



# Why should my weight matter to me? My BMI is 30, what does that mean?

By Rona Scott and Lloyd Stegemann, MD

Weight affects all bodily systems. Without a doubt, a healthy weight is always better. For someone who has never attempted or experienced significant weight-loss, a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or greater typically means there is an ongoing upward trend in body weight. As one would expect, continual weight gain results in added stress on the body. Yo-yo dieting is even worse.

## Why should your weight matter to you?

While society would pressure us to look like supermodels, the reality is that we should move out of a DIET mentality and move into a HEALTH mentality. A number on a scale does not validate who you are as a human being. It is merely a reflection of your lifestyle. Good health is why your weight should matter to you.

Consider common co-morbidities experienced by obese and morbidly obese individuals such as diabetes mellitus, obstructive sleep apnea, etc. There is a greater occurrence of these conditions at a BMI of 30 than there is at a BMI of 25, though not tremendously greater. However, knowing that a BMI of 30 is indicative of a person's weight being on the rise, it is important to know that the co-morbidities increase drastically as BMI increases past 30.

According to the Department of Nutrition at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, it is not gross

overeating resulting in overweight and obesity. Instead, a slight increase on weekends, special occasions, stressful times and holidays can seriously impact a person's weight. The average American aged 19 to 50 consumes 115 more calories on a weekend day than on a weekday. The startling results of this slight increase in calories combined with a slight decrease in expended energy can result in an annual weight gain of five pounds, or 100 pounds, throughout the course of 20 years. This is why your weight should matter to you.

When we move out of the diet mentality and into the health mentality, we realize it is essentially effortless to simply substitute a diet soft drink or bottle of water for one high calorie beverage. This one small effort is a step in the right direction.

For individuals who lost a substantial amount of weight and lowered their BMI from 40 or 50, a BMI of 30 can be a healthy and successful result. Just as a BMI of 30 prior to significant weight-loss is typically indicative of ongoing weight gain, a BMI of 30 after significant weight-loss can be a reflection of ongoing weight-loss. A reduction in BMI of five points can result in greatly increased health.

Ideally, both professionals and individuals will evolve from basing weight-loss success on weight or BMI. Instead, an overall improvement in health and improvement/reversal of co-

morbidities will be the true indicator. The goal for anyone struggling with obesity is to be healthy. Live your goal!

## About the Authors:

*Rona Scott is the director of the bariatric surgery program for New Dimensions in San Antonio, Texas. Prior to this, she spent two years as a national consultant with iVOW, inc. facilitating the implementation of new bariatric programs and the enhancement of existing ones. She served as interim administrator of Sound Health Solutions, a medically managed pre-operative and post-operative program. Ms. Scott presents educational lectures throughout the country for caregivers of the obese and morbidly obese patient. She is active in advocacy issues facing the obese. She is founder and host of the support group F.A.C.E.S of WLS.*

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# ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



ANNUAL CONVENTION



ADVOCACY



PUBLIC EDUCATION

## LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

### Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
  - Community Discussion Forum
  - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE**



**JOIN TODAY: GO TO [OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN](http://OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN)**

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