



Fearless five



Five things to know about losing weight the healthy way

Novant Health is here to take the fear out of weight loss by giving you the education, tools and expertise you need every step of the way. This guide provides you with five important things to know before setting out on your journey.

1

Know where you are

Before choosing the best route to any destination, you must first know where you're starting. The same applies to your weight loss journey. Understanding your current overall health picture — beyond just your current weight — is important to setting the right goals and measuring your success.

Three important numbers

From passwords to clothing sizes to birthdays, you know a lot of numbers by heart. But do you know three key numbers used to identify prediabetes, diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity?

1 A1C

The A1C blood test measures your average blood glucose over the past several months to help evaluate your risk for diabetes.

Blood glucose level	Diabetes risk
Less than 5.7 percent	Normal
5.7 to 6.4 percent	Prediabetes
6.5 percent and higher	Diabetes

2 BMI

Body mass index (BMI) is a calculation of your weight in relation to your height and is used to assess how much of your body is composed of fat.

BMI Range	Category
18.9 to 24.9	Normal size
25 to 29.9	Overweight
30 to 34.9	Class I, obesity
35 to 39.9	Class II, serious obesity
40 and greater	Class III, severe obesity

Source: American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery

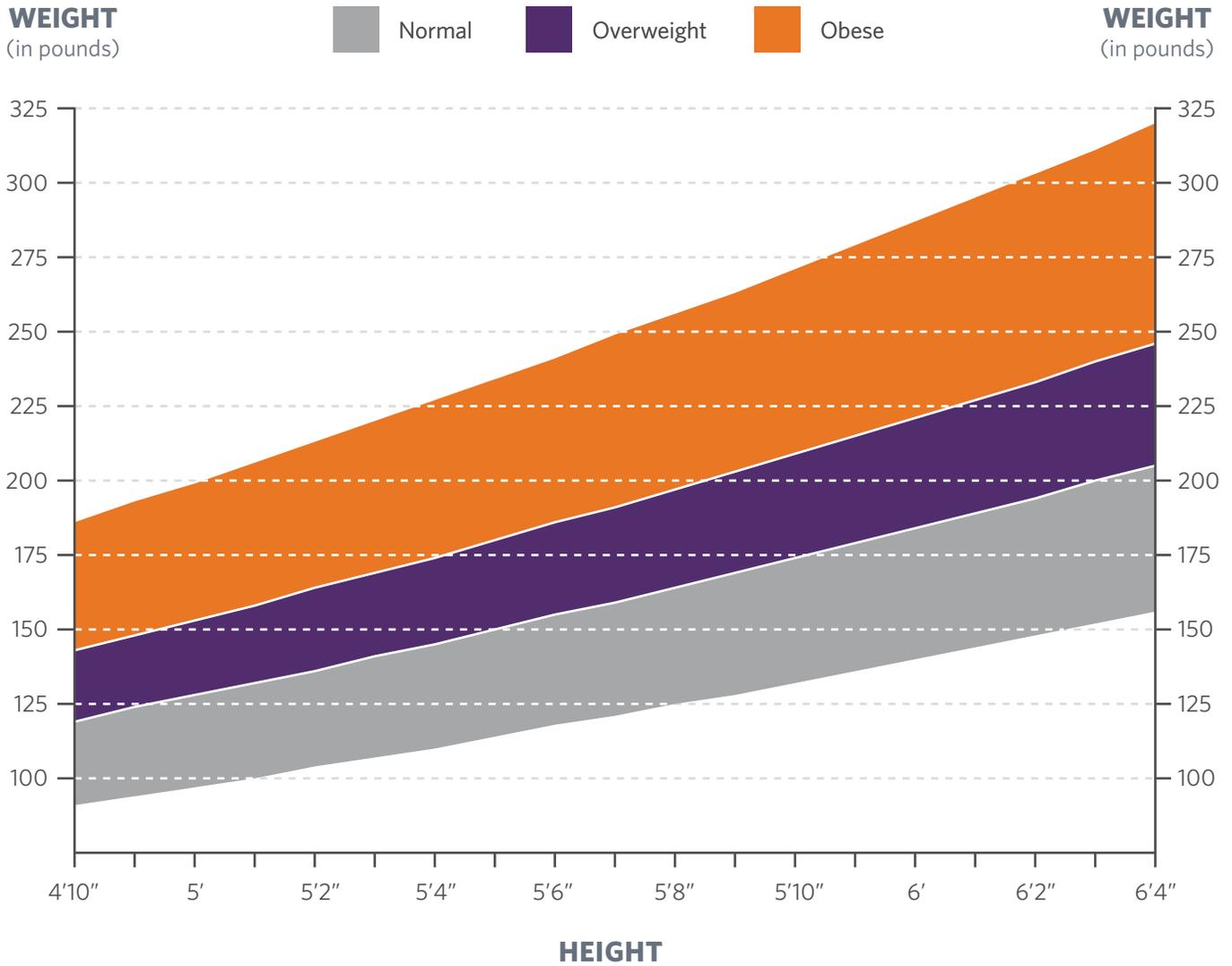
3 Blood pressure

High blood pressure can greatly increase your risk for heart disease and stroke.

	Normal	Pre-hypertension	High blood pressure, stage 1	High blood pressure, stage 2	Hypertensive crisis
SYSTOLIC (Top number)	120	140	160	180	
DIASTOLIC (Bottom number)	80	90	100	110	

Evaluating your weight

In addition to knowing your BMI, the following table can help assess your risk for being overweight or obese.



Source: National Heart, Blood and Lung Institute

Talk to your doctor or attend a free screening

Novant Health offers free screenings to help you learn your A1C, blood pressure and BMI. You can also get these important numbers during a visit with your primary care physician.

[Find a free screening »](#)

[Find a doctor »](#)

2

Know how you got here

