



Fitness Facts

Knowing Body Fat Percentage Puts Weight Loss In Perspective

(NAPSA)—The number of obese Americans continues to increase, according to a recent Harris Poll. The poll indicates that 80 percent of people older than 25 are overweight, a figure that has risen 22 percentage points since 1983.

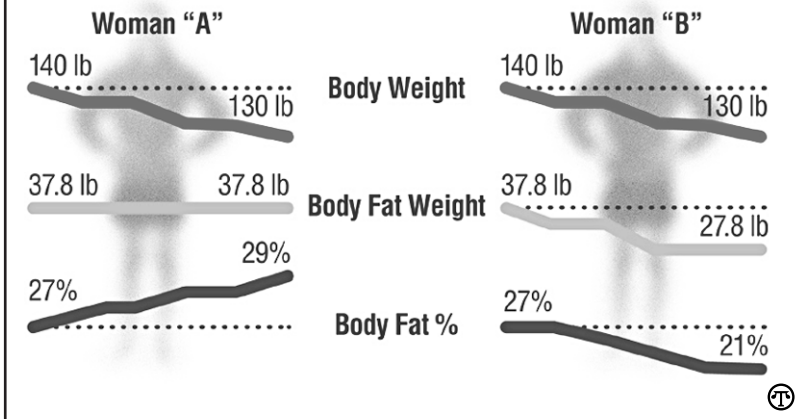
Obese Americans have a 50 to 100 percent increased risk of death from all causes, compared with normal-weight individuals, and are at greater risk for diabetes, heart disease, stroke and certain cancers, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Most individuals with excess body fat understand that their health and well-being are at risk. An incomplete or inaccurate assessment of progress, however, may confuse those aiming to reduce their risk for medical problems through exercise and a smart diet. For example, many fad diets rely on water and muscle loss to produce results. Overall weight might decrease but an individual's body fat—what truly matters in a diet and exercise program—might remain the same or even increase.

"Weight loss can be deceiving if an individual is really losing water and muscle, when excess fat is the true risk factor," said Dr. Steven B. Heymsfield, deputy director of the Obesity Research Center at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York. "Monitoring changes in both body fat and weight gives a more accurate picture of health."

Monitoring body fat allows individuals to better evaluate the progress of a diet and exercise program, and provides a more complete assessment of health risks. Unlike weight, however,

LOSING WEIGHT CAN MAKE YOU FATTER



Weight loss does not always equal fat loss. For example, two women, both weighing the same amount, go on different weight loss programs and each lose 10 pounds. While Woman A lost 10 pounds by cutting calories, her percentage of body fat actually increased. In contrast, Woman B's health regimen combined cutting calories and exercising. Her weight dropped 10 pounds in addition to a six percent decrease in body fat.

body fat is not always visible and can't be determined using an ordinary bathroom scale.

Home-use body fat monitor/scales, first developed by Tanita Corporation, enable individuals to see their bodies better by monitoring their body fat and weight, while tracking changes over time. Tanita's models start at \$49.99, 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 number of calories necessary to maintain current weight and graph an individual's progress over time.

Tanita's body fat monitor/scales calculate body fat percentage using a person's height, weight, body type and impedance measurement. Impedance is determined by sending a safe, low-level electrical signal through the body from the footpads on the monitor. The signal passes more quickly through fat-free mass, which is mostly water. The signal is impeded in fatty tissue. Within seconds, the user's weight and body fat reading appear on the LCD display.

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