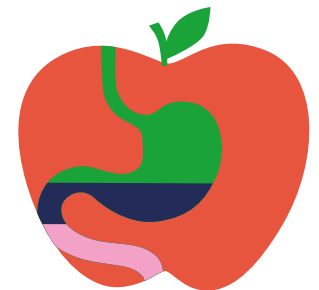# Obesity
– a chronic yet manageable disease

What is obesity?

Obesity is a chronic disease that can be difficult to manage on your own. The disease means that you for example have a BMI (Body Mass Index, kg/m2) above 30. Today, about 1.4 million children and adults are living with obesity in Sweden.

Calculate your BMI at **fakta**omvikt.se. Your BMI can be used as an indicator when you talk to the health care provider about your health.

Why do people get obesity?

Our genes determine how sensitive we are to gaining weight. The risk of developing obesity is also affected by factors including:

- lifestyle
- environment
- stress
- illnesses and the medicines used to treat them

Obesity is likely to lead to a range of different related conditions. Today, more than 200 other diseases can be linked to obesity.

COMMON SYMPTOMS:
- constant hunger
- not feeling full after a meal
- difficulty maintaining weight loss

Why is it difficult to maintain weight loss?

If you live with obesity, you probably have noticed that the hardest thing is not losing weight, but to maintain the weight loss. This is because the body has an internal thermostat, with the function of regulating your weight. When people living with obesity lose weight, the thermostat is set on getting the body back to its previous weight.

In addition, the hormones that control satiety and hunger are unbalanced. This means you feel increased hunger and find it harder to feel satiety. Also, following weight loss, the body's own energy consumption decreases, which means that fewer calories are burnt.

This means that **it is not your fault** if you gain weight again – it depends on how the disease affects your body.

How is obesity treated?

Treatment of obesity varies from person to person. Diet, exercise and other lifestyle changes are the foundation of losing weight. When this is not enough, medication or surgery may be considered.

Talk to your health care provider to learn more about how the disease is treated and what is best for you.

OBESITY SURGERY

MEDICAL TREATMENT

DIET AND EXERCISE

Health benefits of losing weight

For people living with obesity, it can make a big difference to lose relatively little weight. There are several health benefits even at the beginning of weight loss. Maintaining weight loss reduces the risk of several weight-related health problems:

REDUCES:
- type 2 diabetes
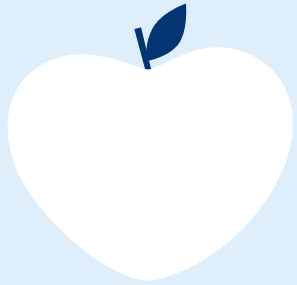- cardiovascular diseases
- sleep apnea

IMPROVES:
- lipids
- blood pressure
- sleep
- quality of life
- joint pain

And remember – to maintain your weight and not gain more is also a health benefit.

What is **your** ideal weight?

The best weight is the weight you have when you live as healthily as you can while still enjoying life.

Why do you want to lose weight and improve your health?

Check the boxes that are the most important to you, and bring the list when you see your health care provider.

- ☐ Improved cholesterol level
- ☐ Better blood pressure
- ☐ Better sugar level
- ☐ More strength and energy
- ☐ Easier to move around
- ☐ Fewer medications
- ☐ To get fitter
- ☐ Less joint pain
- ☐ To avoid complications (e.g. Type 2 diabetes or high blood pressure)
- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ To prevent illness
- ☐ Better self-confidence
- ☐ Better self-esteem
- ☐ To deal with stress better
- ☐ To fight depression
- ☐ Better quality of life
- ☐ Better eating habits
- ☐ Energy to play with my children/grandchildren
- ☐ Better relationship with my body
- ☐ Better relationship with food

When should you seek medical care?

The more boxes you check, the more likely it is that you should seek medical care and get help. A lot of people who live with obesity think they should be able to manage their weight on their own, but it's not that simple. Talk to your health care provider if you feel that your over-weight or obesity is affecting your health.

Visit **faktaomvikt.se** and click on the Support & Tools tab. Here, you can download a discussion sheet of questions to ask your health care provider.

This leaflet contains general information about obesity. For more facts and more in-depth information, go to **fakta**omvikt.se. The site has everything from informative videos and articles to practical tools.