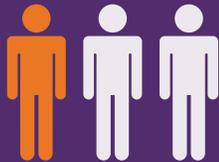
The obesity epidemic

More than a third of Americans age 20 and older are obese, and nearly 70 percent meet the guidelines of being overweight. With millions of adults in the U.S. struggling with their weight, it's important to understand what leads to excess weight gain and obesity.



70%

of American adults are overweight.



72 million

U.S. adults are **obese**.
That's more than **1 in 3**.



More than **2 in 3**
North Carolina adults
are overweight or **obese**.

How we lose and gain weight: A balancing act

The human body is in a constant cycle of consuming and expending energy known as calories. Energy IN is the amount of calories you get from food and drinks. Energy OUT is the amount of calories your body uses for things like breathing, digesting and physical activity. When you take in far more calories than you expend over an extended period of time, it results in unhealthy weight gain.

Energy **IN** = Energy **OUT** → Weight stays the same

Energy **IN** > Energy **OUT** → Weight gain

Energy **IN** < Energy **OUT** → Weight loss

Leading factors contributing to excess weight gain and obesity

- Inactive lifestyle
- Poor nutrition
- Genes and family history
- Health conditions
- Medications
- Emotional factors
- Age
- Pregnancy
- Poor sleep health

Fats, calories and carbohydrates — oh my

With so much talk about counting calories, cutting fat and avoiding carbs, it’s important to know what these terms mean and how they affect your weight.

Six nutrients your body needs to stay healthy

- **Carbohydrates** – found in fruits, vegetables, pasta, rice, grains, peas, beans and other legumes
- **Proteins** – found in meat, poultry, dairy products, eggs and beans
- **Minerals** – such as potassium, calcium and iron
- **Vitamins** – such as vitamins A, D, E and K
- **Water**

Where do calories fit in?

A calorie is the unit of the energy released when your body processes food and beverages. Think of a calorie in terms of a standard kitchen measurement such as an ounce or a teaspoon. The more calories contained in a particular food or drink, the more energy it can provide to your body. When you consume excess calories, your body stores the extra calories as fat. Of the six main nutrients your body needs, carbohydrates, protein and fats provide calories.

