

Understanding Morbid Obesity

Morbid obesity is a serious health condition. According to the National Institutes of Health, you are morbidly obese if you:

- Are 100 pounds or more over your ideal body weight
- Have a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or greater
- Have a BMI of 35 or greater AND one or more of the following conditions:
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - Heart disease
 - High blood pressure
 - High cholesterol
 - Obstructive sleep apnea
 - Acid reflux
 - Cancer
 - Depression
 - Osteoarthritis and joint pain
 - Stress urinary incontinence
 - Female reproductive health disorder

Body Mass Index (BMI) Calculator What to Bring

Visit https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI to determine your BMI based on your weight and height.

Long-Term Problems Associated with Morbid Obesity

Morbid obesity interferes with basic physical functions such as breathing or walking. It also has long-term implications such as:

- Shorter life expectancy
- Serious health consequences (including Type 2 diabetes and heart disease)
- Lower quality of life
- Fewer economic and social opportunities

Serious Health Conditions Related to Morbid Obesity

If you are morbidly obese, you also have a dramatically higher risk of developing other serious health conditions. The chart below provides a list of some of the health conditions associated with morbid obesity. It also shows some of the possible complications of these conditions. Finally, it indicates how morbid obesity affects a person's relative risk of developing these conditions versus those who are not morbidly obese.

Health Condition	Possible Complications	Percentage Higher Risk of Occurrence for Women	Percentage Higher Risk of Occurrence for Men
Type 2 Diabetes	Heart disease, kidney disease, kidney failure, blindness, amputation of the feet or legs, and nerve damage	400% ¹	400% ¹
High Blood Pressure	Heart disease, stroke, kidney failure and vision loss	210% ¹	190% ¹
Coronary Heart Disease	Hardening of the arteries, heart attack, and angina	300% ¹	300% ¹
Stroke		137% ¹	
Esophageal Cancer		200% ²	200% ²
Kidney Cancer		84% ²	84% ²
Breast Cancer		50% ²	
Uterine Cancer		200%-400% ²	

Citations

1 National Institutes of Health. Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults [Online] 17 August 2007.

2 National Cancer Institute. Obesity and Cancer. Questions and Answers. [Online] 31 June 2007.

3 Calle E, Rodriguez C, Waler-Thurmond K, et al. Overweight, Obesity, and Mortality from Cancer in a Prospectively Studies Cohort of U.S. Adults. New England Journal of Medicine 2003;348(17):1625-38.

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