

Recommended Weight and Body Fat Contents

In 1942, Louis Dublin, a statistician at Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, grouped some four million people who were insured with Metropolitan Life into categories based on their height, body frame (small, medium or large) and weight. He discovered that the ones who lived the longest were the ones who maintained their body weight at the level for average 25-year-olds.

These Metropolitan Life tables became widely used for determining recommended body weights. In 1942, the tables gave "ideal body weights." In 1959, they were revised and became "desirable body weights." And in 1983, they were revised once again, this time called "height and weight tables." The weights given in the 1983 tables are heavier than the 1942 tables because, in general, heavier people live longer today.

Experts have criticized the validity of these tables for several reasons:

- 1) Insured people tend to be healthier than uninsured people.
- 2) Frame size was never consistently measured.
- 3) The people who were included were predominantly white and middle-classed.
- 4) Some persons were actually weighed, some were not.
- 5) Some wore shoes and/or clothing, some did not.
- 6) The tables do not consider percentage of body fat or distribution, which are now known to be important factors in longevity.

Many experts say the 1942 tables are more accurate because they indicate lower "ideal weights." Many experts support the use of the 1983 tables, citing that these are the latest statistical sampling of such matters. The American Heart Association recommends using the 1959 tables rather than the newer tables that suggest somewhat higher weights. This Guide shows you the 1959 tables.

Some experts criticize the Metropolitan Life tables stating that they are okay for persons in their forties, but that the numbers are too heavy for younger persons and too light for older persons. For this and other reasons, NutriBase shows you recommended body weights from four sources: the 1959 Metropolitan Life Insurance chart, the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, North American Association for the Study of Obesity, and the U.S. Department of the Army. NutriBase displays the heights and weights from these charts, showing you the entries that are appropriate for your sex, height, frame size, and age.

The Metropolitan Life chart is organized by sex and body frame size (small, medium, or large frame) and all the other charts are sex and age-graded except for the North American Association for the Study of Obesity, which lists weights by sex only.

Weight Charts for Women

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1959 - Females

Height	Small Frame	Medium Frame	Large Frame
4'09"	90-97	94-106	102-118
4'10"	92-100	97-109	105-121
4'11"	95-103	100-112	108-124
5'00"	98-106	103-115	111-127
5'01"	101-109	106-118	114-130
5'02"	104-112	109-122	117-134
5'03"	107-115	112-126	121-138
5'04"	110-119	116-131	125-142
5'05"	114-123	120-135	129-146
5'06"	118-127	124-139	133-150
5'07"	122-131	128-143	137-154
5'08"	126-136	132-147	141-159
5'09"	130-140	136-151	145-164
5'10"	133-144	140-155	149-169

US National Center for Health Statistics - Females

Height	18-24 Yrs	25-34 Yrs	35-44 Yrs	45-54 Yrs	55-64 Yrs
4'10"	114	123	133	132	135
4'11"	118	126	136	136	138
5'00"	121	130	139	139	142
5'01"	124	133	141	143	145
5'02"	128	136	144	146	148
5'03"	131	139	146	150	151
5'04"	134	142	149	153	154
5'05"	137	146	151	157	157
5'06"	141	149	154	160	161
5'07"	144	152	156	164	164
5'08"	147	155	159	168	167

North American Association for the Study of Obesity - Females

Height	All Ages	Height	All Ages
4'10"	114	5'05"	137
4'11"	118	5'06"	140
5'00"	121	5'07"	144
5'01"	124	5'08"	147
5'02"	128	5'09"	150
5'03"	131	5'10"	153
5'04"	134	-	-

US Army - Females

Height	17-20 Yrs	21-27 Yrs	28-39 Yrs	40+ Yrs
4'10"	104	107	110	113
4'11"	107	110	114	117
5'00"	111	114	117	121
5'01"	115	118	121	125
5'02"	119	123	126	130
5'03"	123	126	130	134
5'04"	126	130	134	138
5'05"	130	134	138	142
5'06"	135	139	143	147
5'07"	139	143	148	151
5'08"	143	147	151	156
5'09"	147	151	155	160
5'10"	151	156	160	165

Weight Charts for Men

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1959 - Male

Height	Small Frame	Medium Frame	Large Frame
5'01"	105-113	111-122	119-134
5'02"	108-116	114-126	122-137
5'03"	111-119	117-129	125-141
5'04"	114-122	120-132	128-145
5'05"	117-126	123-136	131-149
5'06"	121-130	127-140	135-154
5'07"	125-134	131-145	140-159
5'08"	129-138	135-149	144-163
5'09"	133-143	139-153	148-167
5'10"	137-147	143-158	152-172
5'11"	141-151	147-163	157-177
6'00"	145-155	151-173	166-187
6'01"	149-160	155-173	166-187
6'02"	153-164	160-178	171-192
6'03"	157-168	165-183	175-197

US National Center for Health Statistics - Male

Height	18-24 Yrs	25-34 Yrs	35-44 Yrs	45-54 Yrs	55-64 Yrs
5'02"	130	139	146	148	147
5'03"	135	145	149	154	151
5'04"	139	151	155	158	156
5'05"	143	155	159	163	160
5'06"	148	159	164	167	165
5'07"	152	164	169	171	170
5'08"	157	168	174	176	174
5'09"	162	173	178	180	178
5'10"	166	177	183	185	183
5'11"	171	182	188	190	187
6'00"	175	186	192	194	192
6'01"	180	191	197	198	197
6'02"	185	196	202	204	201

North American Association for the Study of Obesity - Males

Height	All Ages	Height	All Ages
5'00"	122	5'09"	161
5'01"	126	5'10"	166
5'02"	131	5'11"	171
5'03"	135	6'00"	175
5'04"	139	6'01"	179
5'05"	144	6'02"	184
5'06"	148	6'03"	-
5'07"	152	6'04"	-
5'08"	157	-	-

US Army - Males

Height	17-20 Yrs	21-27 Yrs	28-39 Yrs	40+ Yrs
5'00"	132	136	139	141
5'01"	136	140	144	146
5'02"	141	144	148	150
5'03"	145	149	153	155
5'04"	150	154	158	160
5'05"	155	159	163	165
5'06"	160	163	168	170
5'07"	165	169	174	176
5'08"	170	174	179	181
5'09"	175	179	184	186
5'10"	180	185	189	192
5'11"	185	189	194	197
6'00"	190	195	200	203
6'01"	195	200	205	208
6'02"	201	206	211	214

No Consensus

One look at the charts will make it obvious that there simply is no consensus as to what "ideal body weight" should be. In reality, it is actually different for every individual and is dependent on health, body fat content and distribution, musculature, age, activity, metabolism, and a host of other factors that are not simple to measure accurately. For these reasons, you and your physician or dietitian must decide what your ideal weight should be. You probably have an idea what that weight is. Start conservatively. And if you reach your target weight and still feel you need to trim off additional weight, you always have option to set a new target goal.

Body Fat Content Chart for Women and Men

Body Type	Female	Male
Athlete	<17%	<10%
Lean	17-22%	10-15%
Normal	22-25%	15-18%
Above Average	25-29%	18-20%
Overfat	29-35%	20-25%
Obese	35+%	25+%