The skinny on fat

- There are four major dietary fats in the foods we eat: saturated, monounsaturated, polyunsaturated and trans fats.
- Saturated and trans fats are considered bad fats and increase your risk for heart disease by increasing the bad cholesterol (LDL) levels in your body.
- Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats can lower bad cholesterol levels in your body and prove beneficial when consumed as part of a healthy overall diet.
- One gram of fat contains nine calories — nearly twice as many as a gram of carbohydrates and proteins. This means you could eat twice as much carbohydrates or proteins as fat for the same amount of calories.

Three common food and beverage myths

Myth #1 “Low-fat” or “fat-free” means low/no calorie

Fact

Just because a particular food or drink claims to have reduced or zero fat, it doesn’t mean that it’s low in calories. Many processed low-fat or fat-free foods have just as many or even more calories than full-fat versions of the same foods. Often, when fat is removed, other things such as salt, sugar and starch are added to improve flavor or texture, which can increase the calories.

Myth #2 “Sugar-free” foods are healthier

Fact

Many foods and drinks touting themselves as “sugar free” have simply replaced the sugar with substitute sweeteners — often artificial ones that may pose other health risks. Even without the sugar, these foods can still be loaded with calories and cause weight gain.

Myth #3 Soda is the only sugary drink to eliminate from my diet

Fact

Lots of drinks are loaded with sugar — not just regular soda. It’s important to know the sugar content of your beverages. Here’s a guide for some popular drink options:

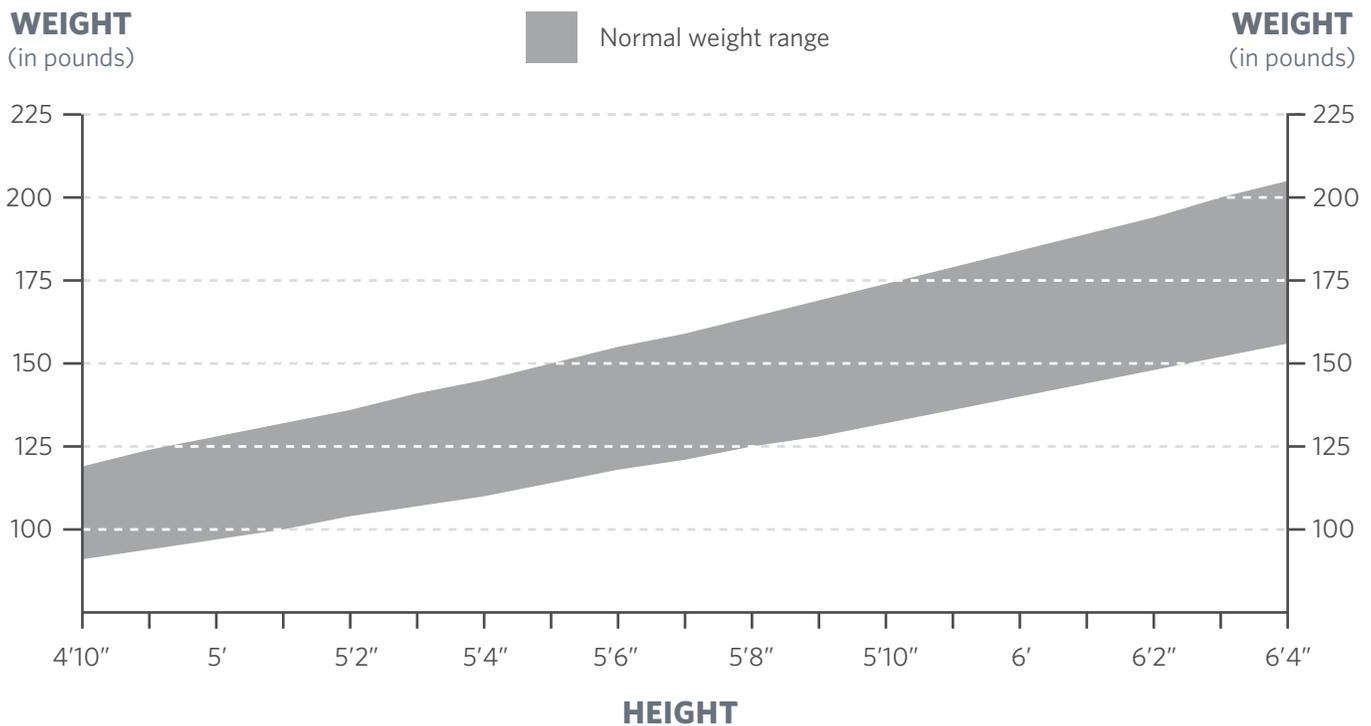
Coffee and one sugar packet	1 teaspoon	Regular soda	10 teaspoons
Seltzer and a splash of juice	1 teaspoon	Orange juice	10 teaspoons
Sports drink	5 teaspoons	Cranberry juice cocktail	12 teaspoons

