

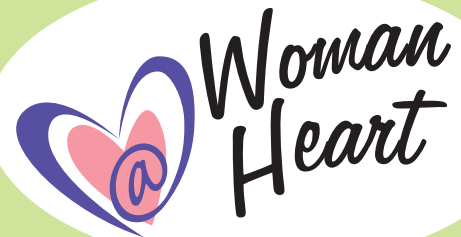
More Than Just Vanity

Being concerned about your body weight should be based on more than just wanting to fit into the latest pair of skinny jeans. Being overweight or underweight can put you at risk of developing some serious diseases.

When a woman is overweight, chances of her developing coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure and certain cancers are significantly higher. Her excess weight may also worsen osteoarthritis and breathing problems.

On the other hand, an underweight woman is at risk of nutrient deficiency, a lowered resistance to infections, chronic fatigue, anaemia and amenorrhoea. The functions of her pituitary, thyroid and adrenal glands as well as her gonads may also be affected.

Being aware of these health dangers reinforces the importance of managing your weight healthily and safely. In any weight management plan, let health be your goal and an improved appearance, a bonus.



The Woman@Heart Programme is jointly developed by Ministry of Women, Family & Community Development and Nutrition Society of Malaysia.

As a resource of knowledge on women's nutrition, Woman@Heart has developed a manual and leaflet series, as well as organised training seminars for healthcare professionals and roadshows, establishing it as the authoritative voice of women's nutrition among healthcare professionals and women throughout Malaysia.

For more information about the Woman@Heart Programme, kindly visit:
Nutrition Society of Malaysia at www.nutriweb.org.my
or the National Population and Family Development Board at www.lppkn.gov.my
Email president@nutriweb.org.my



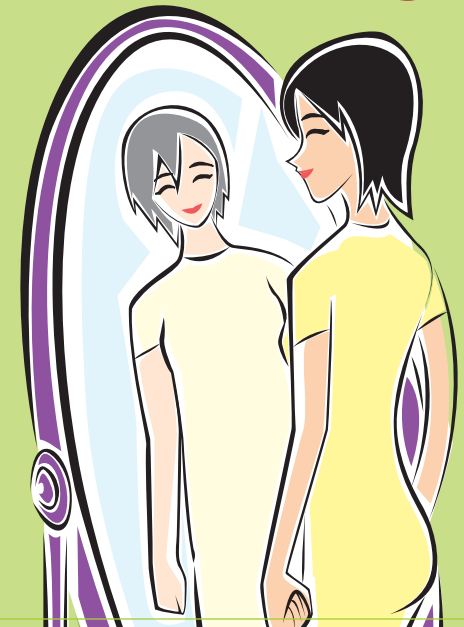
Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development



Nutrition Society of Malaysia



Love Your Body, Manage Your Weight



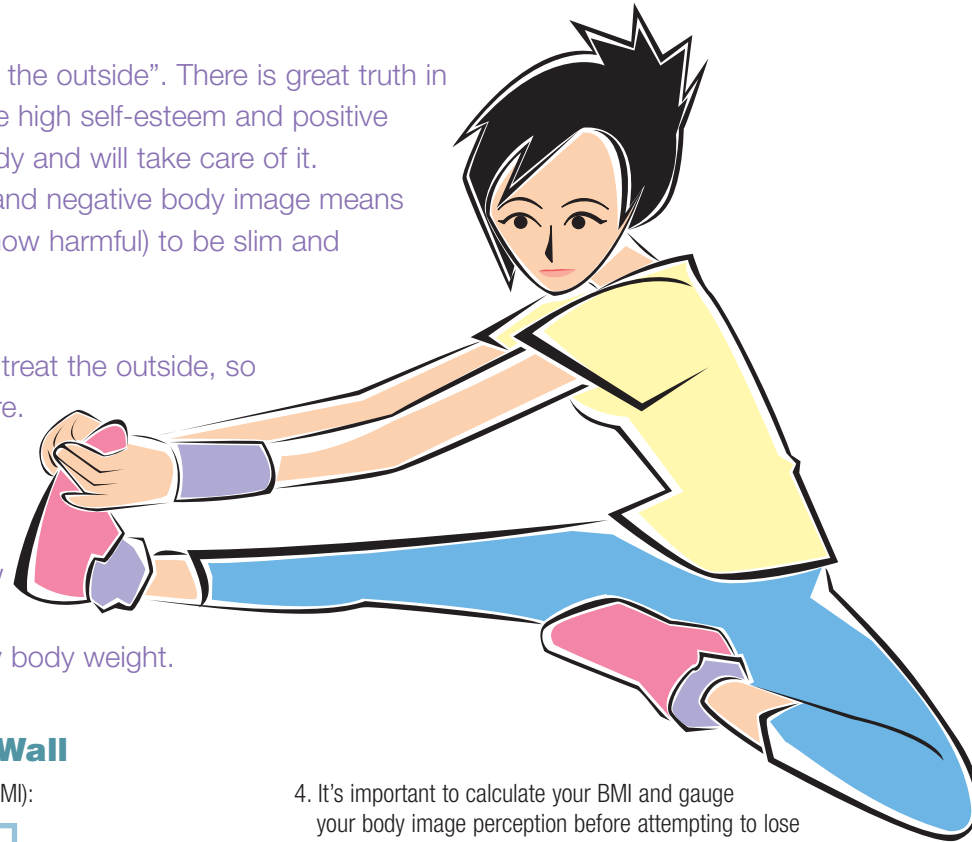
Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development



