



Every Body Is Different

It is important to remember that every body is different. We all have different genetics. If everyone ate the same thing and did the same amount of physical activity, we would not all look the same. Your genetics influence your facial features, body shape, height, and weight.

There is no ideal body weight. A body weight that is right for you is the weight that allows you to feel strong and energetic and lets you lead a healthy life. For example, when your body is healthy, you have the energy to spend time with your friends, participate in sports and concentrate on school or work. Don't rely on charts, formulas or tables to dictate what's right for you. Every shape can be healthy if you eat balanced meals full of nutritious foods and enjoy regular physical activity.

A poor body image can go hand in hand with low self-esteem

Having a negative view of yourself can affect your behaviour in many unhelpful ways. For example, you might:

- avoid social situations
- not speak your mind
- not feel confident to express your uniqueness through styles of clothing or hair
- avoid activities and/or sports that expose your body.

Self esteem is the confidence or satisfaction that you feel about yourself. It comes from inside you. Things that may help you feel good about yourself include intellect, a sense of humour, physical abilities and artistic talents. These factors are more important than your body shape because they help you feel more positive about yourself.

Create variety!

We are all different. Look at body weight and shape from a positive point of view. Remember that weight gain is normal during teen growth spurts and this weight gain will cause changes to your body shape.

Strive for a healthy lifestyle!

- Get hooked on healthy eating! Choose whole grain breads, cereals, pasta and rice. Enjoy vegetables and fruit, lower fat milk products and leaner meat and alternatives every day. Have treats once in a while – not at every meal.
- Be physically active. You are more likely to feel good about your body and have better self esteem if you are active every day. Pick activities that you find fun to do.
- Avoid strict weight loss programs or crash diets. If you think you need to lose weight, talk to your family doctor and get a referral to a registered dietitian.

Believe in yourself!

- Remember that you are more than your appearance
- Identify your unique strengths and abilities and build on those
- Take care of your body, mind and spirit
- Avoid self-critical thoughts – counter them with positive thoughts
- Be yourself when you are choosing clothes and accessories – people will admire you for expressing the real you
- Accept compliments without debating the issue or dismissing the comment – just say “Thank you”

Remember these keys messages:

- Treat your body with respect
- Fuel it with a variety of foods
- Be active regularly
- Give it enough rest, and
- Resist the pressure to judge yourself and others based on weight, shape or size
- Respect people based on the qualities of their character and accomplishments, rather than just because of their appearance.

When you feel good on the inside, you'll look great on the outside!

