



Weight Changes

While body mass index (BMI) is not a perfect indicator of health, it is still widely used in the healthcare system, which is why we need a section on it. When we look at those over 65 years of age, evidence supports a higher BMI as a predictor of decreased risk of early mortality.

To Calculate BMI:

$BMI = \text{Weight (in kilograms)} / \text{Height (in m}^2\text{)}$

Example: Jane is 85 years old, 70 kilograms (154 pounds), and 162 centimetres tall (1.62 m)

$BMI = 70 / 1.62(2) \rightarrow 70 / 2.6244$

$BMI = 26.7$

Therefore Jane falls into the normal body weight range for BMI for her age group. Her risk of early mortality is decreased due to this. But this is only one piece of her overall healthcare puzzle, all of her health conditions, diagnosis, and other factors will also play into her mortality risk. But BMI is one piece where she is in the healthy range.

Evidence Summary

A BMI between 25 and 35 kg/m² is optimal for health in the older adult population. Data from studies suggests that the optimal BMI range for longer health is 31-32 kg/m² for females, and 27-28 kg/m² for males. It is currently recommended to use between 23.0-29.9 kg/m².

Key Message

When calculating normal BMI for elderly individuals, use the range of 23.0-29.9 kg/m² as the reference range.

BMI Chart for Over 65 Years

BMI <23.0	Considered underweight, less promising health outcomes and length of life, increased risk of malnutrition.
BMI 23.0-29.9	Ideal/normal body weight range, best health outcomes, protective, reduced risk of malnutrition.
BMI >29.9	Considered overweight above this range. Above 33 is considered at increased risk of mortality, similar to those underweight.

Elevated BMI Risks

Cardiometabolic Conditions	Physical Conditions	Other
<i>Cardiovascular disease, Dyslipidemia, Hypertension, Type 2 Diabetes, Metabolic syndrome.</i>	<i>Decreased mobility, Pressure injuries, GERD, Arthritis related issues, UTI.</i>	<i>Sleep issues, Sleep apnea, depression, some types of cancer, respiratory issues.</i>

References

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/healthy-eating/healthy-weights/canadian-guidelines-body-weight-classification-adults/body-mass-index-nomogram.html>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35368193/#:~:text=Data%20from%20this%20study%20suggest,for%20female%20and%20male%2C%20respectively.>

<https://www.omnicalculator.com/health/geriatric-bmi>

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