instead of calorically dense beverages, eating mindfully, paying attention to your body's signals of hunger and fullness, and increasing your level of activity.

### **In summary**

Inadvertent weight gain might result from a variety of circumstances.

A few habits that can raise your chance of gaining weight are eating too many processed or sugary meals, sleeping poorly, and engaging in sedentary activities.

However, a few easy actions, like exercising, eating mindfully, and emphasizing whole foods, can support you in achieving your weight loss objectives and making general health improvements.



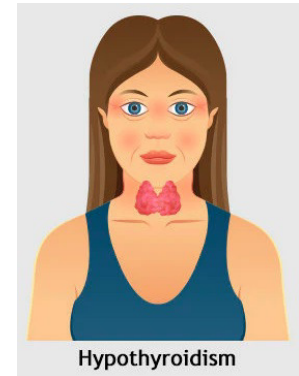


## Chapter 5

### Conditions That Can Cause Weight Gain

#### Hypothyroidism

If your thyroid, a little gland in your neck shaped like a butterfly, stops producing adequate hormones, you can start gaining weight. In addition, it may cause your skin to become dry and thinning, as well as feelings of exhaustion, depression, and constipation. If your hormone levels are low, a quick blood test can determine this, and synthetic hormones can lift your spirits.



#### Depression

Obesity and weight gain are two examples of potential physical adverse effects. Cortisol, also known as the "stress hormone," is frequently elevated in those who suffer from this mood illness, which can lead to belly fat accumulation.



Alternatively, you can gain weight because you're too depressed to work out or eat healthily. It might also be caused by some of the drugs used to treat the illness. If you're depressed, see a physician or therapist.

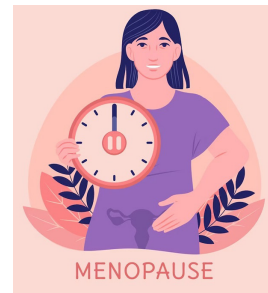
#### Insomnia

Individuals who sleep for fewer than six hours a night are more likely to be overweight. The ideal window of time to maintain weight loss is about eight hours. Your body can produce excessive amounts of the hormones insulin and cortisol when you don't get enough sleep, which can put on weight. Additionally, it may disrupt the hormones responsible for indicating hunger and causing a desire for eating, particularly foods high in fat and sugar.



## Menopause

During menopause, less estrogen may cause an increase in belly fat. Less hormones, however, isn't the only factor. Healthy nutrition and exercise may be impeded by hot flashes, sleep issues, and moodiness associated with a woman's declining fertility. Make a healthy lunch instead of reaching for a candy bar if you're already sleep deprived and sad. Your physician can offer suggestions on how to manage your symptoms.



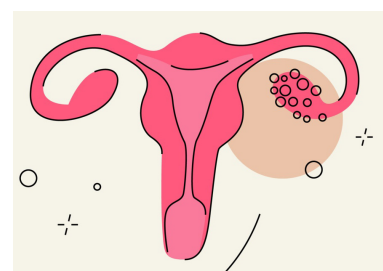
## Cushing's illness

Cortisol typically aids in maintaining normal blood pressure and blood sugar levels. However, an excess of this stress hormone produced by your adrenal glands might cause fat to accumulate around your neck and abdomen. Along with weaker, thinner limbs, a round face, and large purple stretch marks, you may have more bruises. After attempting to determine the underlying reason, your doctor may decide to treat it with radiation, chemotherapy, surgery, or cortisol-lowering medications.



## The syndrome of polycystic ovary

No single test can identify a lady as having this illness. You can get irregular periods, develop acne, or have more facial or body hair. Cysts may also develop on your ovaries. It results from an excess of male androgen hormone. Additionally, if your body is less responsive to the hormone insulin, which aids in converting blood sugar into energy, you may gain weight. Your physician can assist with hormone replacement or balancing.



## Heart Failure with Congestive Heart Failure

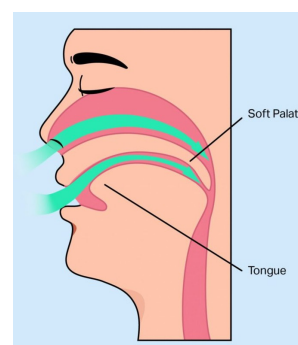
It happens when the heart doesn't beat hard enough. Gaining more than five pounds in a week or two to three pounds in a day could be signs that the illness is getting worse. You might also feel



lightheaded, lose your memory, breathe heavily, have high blood pressure, swell your ankles and feet, and your heartbeat will be faster. Maybe you should record these symptoms in a journal so you can alert your doctor to any unexpected changes. Together, you can make changes to your treatment plan to better your health.

### **Apnea During Sleep**

If you feel tired all day or snore loudly, you might have this hazardous sickness. Your airway frequently shuts off your breathing for a short while when you sleep. Although they can also be symptoms, obesity and excess weight are major factors to sleep apnea. If you have the condition, you can be more vulnerable to high blood pressure, heart failure, and liver problems. A CPAP machine may be recommended by your doctor in addition to other treatments.



### **Edema**

Have some puffiness? This illness results from your body retaining excessive amounts of water, mainly in your arms and legs. A limb may appear enlarged, feel constricted, and be difficult to move. Generally speaking, edema is not a major concern. If it doesn't go away on its own, diuretics, also known as water pills, can help get rid of it. However, the management of the underlying cause—such as significant lung, kidney, liver, and heart diseases—should be a joint effort between you and your physician.



### **Metabolic Disorder**

It is a cluster of illnesses that increases your risk of diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. It's possible that your cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugar, and body fat are at harmful levels. There may be no outward signs other than excess weight that gathers around your waist. Your physician can help you manage it with medication, diet and exercise modifications, and, in certain situations, weight loss surgery.



## Diabetes

Diabetes can be treated with a combination of insulin, medicine, diet, and exercise, depending on the type. Insulin facilitates the body's energy usage. However, it also facilitates the body's ability to retain energy, which frequently results in weight gain. In addition, some therapies may cause you to feel compelled to eat more in order to avoid low blood sugar. See your doctor about the best ways to balance insulin, exercise, food, and medicine to control your diabetes and weight.



## Steroids

Your physician may refer to them as corticosteroids. They can be used to treat a variety of ailments, including some forms of arthritis and asthma. The likelihood of experiencing increased appetite is directly correlated with the dosage and duration of steroid use! That can result in overindulging and gaining weight. Discuss the best ways to handle the adverse effects of your steroid treatment with your doctor.



## Typical Drugs

You could get hungry from one medicine. Another could alter how your body absorbs nutrients or slow down the burning of calories. Some only cause your body to retain extra water. Scientists aren't always certain why a medicine causes weight gain. Typical examples include antipsychotics, antidepressants, birth control pills, medications for epilepsy, and beta-blockers (for high blood pressure).



## Chapter 6

### Getting Weighed Out Quickly?

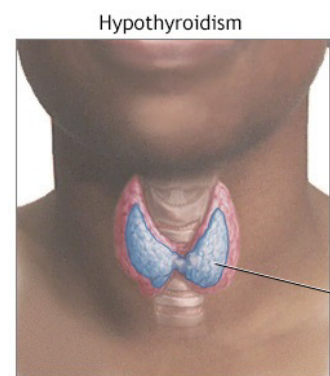
There are a lot of reasons why you can be gaining weight quickly, and these Common Causes Could Help Explain Why?

Something more might be going on if you haven't altered your food or exercise routine and you are still gaining weight.

Of course, being overweight isn't always a problem. However, it can indicate a medical problem that needs to be addressed. Perhaps it's a mood problem, a hormone imbalance, or some other unidentified element changing your physiology. To be completely certain about what it signifies, you should speak with your healthcare professional. While you wait, think about these eight health-related factors that could be causing the scale's number to climb.

