

**A healthy body fat percentage is:  
20-25 % for women  
8-25 % for men**

*These are averages. To determine your ideal range, consult your medical provider.*

**Your Weight** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Body Fat %** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

To improve your body fat percentage:

- Eat healthy
- Engage in physical activity for 30 minutes daily

For more information, or to make an appointment with a personal trainer, contact one of CCMH's Wellness Centers:

**274-5353 - Coudersport**  
**486-1321 - Emporium**  
**642-2505 - Port Allegany**  
**887-5213 - Smethport**

# Body Fat Screenings



*Body Fat: Guidelines for Men and Women*

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## What is Body Fat?

Fat is the body's chief storage form of energy. Fats provide most of the energy needed to perform much of the body's work, especially work done with the muscles in the body. Fat is part of every cell membrane in the body; it insulates the body, cushions the body's vital organs and serves as a shock absorber.

Fat also serves as an energy reserve. After you eat, your body stores some of the food as fat energy to be used as fuel by your cells until your next meal. The problem is that fat cannot be converted into anything other than fat and can only be used by cells that use fat as energy. A pound of fat is 3,500 calories and a person can carry 30-50 pounds of fat without appearing fat at all.

## Body Weight vs. Body Fat

Many people ask the question, "what weight is healthy for me?"

This question is not always easy to answer. Body weight, although very important, is not as important as our body fat. For example, there could be two people of the same sex, age and height who may weigh the same, but

one could be too fat and one could be too thin. How is this possible?

The difference is in body compositions, body fat compared to lean body tissue (everything in the body that is not fat). The first person could have very light bones and underdeveloped muscle with excess fat while the second person could have very heavy bones, be very muscular and have very little fat, but weigh exactly the same.

So you see, when it comes to the question of how much one should weigh, the answer is not as simple as a number. There are many factors involved in determining how much one should weigh. The question one might ask instead is, "what should my body fat percentage be?"

## How Do We Measure Body Fat?

**Bioelectrical Impedance.** With this method you may either hook up electrodes to the ankle and wrist or you may stand on a bioelectrical body fat analyzer. A light electrical impulse is sent from one electrode to the other. Electricity travels through different body tissues (muscle, bone, fat, water,

etc.) at various speeds. Body fat is estimated using the speed at which that impulse travels from one electrode to another. It takes longer for electricity to travel through body fat than anything else in the body. Generally then, the longer it takes the impulse to travel from one electrode to the other, the higher your body fat percentage will be.

When it comes to body weight vs. body fat, try to keep an eye on your body fat percentage more often than just your weight. Also, height and weight charts can be misleading. You may be too fat or too skinny when in actuality, you might be just right or vice versa.