3

Know where you're going

Before starting your weight loss journey, it's important to have a clear vision of where you're going and why. Often, individuals want to lose weight in order to look better on the outside and feel better on the inside. While those are two benefits of achieving a healthy weight, improving your overall health picture should be your No. 1 priority.

Identifying your target weight



Setting S.M.A.R.T. goals

Specific	Identify exactly what you want to accomplish (goal weight, minutes of physical exercise per day/week).
Measurable	Make sure your goal is measurable so you can easily evaluate whether you've achieved it.
Attainable	For a goal to be attainable, you must have sufficient resources (time, ability, etc.) to achieve it.
Realistic	Similar to attainable, your goal must be realistic as well. Even though a goal is attainable, it may not be realistic given the other factors it will take to achieve it.
Trackable	Keeping track of your progress can help you stay motivated and moving in a positive direction toward your goal. Be sure to record your progress or setbacks as you go.

Three elements for success

The following elements are vital to accomplishing your goals and maintaining your results.

- 1 Personal commitment:** Weight loss doesn't happen overnight. It's important that you remain committed to the journey every step of the way — even when you want to quit.
- 2 Readiness for change:** Losing weight the healthy way will require breaking habits and modifying behaviors that you may have had for years. Don't be afraid to let go of the "old you" to make room for a "healthier, new you."
- 3 Support system:** Research has shown that successful behavior change requires the support of a loved one, family member or friend to help you through the process. They will be there to celebrate your successes and support you on those days when you struggle.

Source: National Heart, Blood and Lung Institute

Talk to an expert

It's important to talk to your primary care provider before deciding to lose significant weight. He or she will be able to offer important insights based on your personal health history. If you don't have a primary care physician, visit MyNovant.org to find one in your community.



4

Know how you'll get there and stay there

You are unique, which means your weight loss journey will be unique as well. Just because a particular diet or fitness plan worked for someone else, it doesn't mean it will automatically work for you. Do your research and then talk to your doctor about what is best for you. With the right plan of action and your commitment to succeed, significant weight loss is both attainable and sustainable.

Explore your options

Novant Health offers a wide range of options to help you on your weight loss journey. From nutrition services and medical weight management to advanced surgical procedures, we're the experts you can trust to help you reach your weight loss goals.