#### **Underactive Thyroid (Hypothyroidism)**

Have you experienced any other physical changes, such as tiredness, drier skin, or thinner hair, in addition to discovering that your jeans are getting tighter? All of these indicate hypothyroidism, a disorder in which the thyroid gland, which resembles a butterfly and is located in your neck, isn't making enough thyroid hormones. As a master gland that regulates numerous bodily processes, the thyroid can malfunction and cause symptoms that spread throughout your body, according to the American Thyroid Association.



Metabolic regulation is one of the thyroid's primary functions. Consider your body to be an automobile.

Thyroid hormone keeps an engine running while it is idle. Your idle decreases and your total energy expenditure decreases if your thyroid hormone production is inadequate.

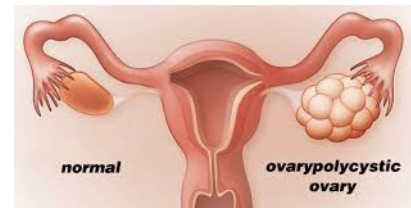
You burn less calories during the day when your resting metabolism slows down.



Thyroid disorders affect one in eight women in their lifetime. Additional symptoms to watch out for, include bloating, constipation, persistent cold feeling, and muscle weakness. If your physician determines that you have hypothyroidism, you will probably be given an oral thyroid hormone replacement that will start to relieve your symptoms a few weeks later.

### **Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)**

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is an additional ailment brought on by hormone imbalances. An imbalance between the sex hormones, estrogen and testosterone (women make testosterone, though in much smaller levels than males), is the hallmark of this endocrine condition. The US Department of Health & Human Services Office on Women's Health claims that this imbalance causes irregular periods, acne, and even the growth of facial hair.



This condition affects one in ten women who are fertile. It also interferes with the body's usage of insulin, which is the hormone that turns carbs into energy. Yes, you guessed it—gaining weight is the result. When your body develops insulin resistance, the sugars and starches you eat are stored as fat rather than being used as fuel. PCOS cannot be cured, but sufferers can control their symptoms with medication and lifestyle modifications. Your medical professional will assist you in selecting the best approach for you.

### **Anxiety and Depression-Related Weight**

Mindless eating is a coping mechanism used by some people to deal with anxiety or depression. Research indicates that overeating may become a prevalent coping strategy for these mood disorders. Consider cracking open a bag of chips as an example. After consuming three, four, and eventually five handfuls, "you're not even tasting the chips anymore; your taste buds are completely saturated with flavor. Yet, you continue eating, wondering, why am I still eating?"



Fatigue, impatience, and difficulty concentrating can be symptoms of both anxiety and depression. Any one of the three could cause you to lose interest in going to the gym or to perform poorly when you work out.

Consider how you've been feeling these past couple weeks. If you find yourself feeling constantly negative, tense, uninterested in activities you typically love, or unable to fall asleep, you might want to ask your doctor to refer you to a mental health specialist. Investigating further can be aided by a mental health specialist. And receiving the right care can assist you in keeping a healthy weight.

### **Weight Gain During Perimenopause and Menopause**

Weight gain during menopause and perimenopause (the years preceding menopause) may be caused by a decrease in estrogen levels. It takes little time for the abrupt drop in hormone levels to knock you off balance.

Additionally, it is observed that excess weight during menopause often accumulates in the abdominal region, significantly increasing the risk of high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease. Preventing weight gain can be accomplished through regular exercise and a balanced diet.



### **Cushing's Illness**

Your body releases cortisol, sometimes known as the stress hormone, in reaction to stressful or dangerous conditions. However, overproduction of cortisol over an extended period of time can lead to Cushing's disease. One uncomfortable side effect is the presence of unusual fat deposits around the cheeks and abdomen.

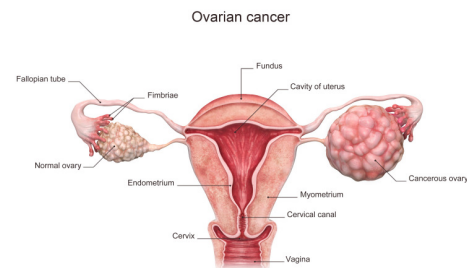


Prolonged steroid use raises the risk of developing Cushing's illness. The disorder can also result from brain tumours on the pituitary gland, as they increase the synthesis and release of adrenocorticotrophic hormone, which in turn signals the adrenal glands to produce cortisol.

Cushing's disease is characterized by weight gain, particularly in the upper body; other symptoms include stretch marks, acne, and easily bruised areas. Treatment options for Cushing's disease vary depending on the underlying cause. If you have Cushing's disease, your doctor will help you decide which course of treatment is best for you.

## Cancer of the ovaries or uterus

Cancer of the ovaries or uterus affects women's reproductive organs. Ovarian cancer starts in the ovaries and often goes undetected until later stages. Symptoms include abdominal bloating and pelvic pain. Uterine cancer begins in the uterus and may cause abnormal vaginal bleeding or pelvic pain. Early detection through screening tests is crucial for effective treatment, which may include surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation therapy.



The symptoms of ovarian or uterine tumours include constipation, difficult sex, vaginal bleeding, and lower back pain in addition to weight increase. However, Similar symptoms are also typical for other disorders, so you should always speak with your doctor to determine the exact source of the issue.

## Drug-Related Causes

Ask your doctor if weight gain is a potential adverse effect before beginning any new prescription or over-the-counter (OTC) drug. Psychiatric drugs frequently result in weight gain, particularly when used to treat bipolar disorder and depression. They have a central nervous system effect and, although they are meant to lessen depression, they unintentionally make you feel more like eating.



Medications intended to treat high blood pressure can also result in weight gain, as reported by Health. Taking insulin for diabetes is another offender because this medication can occasionally result in weight gain.



Maintaining an active lifestyle and adhering to a balanced diet will help you control your condition without gaining too much weight.

## **Sleep Disorders and Your Weight**

If you try to get through the day on four hours of sleep, you will probably end up reaching for simple carbohydrates as a snack to give you little energy spikes, such as cookies, chips, and candy. Why do you have these kinds of cravings when you're tired? Lack of sleep causes hormonal imbalances that affect hunger.



Our body releases more ghrelin—a hormone that tells you when it's time to eat—after a restless night. The hormone that signifies fullness, leptin, may also decrease concurrently. It makes sense why your belt feels tight when you combine the two. But it takes time for this to occur. Weight gain is the result of chronic insomnia.

Lack of sleep might also influence your judgment. Let's take an example where you can have either a cookie or a banana. It was found that being fatigued increases impulsivity, which may lead you to reach for higher-calorie snacks.

In addition, sugar provides quick energy, which is what your body will want when you're tired. Having more sleep can result in a daily sugar intake of up to 10 grams less.

Even though eating a cookie won't make you gain weight right away, if you have a pattern of choosing sweet foods over ones that are higher in nutrients, you can notice your weight gradually rising.



## Chapter 7

### Gaining weight and muscle

It takes months and years to gain lean body weight as opposed to days and weeks.

Before beginning any weight-gain regimen, see your physician.

You need to eat more and promote muscle growth in order to gain weight.



It is a waste of money and time to invest in supplements, powders, and other items that claim to increase muscle mass.

A person's genetic makeup plays a major role in determining their build, which is why it is challenging for someone who is naturally slender to gain weight. Weight exercise and increased caloric intake can modify the human body to a limited degree. It might be just as difficult to gain or lose weight again. Many of the same fundamental guidelines apply to both gaining and reducing weight when done in a wise, healthful manner.

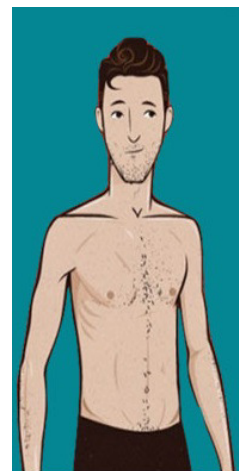
It is crucial to speak with your physician to ensure that the weight-gain strategies you are doing are suitable for you and healthful.

#### Causes of not gaining weight

Several typical explanations for why an individual can struggle to put on weight include:

- Heredity
- Insufficient food intake
- Physically demanding work or lifestyle
- Excessive exercise

Note that this information sheet does not cover eating disorders, substance misuse, disabilities, or major medical issues, which can lead someone to be overly thin.





