

Healthy Tips for Health Month

by Denise Cochrane

Feeling a financial crush? Wondering where you can economize? Tired of trying to feed yourself on a student's budget? If you are used to grabbing a quick bite at the hamburger stand or popping a T.V. dinner in the oven, perhaps a few tips on creative meal planning and food shopping will help you get more value from your food dollar. A few minutes taken to organize yourself and to follow some easy shopping hints can have the result of lower food costs and the added advantage of more variety and great tasting meals.

Whether you eat three meals a day or small snacks between classes, the best way to start is with an overall plan. Spend a few moments making at least a rough outline of meals for the week. Be sure to divide your food intake throughout the day. Even if you can't or won't eat breakfast try to eat something in the morning. This will provide you with energy and help keep you from indulging in tempting high-cost, low-value snacks during the day.

From this menu plan, make a list of the foods you need. Check your cupboard to see what you already have on hand. Consult the newspaper for grocery specials and carefully decide where to shop, but bear in mind your needs, the cost of transportation, and the sale bargains. It does not pay to travel across town merely to save on one item. Eat before shopping or plan to shop when you are not hungry. This will help you to avoid impulse buying and keep you from overspending your food budget.

Think small, buy only what you need to avoid spoilage. If possible, shop at a store where produce is sold loose rather than in large bags. The extra cost of smaller packages may be worth the price if it means you waste less food. For the same reason, buy food in season, and compare the costs of fresh, canned or frozen foods.

Read the labels. Compare prices, brands and quality. Avoid products that have water, salt, and/or sugar high on the list. Generic or house brands often provide reasonable quality at lower prices.

Be aware of the effect of colourful food displays. The featured product(s) may not be lower priced after all. Keep your eye on the lower and uppermost shelves. Products above or below eye level are often priced better than those within easy reach.

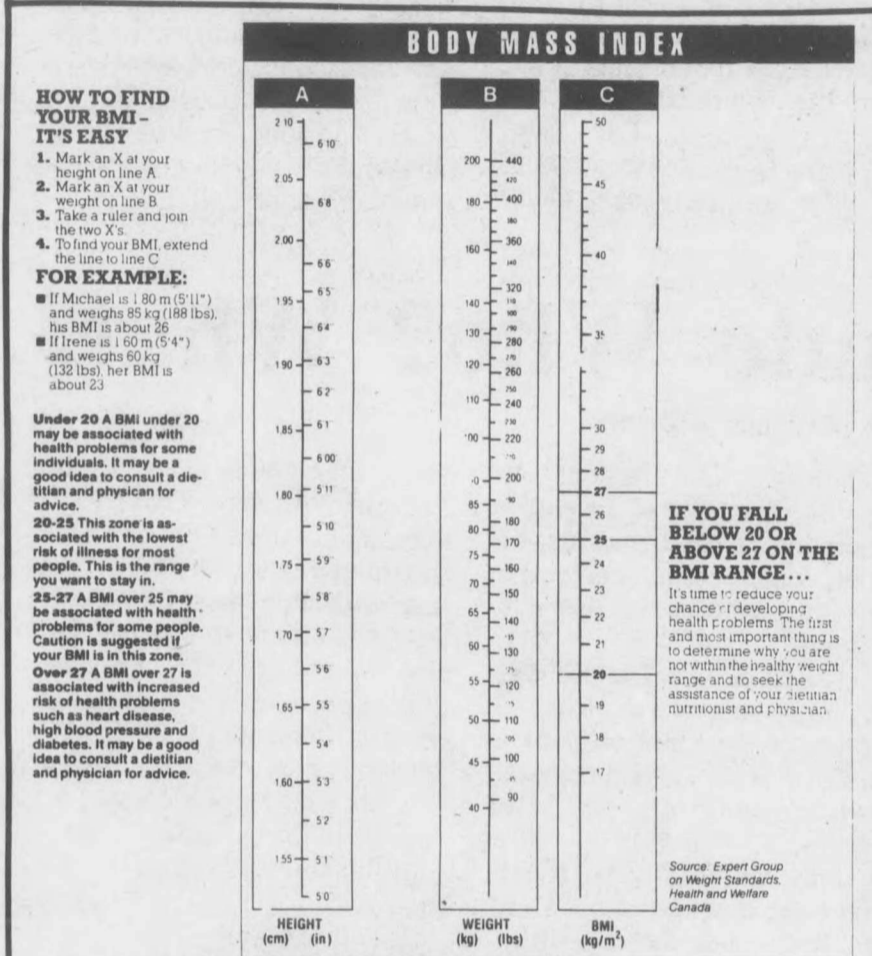
by Brenda McDonald

"You can never be too rich or too thin." It's a motto that society today lives by. However, just how thin is thin and how far should you go before your health is at risk?

The best way to figure out how much you should weigh is to use a measuring technique known as the body mass index. This is a

ratio of weight to height. This index can help you determine if

you are at risk of developing health problems. A value of under 20 is considered underweight, it may indicate illness. 20-25 is the healthiest range to be in, 25-27 is considered the caution zone and over 27 means an increase in health problems associated with obesity.



THE BENEFITS OF BMI

- It allows us to talk about the health of a person, not just the weight.
- It is based on the assumption that short people are no more prone to being overweight than tall people.
- It considers a wider range of acceptable shapes and sizes that are healthy as compared to previous standards.

If you have a value of under 20 you may be underweight to the point of doing yourself harm. Professional help may be in order.

If you are in the caution zone or above some modifications in lifestyle can help you to attain your ideal weight. Do you eat on the run, munch away on junk food while watching television or doing homework? Do you eat because you're depressed or bored? These poor eating habits can add extra empty calories to your daily intake of food which, in turn, can add unwanted extra pounds in the cause of a year.

So what is the answer? Go out and buy the latest diet aid or go on the latest fad diet? Hoping to lose those extra pounds in a week or two is hopeless. Remember that it took you months to add on those extra pounds and it will take the same amount of time to lose them. Crash dieting only results in the loss of water and lean muscle tissue. You may have lost 10 pounds in one week, much of that is water and will quickly be regained when you start eating again. Your body protects itself after a crash diet by

gaining more weight in case you decide to "diet" again.

The only way to lose weight and keep it off is to adopt a healthy balanced lifestyle. This includes good nutrition and physical activity.

Reducing fat intake, and choosing low fat foods in all important change. Fat is the most energy rich nutrient, adding countless calories that you may not be aware of.

Incorporating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy and protein foods, these are rich in vitamins and minerals and low in calories.

Find an exercise that you like and make it part of your weekly activities. Even walking half an hour each day can burn calories, build cardiovascular endurance and tone muscles.

Making some behavior modifications such as eating planned meals and limiting the amounts and types of foods you snack on can defer you from consuming unwanted calories.

These changes may seem quite extreme if you live a sedentary life and have poor eating habits. Take them one at a time. It is impossible to change your lifestyle overnight and you shouldn't expect to. In time you will feel better, look terrific and

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