

Understanding The Different Types of Body Fat

(NAPSA)—Body fat we all have it, but how much is too much? While a certain amount of body fat is essential to good health, too much can be dangerous. Significant research links too much body fat to health risks and the development of certain diseases. It is important to know the facts about body fat and understand the risks to your health and fitness.

“Maintaining an appropriate amount of body fat is critical to overall health,” said Dr. Steven B. Heymsfield, deputy director of the Obesity Research Center at St. Luke’s-Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York. “Body fat is important to understand and monitor because it gives a better measure of fitness, health risks, weight classification and the effectiveness of a nutrition program.”

However, for many individuals, maintaining a healthy balance of body fat can be challenging and confusing. This is due, in part, to the abundance of myths about body fat.

Myth 1: No Fat Is Good Fat

Everyone needs some body fat to maintain good health. Conversely, too much body fat can be dangerous. Research indicates that too much body fat, not necessarily excess weight, can shorten human longevity.

Myth 2: Everyone Needs The Same Amount Of Fat

Many individuals are confused about what body fat ranges are healthy for their age and gender. Women should have more body fat than men of similar age. For example, the healthy range for women ages 18 to 39 is between 21 percent and 33 percent, whereas the healthy range for men of the same age is between 8 percent and 19 percent.

For the average adult, the healthy range of body fat is shown below:

Age	Female	Male
18-39	21-33%	8-19%
40-59	23-35%	11-22%
60-79	24-36%	13-25% [Ⓣ]

This difference is the result of hormonal differences between the two sexes. The higher body fat content of women is both normal and healthy, and women should not strive to achieve or be held to the same body fat standards as men.

Myth 3: Fat Is Fat

There are several different types of body fat, and each has different risk factors. For example, visceral fat, or fat stored in the abdomen area can be more dangerous than peripheral fat, which is stored in surrounding areas of the body like the hips and buttocks.

Break Free From Fat Confusion

Unlike weight, body fat is not always visible and can’t be determined using an ordinary bathroom scale. Individuals can monitor their health and body fat easily and effectively through home-use scale plus body fat monitors, first developed by Tanita Corporation. Home-use body fat monitor/scales enable individuals to see their bodies better by monitoring their body fat and weight, while tracking changes over time. Tanita’s models start at less than \$50, making body fat monitoring affordable for a majority of consumers. The newest models have innovative features that compare body fat percentage to the healthy range, estimate the num-

ber of calories necessary to maintain current weight and graph multiple users’ progress over time.

For more information on Tanita’s product line or to find a local retailer, consumers may call 1-800-9-TANITA or visit www.tanita.com.

Understanding Body Fat: A Glossary Of Important Terms

Body fat—functions as insulation, protection and energy reserve. When the percentage is too high, fat increases a person’s risk of certain diseases and can interfere with the immune system, prevent heat loss, stress, cause sleep problems and affect self-esteem.

Visceral fat—fat stored in the abdomen area.

Peripheral fat—fat found in surrounding parts of the body such as the hips and buttocks.

Storage body fat—important in small quantities, but dangerous in larger amounts.

Essential fat—fat necessary to a healthy body.

Percentage body fat—the percentage of total body weight that is fat.

Fat Free Mass—muscle, bone, tissue, water and all other fat free mass in the body.

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