### **See your physician before attempting to put on weight.**

Consult your physician before beginning any weight-gain regimen. Your medical professional can:

- Examine you to rule out the chance that hyperthyroidism or another underlying medical issue is the reason for your thinness.
- Provide a weight target that is suitable for your height and body type
- evaluate your levels of physical activity and eating
- offer advice on lifestyle, exercise, and food modifications that may promote weight gain
- if required, send you to additional experts, such as a dietician.

Consume more food to acquire weight; prioritize quality over quantity.

Underweight often occurs when calorie intake (measured in kilojoules) is less than energy expenditure. To put it another way, eating more is necessary for weight gain.

Ensuring that every kilojoule consumed has optimal nutritional content is necessary to gain weight in a healthy way. Increasing your consumption of high-calorie foods and beverages, such as chips and soda, won't make you stronger, help you grow muscle, or repair damaged tissue following surgery.

### **Among the recommendations are:**

- To determine how many kilojoules you consume on a typical day, use a kilojoule-counter book. It could be less than you anticipate.
- Consume three healthful meals each day Try to give yourself slightly larger serves whenever you can.

- Eat five or six times a day if your hunger is small. Fluids should not be eaten during meals, but rather before and after them. This makes more space for eating.
- Gaining weight successfully necessitates increasing your daily carbohydrate consumption. Steer clear of low-carb diets.
- Consuming large amounts of protein from food won't accelerate muscle growth and will strain your body excessively, particularly your kidneys. Avert diets heavy in protein.
- Fruit, yoghurt, muffins, rice pudding, low-fat custard, milkshakes, or liquid meals can all be considered nutritious snacks.
- Steer clear of high-fat junk meals. opt instead for wholesome, high-fat foods like almonds or avocado. Add some concentrated calories to your normal foods, such as grated cheese. Put some almond or peanut butter on a wholegrain muffin.
- Use milk, not water, when making hot oatmeal or other cereal. Once cooked, stir in honey, almonds, dried fruits, or powdered milk.
- Add almonds, sunflower seeds, avocados, whole olives, and olive oil—healthy oils—to salads as garnishes.
- Add one to two tablespoons of dry milk powder to soups, casseroles, mashed potatoes, and liquid milk to give them more body.

### **Resistance exercise to gain muscle**

Strength training encourages the growth of muscles. Resistance training can be done with your own body weight, free weights, weight machines, or resistance bands.

### **Among the recommendations are:**

- To allow your muscles to heal, limit your weekly training to two or three sessions. If you find yourself wanting to work out more often, remember that muscular growth occurs during recovery.

- Select compound exercises, like the bench press and squat, that target many major muscle groups.
- Make your workouts quick and intense rather than long and boring.
- Avoid wasting your time or money on pills, powders, and other items that make the promise to build muscle. There is no scientific proof for these assertions.
- Consult a professional. You can get assistance from a physiotherapist, personal trainer, exercise physiologist, or gym teacher to ensure that you are performing each exercise correctly. You can lower your chance of injury and maximize your gains with sound counsel.

### **Changing one's lifestyle to gain weight**

#### **Among the recommendations are:**

- Even when you're not hungry, be ready to eat. Set a timer to remind yourself to eat every two hours.
- Make an effort to enhance the attraction of your extra eating sessions. As an example, keep your favourite snack foods in the refrigerator and pantry.
- To aid in promoting muscle growth, consume modest portions of protein-rich foods both before and after each resistance training session.
- Recognize that consuming more food can result in gas or bloating.
- Expect to put on some extra weight as well. Gaining muscle mass cannot be achieved without gaining more body fat.

### **Monitor your progress with weight growth.**

Keeping track of your advancement increases motivation.

#### **Among the recommendations are:**

- Maintain a journal to track your calorie consumption and exercise regimen.
- Maintain consistency. You must increase your daily food consumption in order to gain weight. Making a menu in writing could be helpful.

- Check to see whether your goals are realistic. For example, gaining a few kg extra may take a year. Gaining lean body weight takes time, so don't let little increases depress you.
- See your doctor often so they can assess your progress.

### **Where to Look for Help –**

- Physiotherapist
- Licensed personal trainer
- Competent fitness instructor

### **Points to bear in mind**

- Increasing one's lean body mass is a gradual process that takes years as opposed to weeks or days.
- Speak with your doctor before starting any weight-gain program.
- To acquire weight, you must eat more and encourage the growth of muscle.
- Refrain from squandering time or cash on supplements, powders, and other products that claim to increase muscle mass.



## Chapter 8

### I'm Eating Well, So Why Am I Putting on Weight?



You're not alone if you're attempting to eat healthier but the scale is not showing a decrease in weight. Successful weight loss is influenced by a variety of circumstances, much like most things in life. Luckily, we have some control over most of these things, but not all of them.

Here are some things to think about and take care of if, in spite of eating a nutritious diet, you're having trouble losing weight or keeping it off in order to assist you reach your objectives.

#### **You might not fully understand what a healthy diet entail.**

There are a ton of false beliefs around what constitutes a healthy diet. Many consumers believe that there are excellent healthy options at their favourite fast-food companies or restaurants. But are foods truly nutritious when they are laden with sugar, salt, and dressings and sauces?

Fruit and vegetables should make up at least half of the usual meal plate. Equal portions of the remaining half should be consumed as lean meats, whole grains, and other protein sources such as beans, nuts, and tofu.

#### **You May Be Overindulging in Food**

Overindulging in healthful foods might actually undermine your efforts to reach your goal weight, even if you're reaching for salads and grilled dishes when dining out. Why? Because since the 1970s, portion sizes have increased substantially, making it challenging to determine how much food constitutes a healthy portion.

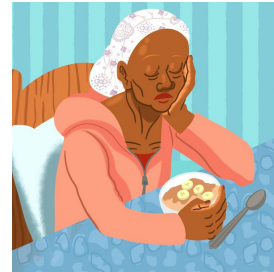


When preparing and dining at home, use a portion or divided plate if you have trouble with portion distortion. Alternatively, take the time to precisely measure the foods you produce before adding them to your plate. When eating out, select meals that are

mostly made up of grilled lean meats and fruits, and try to finish around half of the servings that are placed in front of you.

### **Perhaps You're Not Eating Enough**

While consuming fewer calories than suggested may seem like a good way to lose weight quickly, in reality, it makes your body store more energy as it burns less calories. Your body will instinctively hang onto whatever calories it consumes in "starvation mode," even though you are not truly famished. This is done to assist you maintain your energy balance.



Eating too little can sometimes make you so hungry that you end up eating unhealthy foods or skip out on your scheduled, healthful meals and snacks in an attempt to lose weight. Thus, how can you help?

First, make sure you're feeding your body well by consuming meals that are balanced and healthful. Next, choose natural or nutrient-rich snacks that not only fuel your body but also control your hunger and reduce the temptation to overindulge in between meals.

### **You might be holding onto water.**

Given that water makes up the majority of the human body, it is sense that occasionally our bodies might retain more water than is necessary. While eating too much processed food or salt is the most prevalent cause of water retention, other factors that can contribute to the condition include prolonged standing or sitting, hormonal changes that coincide with your menstrual cycle, and even some medications.

#### **➤ Reduce Your Sodium Consumption**

Eliminating excess water weight is the most obvious strategy to reduce sodium intake. In addition to reducing the amount of salt you add to your food at the table, we advise you to read product labels and steer clear of items that are high in sodium when you purchase. The most popular foods high in sodium are salted almonds, canned soups, bacon, sausages, hot dogs, and cold meats.





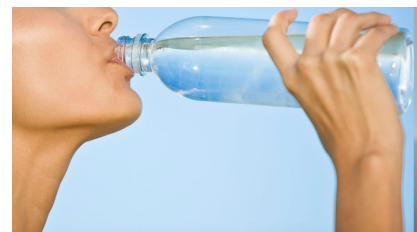


### ➤ **Consume Meals High in Magnesium**

Eat more meals high in magnesium, vitamin B6, and potassium in addition to consuming fewer high-sodium foods. These vitamins and minerals support a number of body processes and have been shown to aid in the reduction of fluid retention. So, make sure to eat plenty of leafy greens, whole grains, avocados, bananas, tomatoes, and other foods high in these vital elements.