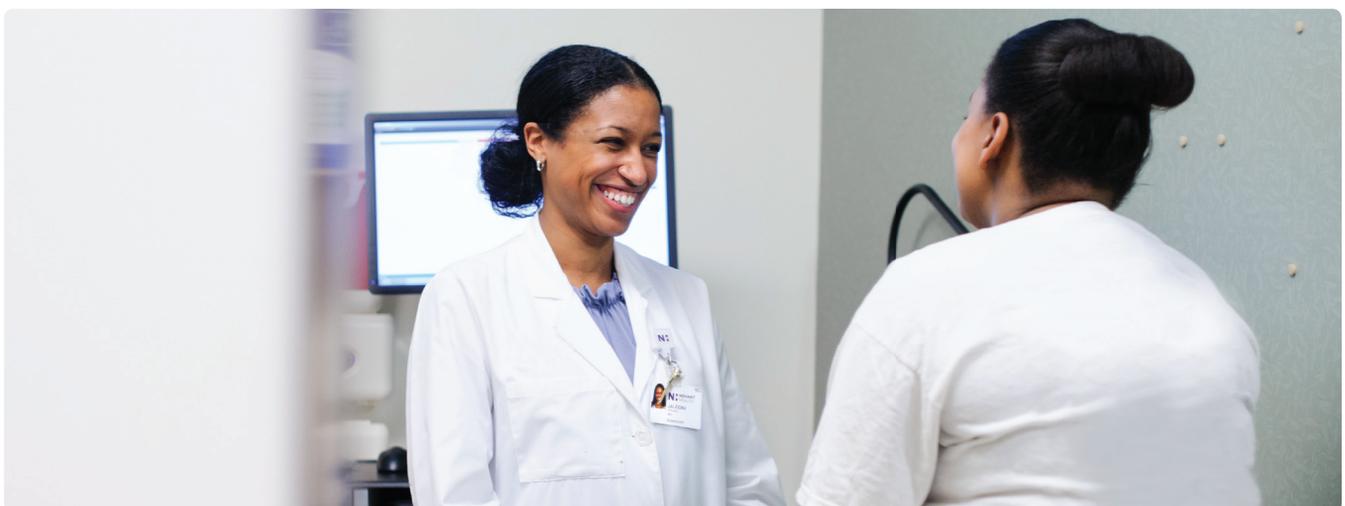
Medical weight management

Depending on your weight loss goals, medical weight management may be the best way to start or continue your journey. Typically, medical weight management is for individuals who:

- Can successfully lose weight and maintain weight loss without weight loss surgery
- Need to lose more weight or maintain weight loss after bariatric surgery
- Have insurance that requires the consideration of nonsurgical weight loss options before approving coverage of weight loss surgery

Elements of Novant Health's medically managed weight loss program:

- Individual assessments
- Behavioral education
- Metabolic and body composition testing
- Lifestyle management programs and resources
 - Exercise consultations
 - Diet and nutrition services
 - Medical treatments
- Support groups



Surgical weight loss options

If you have struggled to lose weight through diet and exercise or maintain weight loss over time, you might benefit from weight loss surgery. Novant Health offers a wide range of surgical options designed to help patients lose weight and keep it off.

Four common, effective surgical weight loss procedures:

- 1** *Sleeve gastric bypass:* Also referred to as the mini-gastric bypass or MGB, this procedure limits the amount of food a person can eat before becoming full. It alters the digestion process — producing an inability to absorb all the calories and nutrients that are ingested. Sleeve gastric bypass is a minimally invasive procedure that partitions the stomach into a long, narrow tube and a separate larger piece. The smaller stomach is attached about six feet down the small intestine. The larger stomach is sealed off from the rest of the digestive system.
- 2** *Roux-en-Y gastric bypass:* This procedure is commonly done in many centers around the world. It consists of a small pouch completed with a bypass mechanism.
- 3** *Sleeve gastrectomy:* During this weight loss procedure, the stomach is reduced in size by 85 percent. The remainder of the stomach is removed. The term “sleeve” refers to the new look of the stomach pouch.

Are you a candidate for weight loss surgery?

If your BMI is 35 to 39 and you have significant obesity-related health problems, such as:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Joint disease
- Sleep apnea

If your BMI is 40 or greater without any known obesity-related health problems.

- 4** *Gastric banding:* During this procedure, a band is placed around the uppermost part of the stomach, dividing it into two parts: a small upper pouch and a lower stomach. The upper pouch can hold only about 4 ounces (1/2 cup) of food. As a result, individuals eat less food at one time, feel full sooner and feel satisfied longer. The goal is to lose weight gradually, at a healthy rate of one to two pounds per week. Gastric banding requires the most follow-up and maintenance of all the procedures.