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“The inside matters more than the outside”. There is great truth in this statement. When you have high self-esteem and positive body image, you love your body and will take care of it. However, a poor self-esteem and negative body image means you’ll do anything (no matter how harmful) to be slim and attractive.

What’s inside affects how you treat the outside, so accept yourself for who you are. Once you do, you’ll start to make wise choices when it comes to your body. This leaflet will help you gauge how you view your own body and guide you to achieve a healthy body weight.



Mirror, Mirror On The Wall

1. First, calculate your Body Mass Index (BMI):

$$BMI = \frac{\text{weight (kg)}}{\text{height (m)} \times \text{height (m)}}$$

2. Based on this table, which ‘status’ does your BMI fall into?

BMI (kg/m ²)	Status	Desired Weight Change
Less than 18.5	Underweight	Gain weight
From 18.5 to 24.9	Normal	Maintain (ideally between 20 to 23)
From 25.0 to 29.9	Overweight	Lose weight
From 30.0 to 39.9	Obese	Lose weight

3. Do you feel like you need to lose weight, gain weight or remain the same? Does your answer match what you should be doing in the ‘Desired Weight Change’ column? If not, you have a negative body image.

4. It’s important to calculate your BMI and gauge your body image perception before attempting to lose or gain any weight. A negative body image might demand that you lose 10kg when you really need to gain 10kg!

Improve Your Body Image

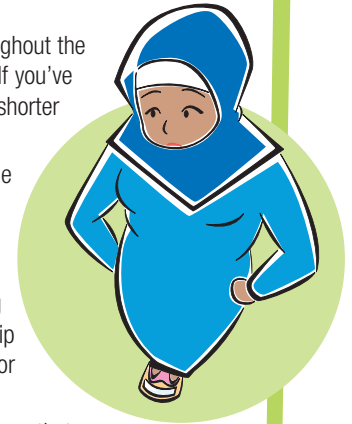
Did the previous exercise reveal that you have a negative body image? If so, here’s how to improve the way you view yourself:

1. Women come in different shapes and sizes. Accept your natural body shape and be realistic about how you look.
2. Groom yourself so that you always look your best. This greatly boosts confidence.
3. Realise that the media’s definition of the ideal woman may be unrealistic.
4. Avoid spending time with people who are critical of your appearance. Don’t base your self-worth on what people say.
5. Eat according to the Food Guide Pyramid and stay away from crash diets, yo-yo dieting and weight-loss supplements.

Proper weight management is an important part of caring for your body. These tips will help you achieve a healthy body weight safely and effectively:

Losing The Pounds

1. Be realistic and aim to lose no more than 0.5 to 1 kg per week. Weigh yourself weekly.
2. Get in 60 to 90 minutes of exercise throughout the day. Try brisk walking or take up a sport. If you’ve been inactive for some time, start with a shorter duration and work your way up.
3. Start moving. Take the stairs instead of the elevator, do housework or do gardening.
4. Limit high-fat, high-sugar foods. Take more fruits and vegetables, legumes, whole grains and cereals. Reduce serving size and eat at scheduled times. Don’t skip your meals. You’ll only wind up snacking or overeating!
5. Avoid unsafe weight loss methods and drugs that may cause health problems and even more pounds in the long run!



Piling On The Pounds

1. Set a realistic weight gain goal and time frame. Weigh yourself weekly.
2. Stay active and do weight training exercises. Don’t exercise too strenuously, though.
3. Sleep well, manage your stress and if you smoke, now’s the time to stop!
4. An extra 500 to 1000 calories daily will help you gain about 0.5 to 1 kg per week. Take more nutritious, high-calorie foods like dairy products, nuts, dried fruits and eggs. Keep mealtimes scheduled, relaxed and snack healthily throughout the day.
5. Avoid uncertain weight gain methods like appetite stimulants or weight gain supplements. Always consult your healthcare professional first.