### ➤ **Hydrate well with water.**

Yes, that is accurate! Retaining water may indicate that you should increase your water intake! The brain initiates the body's thirst process when your fluid levels are low, which many individuals misinterpret for hunger. Your body may retain more fluids if you are dehydrated, which can happen if your intake of water is less than your output.



Fortunately, water can be found in a lot of our healthful meals, and other beverages like tea and coffee can also help you get the necessary amount of hydration for your body. Make careful to observe the colour of your pee. You are dehydrated if your urine is dark orange or deep yellow in hue. It should only be slightly yellow. It was recommended eight 8-oz glasses of water each day as a conservative amount.

### **You're Sleeping Insufficiently**

Your body will naturally gravitate toward junk food instead of the nutritious meals and snacks you had planned when you don't get enough sleep. It indicates that sleeping for fewer than five hours a night increases the risk of gaining weight. Thus, in order to support your weight loss efforts and maintain maximum health and wellness, make sure you receive between seven and nine hours of sleep every night.





## **You're Stressed Out**

I mean, who isn't? Regrettably, there is evidence linking persistent stress to impeding weight loss. Why? To begin with, the "comfort foods" that individuals frequently eat when they're anxious

are usually unhealthy. Furthermore, your body may retain fat, particularly the belly fat that most individuals aim to lose, due to the hormone cortisol, which is released when you're under stress.

Instead of reaching for chips, cookies, or other high-carb, high-fat meals, learn to relax and engage in enriching hobbies like yoga, Pilates, or reading to reduce your stress levels.

## **You've Been Over 40**

A number of variables make it more difficult to lose weight if you're over forty, including:

- **Hormones** - Naturally, hormones have a major role in the inability to reduce weight or the experience of weight increase. Women's bodies start to produce less estrogen in their mid-30s, which leads our bodies to become more fat in the middle.
- **Decreased Metabolism** - The body's basal metabolic rate (BMR) and the overall amount of energy used during exercise both decline around the age of forty. It was estimated that beyond age 40, metabolism can slow by about 5% year, meaning you'll require 60–100 less calories per day on average every ten years.

You will likely require even fewer calories if you lead a more sedentary lifestyle, consume more calories than you burn, and experience regular stress. Remember this, then.

- **Hereditary** - The exact genes that regulate our body's generation of fat cells and where those cells are stored have been identified. Even though this is something we can't exactly control, you can tell where your family loves to store extra fat by observing your parents and other family members.

- Decrease in Muscle Mass - In addition to slowing down with age, our bodies start to lose muscle when we reach our 40s, and the loss of muscle becomes worse every ten years. Despite the belief of some specialists that age impairs the motor units that comprise our muscles, exercise is a daily component that is necessary to avoid muscle loss. Inactivity is the main factor leading to muscle loss.



## Chapter 9

# Why do people get fat and overweight?

### How can overweight and obesity arise?

Numerous factors might contribute to the acquisition and maintenance of excess weight. These include of heredity, environment, food, and inactivity. A brief overview of some of these elements is provided in the section that follows. Further details about the causes of overweight and obesity can be found at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.



### Consumption and Exercise

When a person consumes more calories than they expend via exercise, they gain weight. The main cause of weight gain is this imbalance.

### Ambience

The environment we live in affects our capacity to keep a healthy weight. As an illustration:

- People find it difficult to be physically active when there aren't any nearby parks, sidewalks, or reasonably priced gyms.
- Americans consume more calories from oversized meal portions, which means they need to engage in even more physical exercise to stay at a healthy weight.
- Supermarkets that offer reasonably priced, healthful meals like fresh produce are out of reach for certain individuals
- Food advertising pushes consumers to purchase unhealthy items like sugar-filled drinks and high-fat snacks.

## Genetics

Obesity may be influenced by genetics. In diseases like Prader-Willi syndrome, genes can directly contribute to obesity.



The likelihood of gaining weight can also be influenced by genes. Though external factors like a plentiful food supply or insufficient physical activity may also be necessary for an individual to be overweight, scientists believe that genes may contribute to an individual's increased risk of obesity.

## Medical Conditions and Prescription Drugs

Certain hormone disorders, such as Cushing syndrome, polycystic ovarian syndrome, and underactive thyroid, can cause overweight and obesity.

You may gain weight while using a number of drugs, including antidepressants, certain corticosteroids, and treatments for seizures.

## Stress, Emotional Elements, and Restless Nights

Boredom, anger, upset, or stress might cause some people to overeat.

Individuals are more likely to be overweight or obese the less sleep they get. This is partially due to the fact that hormones generated while you sleep regulate hunger and energy expenditure.



## Chapter 10

### 12 Typical Reasons for Unexpected Weight Gain



Perhaps it's even your sleeping patterns.

**WE'VE ALL BEEN THERE:** for the past few months, you've been working extremely hard to shed some pounds, both in the kitchen and at the gym. It has also been effective. You're ecstatic to be making progress toward your desired weight. Until the day you decide to check your progress by stepping on the scale, and all of a sudden, you've gained weight.

It is understandable to feel defeated in this situation. You've worked hard to reach a weight you're comfortable with, and you're fairly certain that the weight gain wasn't caused by anything you did differently. In any case, why does abrupt weight gain occur?

Reversals in weight are actually quite common, so don't give up (more on that here). You may have occasional weight fluctuations of a few pounds. You probably don't weigh the same in the morning as you do at night. A number of variables, such as salt consumption, fluid retention, and hydration, can cause weight fluctuations ranging from one to six pounds. However, you should speak with your doctor if you notice weight increase in the double digits overnight.

It's common to have fluctuating weights and even gain weight.

But, if you are gaining weight at other times of the year and haven't made any dietary changes, you should be concerned as this could be a sign of an underlying condition such kidney, liver, or congestive heart failure.

A few factors listed below can result in an unexpected increase in weight.

## 12 Typical Reasons for Abrupt Weight Gain:

### 1. Your salt intake is excessive.

Your body retains water when you consume sodium. Water has volume and weight. According to him, eating a lot of salty food for several days in a row could cause you to gain weight all of a sudden.



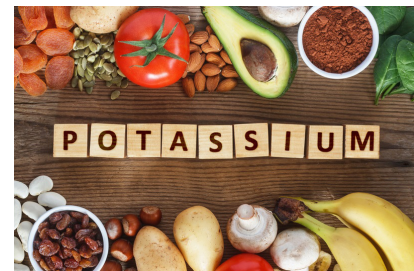
Food from restaurants, particularly fast food, is frequently high in salt. Thus, your sudden gain of weight may be explained if you have been eating takeout and restaurant meals all of late.

But remember that a lot of the meals you eat at home are also high in sodium. Among the most common foods in the American diet that are high in sodium include bread, sandwiches, cold cuts, and cured meats.

### 2. There isn't enough potassium in your diet.

While cutting back on salt is wise, there are other nutrients to consider when it comes to water weight.

Potassium functions as a counterbalance to sodium. Potassium aids in blood pressure regulation and muscular function while sodium helps keep the fluid around your cells in place. The two work together, and if one is not functioning properly, overall hydration is affected.



Although there isn't a suggested daily intake of potassium, Men 19 years of age and above should aim for a daily consumption of 3,400 milligrams.

### 3. You've started taking a new drug.

Many medications may cause weight gain. In fact, medicine may be the root cause of up to 15% of obesity cases.



There are two common culprits: pharmaceuticals used to treat heart disease (beta blockers) and depression (SSRIs). Certain allergy-blocking antihistamines, prescription sleep aids, and even medicines can result in "a bump in weight."