Note: Available procedures vary by Novant Health Bariatric Center location.

Additional tools for the journey

From healthy recipes and workout planning to digital solutions for tracking your progress, Novant Health has the tools you need for your journey.

Remarkable You: Novant Health’s wellness initiative is designed to equip you for the journey ahead. You’ll find healthy recipes, valuable articles and insightful videos about a range of topics including general wellness, heart health, prediabetes and diabetes, and weight management. Visit [NovantHealth.org/RemarkableYou](https://www.novanthealth.org/RemarkableYou).

MyChart: If you’re a Novant Health patient, sign up for our free online health management tool. View your medical history, track your health trends, view test results and communicate with your care team securely from your computer, tablet or phone. If you use personal health technology such as Fitbit, Apple’s Health app or smart scales, you can even upload data directly into MyChart for real-time tracking.



Healthy tips for getting started

Low-fat recipe substitutions

Instead of:	Choose:
Whole milk	Skim or 1 percent
Regular mayonnaise	Plain, nonfat Greek yogurt
Sour cream	Plain, nonfat Greek yogurt
Regular cottage cheese	Fat-free cottage cheese
1 pound ground beef	1/2 pound, 93 percent lean ground beef AND a 14-ounce can cooked lentils or beans, or ground turkey or chicken breast
Eggs	2 egg whites per egg or 1/4 cup egg substitute per egg
Butter	Soft spread made with canola oil
Cream cheese	Fat-free cream cheese
Oil	Fat-free chicken broth or applesauce
Regular salad dressing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 tablespoons plain, nonfat Greek yogurt with 2 teaspoons of a ranch seasoning packet ▪ Lemon or lime juice ▪ Balsamic vinegar ▪ Fresh herbs finely chopped: parsley, cilantro, basil, mint, rosemary, chives, oregano, thyme, dill

Five easy ways to fit physical activity into your daily routine

- 1 Take the stairs.
- 2 Park farther away in parking lots.
- 3 Take a short walk at lunch.
- 4 Turn off the television and put electronic devices out of reach.
- 5 Use a pedometer or other wearable fitness technology to monitor your daily activity.

Exercise basics: Getting started the right way

- **Low impact:** Look for activities that put minimal stress on your joints, such as walking, swimming or water exercises, and cycling.
- **Ease into your workout:** Start slowly for the first five minutes to give your body time to adjust to the activity.
- **Find the right pace:** Exercise at a comfortable pace that allows you to talk without too much difficulty.
- **First things first:** Focus on increasing duration first, then increasing intensity.
- **Cool down:** Slow down for the last five minutes to allow your body to ease back into its resting state.
- **Stretch it out:** Finish each workout with slow stretching exercises.

5

Know you're not alone

The decision to lose weight is a very personal one, but that doesn't mean you are alone in your journey. Surround yourself with individuals ready and willing to support you every step of the way. These can be family members, friends or even people in your community who are embarking on a weight loss journey of their own. You can meet such individuals through support groups and at wellness events like health fairs and educational seminars.

The right healthcare partner is also an important part of your support network. Novant Health is here to help you get started and keep you moving in the right direction. From primary care providers to weight loss specialists, our team of experts can give you the tools you need to succeed.

Find a doctor

Visit MyNovant.org to find a primary care provider near you. For your convenience, many of our locations offer same-day appointments, extended hours and online scheduling.

Schedule a comprehensive weight management consultation

Novant Health Weight Loss services offers comprehensive weight management solutions at several locations in your community. Visit NovantHealth.org/bariatric to find a location near you

Attend a free weight loss surgery seminar

If you are interested in surgical weight loss, you should plan to attend one of our free, informational seminars. This seminar will help you determine if you are a candidate for weight loss surgery and provide you with information about the surgical options available. Live seminars are offered in the surrounding Triad locations, and our Charlotte program offers an online version.

[Click here to register.](#)

Download our mobile app

Find Novant Health locations near you, view emergency room and urgent care wait times, and get helpful medical information all at your fingertips on your tablet or smartphone.