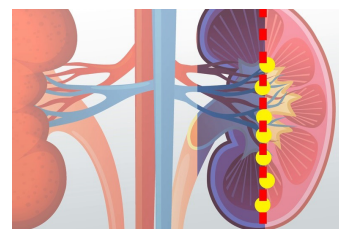


Adding steroids and testosterone-boosting medications or supplements to that list as well. These medications alter your hormones, which may cause you to gain weight suddenly. That includes over-the-counter or online supplements. It's not necessary for it to originate from your PCP's prescription pad to be a cause for concern.

If the weight gain is worrisome so they can determine whether to continue using it or whether any changes need to be made. Furthermore, if you use an over-the-counter or internet supplement and you haven't informed your primary care physician about it, it's definitely time to do so.

#### **4. Diuretics are what you take.**

It was noted that fluid weight gain may occur if you are taking diuretics for medical reasons and they are modified or stopped.



This is not true weight in the majority of these cases. A change in diet, a change in exercise regimen, a change in metabolic rate (thyroid dysfunction), etc., would be related to true weight gain.

Naturally, if you've just stopped taking diuretics or adjusted the dosage, check with your doctor to make sure this is the case for you.

#### **5. You're overindulging in food.**

It would seem apparent to choose this one. However, most individuals are unaware of how quickly it can occur. You might even see a five- or ten-pound increase in weight if you've been increasing your calorie intake on a regular basis for a month or two.



It's critical to understand that these modifications may be minute. Perhaps you've been hosting happy hours once a week. Alternatively, it's possible that you raised your portion sizes unintentionally by purchasing new plates or bowls. Even a weekly increase of 500 calories can add up over time.

To see if you start to lose weight, think about maintaining a diet log, utilizing a calorie-counting app, or simply quitting the food habit that you suspect might be the culprit.



## **6. You changed to a diet richer in carbohydrates.**

You will see an immediate difference in weight if you switch from an extremely low-carb plan (like keto) to a diet that incorporates more grains and carbs. This is because carbohydrates are turned into glycogen in your muscles and liver. About three grams of water are contained in every gram of glycogen, thus eating pasta will cause your tissues to retain more water.



Both for general health (fiber is a carbohydrate) and exercise (glycogen is an effective source of fuel for workouts), carbohydrates are essential.

## **7. You recently went on a weight loss journey.**

Incredibly, incredibly good if the weight that was gone stayed lost. However, this is often not the case at all.



Act to maintain balance because our body weight and body fat are tightly regulated. Even if you continue your weight-loss regimen, any pounds you manage to lose will probably come back.

Therefore, regardless of how much you eat or exercise, it's extremely probable that you will put some of the weight back on if you recently lost it. This is perfectly normal.

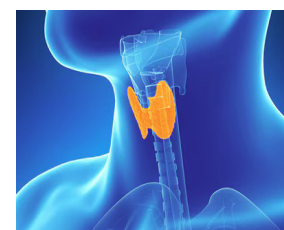
## **8. You just gave up smoking.**

Since quitting smoking suppresses your appetite, you'll probably eat more and put on weight. But don't worry too much those who gain weight after quitting usually don't gain much.



## **9. An endocrine disorder affects you.**

As for hypothyroidism, or underactive thyroid, about one in five persons suffer from it. Although hypothyroidism is far more frequent in women, Cheskin notes that many males also suffer from it, which can result in abrupt and noticeable weight gain.



Although less common, a few other hormone abnormalities, such as Cushing's illness, can also result in weight gain. He continues, "You probably won't have weight gain as your only symptom if you have one of these endocrine disorders." According to the Mayo Clinic, these hormone imbalances can cause irritation, sadness, weakness, headaches, fatigue, and cognitive difficulties.

#### **10. You suffer from another long-term illness.**

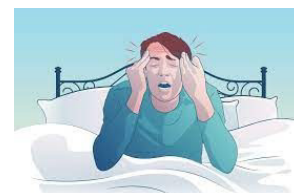
Abrupt weight gain can result from a variety of chronic disorders or diseases, not just faulty endocrine system function. Seeing a doctor right away if they observe that they are gaining one to two pounds every few days, or even every day. This is probably fluid weight, which can be a sign that your kidneys aren't eliminating enough liquid from your body.



This could be because of failing kidneys or liver disease that is causing you to leak fluid into your extracellular space; depending on where it is or how it manifests, this could be called third spacing, edema, or ascites.

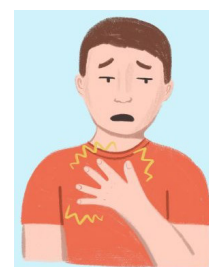
#### **11. You're not taking a nap.**

People who sleep less are more prone to seek and consume higher-calorie foods. Therefore, you might gain a few pounds if you've made any lifestyle changes that could keep you from sleeping, including having a baby.



#### **12. You currently have mild heart failure.**

Sudden weight gain may be a sign of heart failure before it becomes serious. If you gain more than two or three pounds in a 24-hour period, your body may be holding onto fluids, which occurs when the heart isn't working properly.



If you see an increase in swelling in your lower limbs, this is a good indicator that your weight gain may be related to your heart. This fluid frequently gathers in the feet, lower legs, and ankles. There may also be additional symptoms like dizziness, shortness of breath, and elevated heart rate.

### **When should I visit a physician regarding my unexpected weight gain?**

Visit your doctor right away if you're slowly gaining weight every day, if your weight gain is compounding with other symptoms, or if it's hitting double digits overnight. If you are experiencing some weight fluctuations, you probably don't need to schedule an appointment, but make sure it's normal for you by speaking with your doctor the next time you see them.



## Chapter 11

### What weight increase is deemed inadvertent or inexplicable?

Our physical weight varies every day. In fact, it can fluctuate by five or six pounds in a single day based on a number of variables, such as our stress levels, our stress levels related to food, and our degree of physical activity.



However, if you check your weight on a daily basis and are taken aback by the surge, you may be asking yourself, “Why am I gaining weight so quickly?” Why am I putting on weight without trying?

Unintentional or unanticipated weight gain can be distressing and concerning. Although lifestyle choices can often have a significant impact, gaining weight might occasionally indicate a medical issue.

Here are a few possible explanations for weight increase that seems out of the ordinary, along with when to get concerned and what to do next. Either read on or select one of the links below to go to a certain section:

- What does it mean to gain weight inadvertently or without cause?
- How aging may cause inadvertent weight gain
- Variations in weight due to lifestyle
- Health issues that may contribute to inexplicable weight gain

#### 1. What constitutes inadvertent or inexplicable weight gain?

Gaining weight without increasing your caloric intake or decreasing your level of activity is known as unintentional or unexplained weight gain.

Unexpected weight gain frequently occurs when your daily caloric needs, or the number of calories your body requires to function properly, decrease yet you’re eating patterns remain unchanged. You might require less calories due to age, menopause, and lifestyle decisions.

Unaccounted-for weight gain, however, can also occur for non-calorie-related causes. For instance, you can be experiencing aberrant tissue growth or water retention due to a known or unknown medical problem.

Making an appointment with a primary care physician is an excellent first step if you have any concerns. In addition to treating hundreds of ailments, they can refer you to a specialist if you require more sophisticated medical attention.

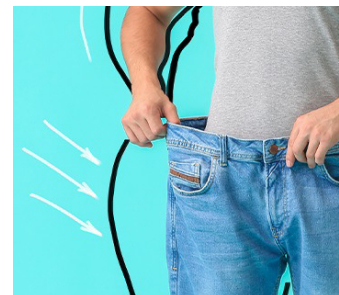
## **2. How growing older might result in inadvertent weight gain**

Does controlling your weight seem more difficult as you age? It's not just in your thoughts. Your body is changing and requires less calories to function, which accounts for some of the weight gain, even though behaviour plays a major role.

### **➤ Slower metabolism**

Your body uses your metabolism to transform the food and liquids you consume into energy that is used throughout your entire body. Even when you're sleeping, it never stops.

You need to consume less since a slowed metabolism causes your body to burn through food more slowly. Your metabolism is influenced by a number of factors, such as age, gender, genetics, hormones, nutrition, muscle mass, and degree of activity. Your metabolism slows down as you age, but you may speed it up with exercise and a balanced diet.



### **➤ Decreased resting metabolic rate**

Although they are not the same, your metabolism and your basal metabolic rate (BMR) are related. The BMR is the bare minimum of calories your body requires to sustain vital physiological processes, such as breathing, while at rest. Each has a unique metabolic rate.

The majority of people should get 60–70% of their daily calories from their BMR. Therefore, if you consume 2,000 calories, 1,200–1,400 of those calories should be used for bodily processes. The remaining calories are utilized to fuel eating and maintain physical activity.

Around the age of 60 is when your BMR starts to decline. Therefore, it's possible that your body need 1,000 calories instead of 1,200 to support vital bodily activities. Consuming 2,000 calories a day could lead to weight gain.

### ➤ **Changes in sex hormones**

Your levels of sex hormones decline with age. During menopause or perimenopause, which typically occurs between the ages of 45 and 55, a woman's estrogen levels rapidly fluctuate. Over time, men's testosterone levels progressively drop.



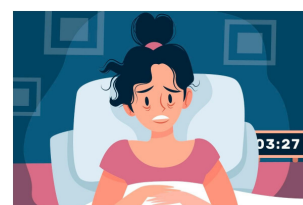
Gaining weight can result from changes in sex hormones. However, hormones aren't typically the main factor in weight increase during or after menopause. Less muscular mass and a slower metabolism are more likely factors.

## **3. Lifestyle reasons for weight fluctuations**

As an adult, gaining weight is common and can average up to two pounds year. These extra pounds are frequently the result of behavioural or lifestyle changes (e.g., timing and portion sizes of your meals throughout the day), in addition to the natural aging process. Therefore, even if you don't think anything significant has changed, variations in your weight may actually be readily explained.

### ➤ **Lack of sleep**

Your weight is just one of the many reasons you should strive for 7-9 hours of sleep per night. People who tend to gain weight when they don't receive the recommended amount of sleep.



The cause? Insufficient sleep can have an impact on your metabolism, hormones that trigger appetite, and dietary preferences. Persons who were sleep deprived consumed almost 400 extra calories each day on average. Not only that, but getting the necessary exercise while you're exhausted is more difficult.

### ➤ **Yo-yo dieting**

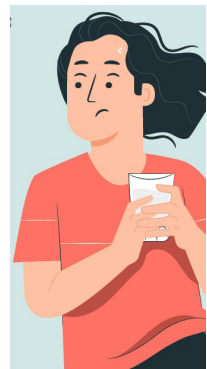
Yo-yo dieting, often known as repeat dieting, can cause inadvertent weight gain over time. This is due to the fact that beginning and ending a diet might alter your appetite and lead to overeating. Cortisol, a stress hormone that causes your body to retain fat, might also be impacted by it. Making long-lasting behavioural adjustments can help patients lose weight and keep it off, maybe with medical assistance.



### ➤ **Inadequate hydration**

Unexpected weight gain may be the result of insufficient drinking. Given how much water weighs, that might sound strange, yet it's true.

The way your body reacts to thirst is one way that dehydration can cause weight gain. Even though you might only need a large glass of water, being thirsty might make you feel hungry even when you're not. Your body doesn't function as well when dehydrated; it may burn calories more slowly and break down fat less efficiently. This is another factor.



### ➤ **Giving up cigarettes and other tobacco items**

Tobacco cessation is among the best things you can do for your health.

However, giving up tobacco can result in weight gain; most persons gain 5–10 pounds in the months after their cessation.



This is because nicotine, which is found in cigarettes and other tobacco products, decreases hunger while increasing metabolism. You'll be hungry after quitting and could turn to food to satisfy your cravings, but your body won't burn calories as quickly.

Giving up smoking will improve your health and give you more energy, so a few pounds gained is a modest price to pay. But see your primary care physician if you're concerned that you might gain weight after stopping smoking.



### ➤ **Using specific drugs**

Your unexpected weight increase may have been caused by a new medicine you started taking recently.



Certain medications have adverse effects that can alter how your body stores and processes food, increase appetite and lead to overeating, cause water retention, or slow down your metabolism, which makes your body burn calories more slowly. Exercise may also be hampered by the negative effects of some drugs.

The potential weight gain associated with medicine is contingent upon several factors, including age, underlying medical conditions, duration of treatment, and lifestyle modifications. While some people may gain a few pounds over the course of a year, others may gain twenty pounds in just a few months. Additionally, some people may experience weight loss while using the same medications that induce weight gain in others.

Antipsychotics, antidepressants, medications for epilepsy, insulin, and several cancer treatments are among the medications that can make you gain weight.

There are treatments available if your drugs are the reason behind your weight gain. You might be able to reduce the dosage of your existing medicine or switch to a different one. However, before making any modifications, see a physician.

## **4. Health issues that may contribute to inexplicable weight gain**

While age and certain activities account for the majority of weight increase, some diseases and medical problems can also contribute to weight gain. Unintentional weight gain that is expected can also be caused by medical issues; for example, gaining weight during pregnancy is a common occurrence. However, weight gain resulting from medical issues is sometimes unexpected and unexplained.

### ➤ **Thyroid that is not functioning properly**

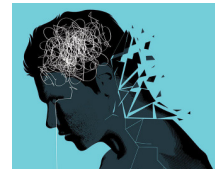
A hormone that the thyroid gland produces aids in regulating your mood, temperature, heart rate, metabolism, and other bodily functions. Fatigue, sadness, and weight gain are possible side effects if your body doesn't produce enough of this hormone.



Underactive thyroids can occur in both men and women, although it is more common in the former. A thyroid function test is the only method available to diagnose the issue. The good news is that medication may typically effectively treat an underactive thyroid.

### ➤ **Problems pertaining to mental health**

Individuals with mental health disorders experience distinct effects. While some people may unexpectedly lose weight, others may experience weight increase.



Weight gain can result from mental health issues for a variety of causes. People with bipolar disorder, anxiety, or depression may overindulge in food or make unhealthy dietary choices as a coping mechanism.

In addition, some mental health issues, such as depression, might make it difficult to find the will or energy to engage in physical activity or exercise. Additionally, weight gain is an adverse effect of common mental health drugs such as antipsychotics and antidepressants.

### ➤ **Elevated cortisol**

Since cortisol is released into your body while you're under stress, it's commonly referred to as the stress hormone. It's how your body gets ready for potentially hazardous circumstances.



Your body triggers a fight-or-flight reaction, which increases heart rate and energy. Due to their fast vitality, you can also have a craving for sugary and fatty foods. Your metabolism is one of the body processes that is momentarily stopped or slowed down when it isn't necessary to keep you safe from harm.

Your cortisol levels (as well as your body's functioning) should return to normal about four hours following a stress response, unless your body has released extra cortisol in response to stress, you're taking an oral corticosteroid drug, or you have a medical condition such as Cushing's syndrome.

Long-term high cortisol levels might lead to unanticipated weight gain since they can make you seek high-calorie foods and slow down your metabolism.

### ➤ **Sugar**

Unexpected weight gain is a possibility in both type 1 and type 2 diabetes. Particularly type 2 diabetes and weight increase are frequently associated.



Diabetes patients may be more prone to gain weight due to their diet, medications, and decreased levels of physical activity. Insulin resistance—the root cause of type 2 diabetes—can lead to an increase in hunger and a loss in energy.

### ➤ **Fluid holding back**

Your body's fluid content varies throughout the day. Depending on your fluid levels, it's very common for your weight to fluctuate by up to four pounds in a single day.

A large accumulation of fluid in the body is called edema or fluid retention.

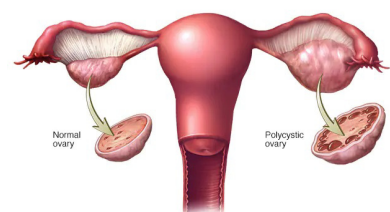
This may result in an abrupt rise of fifteen pounds or more in weight.

If you have edema, your limbs, hands, feet, face or abdomen will likely look swollen.

This kind of weight increase can happen to people taking specific medications or those with medical disorders including liver disease, kidney illness, or heart failure. However, it's also possible that your diet—for instance, consuming an excessive number of salty foods—is causing you to retain fluids.

### ➤ **Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)**

The disorder known as polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) damages the ovaries, resulting in an excessive production of androgens, or male sex hormones. Although most women only have trace amounts of these androgens, larger levels can have an impact on a woman's physiological processes.



PCOS can make it difficult to reduce weight and lead to weight gain, particularly around the belly. Missed or irregular periods are frequently caused by PCOS. Acne or greasy skin, as well as facial and body hair development, can also result from the disorder.

### **Is weight gain inexplicably caused by cancer?**

While weight gain may indicate malignancy, behavioural changes or other underlying medical conditions are more likely to be the cause. Cancer patients are more likely to lose weight than gain it. This is a result of the intense effort your body must make to combat the malignancy.



In the later stages of the disease, weight gain is possible for cancer patients if their tumours are bigger or if they start to retain fluid, usually in their legs or belly.

### **Which malignancies are responsible for inexplicable weight gain?**

Though fluid retention is more common in cases of ovarian and colorectal cancer, unexplained weight gain can occur with any kind of cancer.

Additionally, a patient receiving cancer therapy may gain weight as a result of the medications they are taking. This is particularly valid for those who are suffering from ovarian, prostate, or breast cancer.

### **When should I start to worry about weight gain that seems unnatural?**

Unexpected weight increase may indicate a short-term or long-term health issue. Schedule a visit with your physician if you believe a medical ailment is the reason for your weight fluctuations.

If your unexplained weight increase is sudden or accompanied by any of the following symptoms, get medical attention immediately away:

- Fever
- Sensitivity of the skin
- Breathing problems or shortness of breath
- Pectoral Palpitations

- Perspiration
- Vision alterations

Speak with a doctor even if you think that changes in your weight are due to aging or lifestyle choices. A higher chance of developing diseases including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and several types of cancer is associated with being overweight.

Whatever the reason behind your unanticipated weight increase, your doctor can assist. In the event that you need to see a specialist, they will put you in touch with a provider that can meet your needs.



## Chapter 12

### Six Inconspicuous Causes of Your Weight Gain

One of these problems may be the cause if you're finding that your clothing is getting too tight or if the number on the scale is rising.

You may want to think about other possible causes for your abrupt weight gain if you've observed that the number on your scale is rapidly rising or that your clothes are getting tighter but your eating habits and level of exercise haven't changed.

Although there is no set definition for rapid weight gain, it is something to be mindful of. Rapid weight gain is weight gain that will be sustained. It's not really focused on how much weight was acquired in a certain time frame. It's critical to ascertain whether additional symptoms exist that might indicate a problem. However, gaining 10 pounds over the course of a few years is one thing; gaining 10 pounds in a month is quite another.

However, the majority of people's weight can still change throughout the day based on things like their water and exercise intake.

Someone who is gaining weight without knowing why is to get in touch with their primary care physician or dietitian so they can order the necessary blood work to find out why you are gaining weight.

**Here are a few theories that could apply.**

#### 1. Menopause

Women may acquire weight more readily around menopause. Weight gain might result after menopause for various reasons. You usually see a drop in the estrogen and progesterone levels, but sometimes there's also a drop in the testosterone levels with the hormonal changes related to menopause.



Lean muscle mass loss is frequently caused by testosterone deficiency, and this can happen 12 to 18 months after menopause begins. Additionally, this may lead to weight gain.

Your basal metabolic rate will drop anytime you lose muscle, especially if you're not exercising regularly or are not active. This can actually make you more prone to gaining weight.

## **2. Restless nights or disturbed sleep**

You may be more prone to be overweight if you don't get enough hours of sleep or if your sleep is interrupted by frequent awakenings.

Even though a number of studies have linked sleep deprivation to weight gain, it can be difficult to determine which factor contributes to which. It's a bit of the chicken or the egg story in that you may be more susceptible to obstructive sleep apnea, so weight gain can sometimes also affect your sleep quality.



Not getting enough sleep might actually slow down your metabolism and raise the stress hormone cortisol production. Painsty sleep can sometimes also impact some of the patients' stress levels, which can actually then lead to more stress-related cravings and overeating."

## **3. Some drugs**

Numerous drugs have the potential to cause weight gain either directly or indirectly. Certain drugs have the potential to disrupt one's metabolism, specifically the metabolism of carbohydrates, by increasing insulin resistance. Additionally, several drugs have the potential to increase appetite and desires, which leads to overeating. Steroids, immunosuppressants, older generation beta-blockers used to treat tremors, anticancer drugs, HIV treatments, and psychiatric drugs used to treat schizophrenia are a few examples of medications that may have an impact on your weight.



## **4. Mental health issues, including depression**

Similar behaviours to eating disorders can be triggered by a number of mental health conditions, including depression and generalized anxiety disorder.



People sometimes resort to food for solace when they're depressed or stressed. Additionally, cravings and occasionally even hunger can be directly induced by both depression and anxiety.

However, not everyone will have the same symptoms. When disturbed, some people will eat more, while others may eat less.

It may also worsen the situation if the person gained the weight as a result of their depression.

Putting on weight while depressed may have an impact on your motivation, energy level, and ability to deal with your mental health problems. Therefore, it is crucial to disrupt that pattern.

In this situation, therapy or medication for more severe cases may be helpful.

## **5. Specific health issues**

Your doctor might want to test you for certain endocrine diseases if you are unable to explain your weight increase in any other way. The thyroid, ovaries, and adrenal glands are parts of the endocrine system, which aids in controlling hormones that affect many bodily processes.



The first thing we do is look at the patient's medical history to see if there are any other conditions or symptoms that could be contributing to their weight gain. These include hyperthyroidism and pituitary problems, but they are less common.

## **6. Not noticing what you're eating**

Probably still the most common cause of weight gain is people's ignorance of how much they're eating.

Your metabolism slows down as you age, yet most individuals don't change how little they eat to reflect this.

We consume more calories than we burn, many people experienced this during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many people saw an increase in stress, and because they were working from home, they also became less active. The most frequent reason for weight gain is probably still people's ignorance of their actual food intake.

When it comes to treatment for rapid weight gain, timing is crucial. You weigh yourself at home a few times per month so that you can identify any sudden changes in your weight.

The sooner you seek help, the better. Compared to gaining 10 to 15 pounds, treating someone after they have gained 30 pounds is far more difficult. The fundamental problem should be dealt with as soon as feasible.



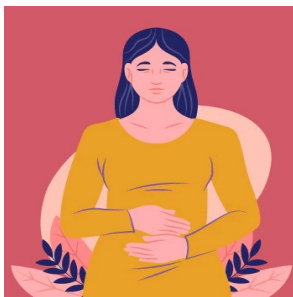
## Chapter 13

### Menopause-related weight gain: The Facts

Although many women gain weight as they get older, this isn't always the case. In order to mitigate weight gain, increase your physical activity and maintain a nutritious diet.

Women may find it more difficult to maintain their normal weight as they age. During the period known as perimenopause, which occurs a few years before menopause, weight gain frequently begins. When a woman enters her 50s, she frequently gains weight at a pace of 1.5 pounds annually.

Weight gain with menopause is frequent. However, by maintaining an active lifestyle and paying attention to good eating habits, you might be able to reduce it.



#### Why do women acquire weight during menopause?

Women are more likely to gain weight around their abdomens than around their hips and thighs as a result of the hormonal changes associated with menopause. However, hormonal changes by themselves may not be the reason for weight gain. Rather, it's typically associated with aging, as well as hereditary and lifestyle variables.

For example, we often gain fat as we age and lose muscle mass. The reduction of muscle mass causes the body's rate of calorie consumption to decrease. We call that rate metabolism. This surgery may make it more difficult to maintain a healthy weight. If you continue to consume the same things every day without making any extra physical effort, you will probably gain weight.

Most people lose some of their mobility as they age. By keeping an eye on your exercise intensity and trying to move more, you may be able to maintain a healthy weight.

It's possible that genetic factors contribute to weight increase around menopause. You most likely will if your parents or other close relatives are overweight in the midsection.

Menopause weight gain may also result from other factors including consuming an unhealthy diet and obtaining little sleep. People who don't get enough sleep have a tendency to eat and drink more calories and to snack more.

## **How dangerous is this weight increase?**

Gaining weight during menopause can negatively impact your health. Being overweight, particularly in the middle of your body, raises your risk of certain health problems, such as:

- Breathing issues.
- Heart and blood vessel disease.
- Type 2 diabetes.

Additionally, being overweight increases your risk of developing some cancers, such as endometrial, breast, and colon cancers.

## **How can one prevent gaining weight while going through menopause?**

There is no miracle cure for menopausal weight increase, nor can it be stopped. However, it could be beneficial to adhere to these weight-management guidelines:

### **• Make more movement**

Exercise, especially aerobic and strength training exercises, can help you maintain a healthy weight and lose excess weight. Your body can burn more calories when you gain muscle, which aids in controlling your weight.

Moderate aerobic exercise for the majority of healthy adults. This entails vigorous aerobic exercise, such jogging, for at least 75 minutes per week or at least 150 to 200 minutes of brisk walking.

It is also advised to perform strength training activities at least twice a week. You may need to exercise more if you want to reach specific fitness objectives or lose weight. Schedule some time for self-care. Engaging in enjoyable activities can aid in your physical fitness. Yoga, gardening, and other energetic pastimes might be examples of this.

You might also sleep better if you move more. It might be simpler to exercise more as a result.

- **Reduce your Intake**

You may require roughly 200 fewer calories per day in your 50s than you needed in your 30s and 40s to maintain your current weight. Taking in even fewer calories may be necessary to lose weight.

Keep an eye on what you're eating and drinking to cut calories without sacrificing nutrition. Increase your intake of fruits, veggies, and whole grains—especially the lower-processed, higher-fiber varieties.

A plant-based diet is generally more healthful than other diets. Good options include fish, almonds, soy, legumes, and low-fat dairy products. Consume meat sparingly. Consume shellfish and fish rather than red meat. Shortening, stick margarine, and butter can all be swapped out for vegetable or olive oils.

- **Examine your sweet tooth.**

The average American diet contains around 300 calories per day from added sugars. Sugar-sweetened liquids, including juices, soft drinks, energy drinks, flavored waters, and sweetened coffee and tea, account for around half of these calories. Additional sugar-containing foods include cakes, pies, cookies, doughnuts, ice cream, and candies.

- **Limit the amount of alcohol you consume.**

Drinking alcohol increases the number of calories in your diet and increases your chance of gaining weight.

- **Seek help**

Spend time with loved ones who support your efforts to maintain a healthy diet and increase your physical activity. Better yet, work as a team to change your way of living.

### **Does hormone treatment contribute to reduced weight gain?**

The usual treatment for hot flashes that lower quality of life is hormone therapy. Additionally, this treatment might aid in the redistribution of fat that builds up in the belly or around the midsection of the body. Visceral fat is the term for that kind of fat.

Additionally, hormone therapy may help you control your weight by enhancing sleep, which may encourage changes in lifestyle that are healthier.

Recall that weight increase is typical during the menopause. Accepting the physical changes that menopause brings about can be beneficial to your mental well-being. However, you might be able to slow down weight growth by making dietary and exercise adjustments. Adopt a healthier lifestyle and reap the benefits.



## **Chapter 14**

### **Obesity and Overweight**

#### **What is obesity and overweight?**

A BMI of 30 or higher is considered obese if there is extra body fat present.

Depending on what one reads, obesity is defined differently. Obesity and overweight often denote a weight exceeding what is considered healthy. A chronic illness called obesity is characterized by an excessive quantity of body fat. The body requires a certain amount of fat for a variety of functions, including energy storage, shock absorption, and thermal insulation.

The best metric for characterizing obesity is body mass index (BMI), which is based on an individual's height and weight. A person's BMI is calculated by dividing their height in meters squared (m) by their weight in kilograms (kg).

Adults' total body fat content and BMI are strongly correlated since the latter measures body weight in relation to height:

- Normal: BMI of 18.5-24.9
- Overweight: BMI of 25-29.9
- Obese: BMI over 30
- Morbidly obese: BMI over 40

#### **What is the prevalence of obesity?**

Obesity has reached pandemic proportions. One in three Americans is fat, while more than two thirds of people are overweight or obese. Obesity in youngsters has become significantly more common. Globally, the prevalence of obesity has also been rising quickly; between 1991 and 1998, the incidence of obesity almost doubled.

#### **Body mass index (BMI): What is it?**

In order to assess obesity, many doctors and researchers now use the body mass index (BMI).



A mathematical formula that takes into account a person's height and weight is used by the BMI.

However, there are certain issues with the BMI calculation that are similar to those with the weight-for-height tables. Regarding the boundary between "healthy" and "unhealthy" BMI ranges, opinions differ. Furthermore, the BMI does not reveal a person's percentage of body fat. But for most adults aged 19 to 70, BMI is a decent overall guideline and an accurate measure of body fat, just like the weight-for-height table. Furthermore, it might not be able to measure body fat effectively for pregnant women, bodybuilders, and some athletes.

A person's weight in kilograms divided by their height in meters squared yields their BMI ( $\text{BMI} = \text{kg/m}^2$ ). Divide the weight in pounds by the square of the height in inches to get the BMI in pounds, then multiply the result by 703.

Knowing what "healthy weight" entails is crucial. A body mass index (BMI) of 19 or above and less than 25 for all individuals 20 years of age and older is considered healthy. In general, obesity is defined as having a body mass index (BMI) of thirty pounds or more, or equal to or higher than thirty.

**Overweight and obesity are defined by the World Health Organization using a classification system based on BMI.**

- A BMI of 25 to 29.9 is regarded as "pre-obese."
- A BMI between 30 and 34.99 is considered "obese class I."
- A BMI between 35 and 39.99 is considered "obese class II."
- A BMI of 40.00 or higher is classified as "obese class III."

The conversions from metric to arithmetic are already done in the table below. Locate the suitable height in the left-hand column before using the table. Proceed over the row to the designated weight. The BMI for that height and weight is indicated by the number at the top of the column.

The National Institutes of Health provided the BMI to Appropriate Weight and Height Chart.

**The table that follows shows the risk of related diseases based on waist size and BMI.**

Disease Risk* Relative to Normal Weight and Waist Circumference				
BMI (kg/m2)	Obesity Class	Men 102cm (40 in) or less Women 88cm (35 in) or less	Men > 102cm (40 in) Women > 88cm (35 in)	
Underweight	< 18.5			
Normal weight	18.5 - 24.9			
Overweight	25.0 - 29.9	Increased	High	
Obesity	30.0 - 34.9	I	High	Very High
Obesity	35.0 - 39.9	II	Very High	Very High
Extreme Obesity	40.0 +	III	Extremely High	Extremely High

Body Mass Index Table																																																			
	Optimum range					Overweight				Class I obesity					Class II obesity					Class III 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	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54															
Height (inches)	Body Weight (pounds)																																																		
58	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167	172	177	181	186	191	196	201	205	210	215	220	224	229	234	239	244	248	253	258															
59	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173	178	183	188	193	198	203	208	212	217	222	227	232	237	242	247	252	257	262	267															
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75	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279	287	295	303	311	319	327	335	343	351	359	367	375	383	391	399	407	415	423	431															
76	156	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254	263	271	279	287	295	304	312	320	328	336	344	353	361	369	377	385	394	402	410	418	426	435	443															

In conclusion, it is imperative that we collectively address and overcome the pervasive issue of obesity. By prioritizing education, promoting healthier lifestyles, and implementing supportive policies, we can combat this epidemic and improve the well-being of individuals and communities worldwide. Together, we must strive for a future where everyone has the opportunity to lead healthy and fulfilling lives, free from the burdens of obesity.