

fit

Beyond the Scale

It's here again

- time to face the dreaded scale at the doctor's office. But this time is different. You've been exercising and eating well (second helping of holiday treats aside, of course). You even fit into those "skinny" jeans you've been hiding in the closet. So why, according to the scale, are you still considered overweight? Is it possible for someone to be fit even if the scale says otherwise?

The short answer is yes.

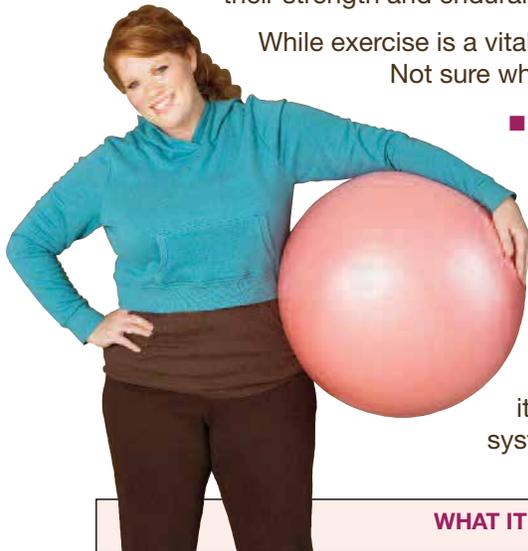
According to the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, physical fitness is defined as "a set of attributes that people have or achieve that relates to the ability to perform physical activity." In other words, that number on the scale is only a piece of the body's puzzle.

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Take our muscles, for example. While most of us know they can weigh more than fat, we often forget how their strength and endurance can make a difference. And there's more.

While exercise is a vital part of maintaining fitness, a well-balanced diet is just as important.

Not sure where to start? Here are a few quick tips:



- **Say yes to carbs (really!).** Carbohydrates provide 45-60% of your energy levels. Opt for good carbs, such as sweet potatoes, brown rice, quinoa, legumes, beans, nuts and seeds, high fibers, 100% whole grains, raw, whole and fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Don't forget the protein.** A daily source of protein is crucial for the body's regulation and maintenance. In addition to the meaty sources — chicken, turkey, duck, lamb, beef, or buffalo — you can also find protein in other places, such as eggs, fish, and dairy. Even bee pollen protein digests easily and is rich with many other nutrients.
- **Stay hydrated.** The easiest to do — and often the hardest to remember. Whether it's a little exercise or a lot, hydration is key to keeping your skin beautiful, digestive system running smoothly, and energy levels high.

	WHAT IT IS	WHAT IT DOES	HOW TO IMPROVE
Muscle Strength	The ability of the body's circulatory and respiratory systems to supply fuel during physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Burns calories – Increases energy – Promotes healthy aging 	<p>Exercise using free weights and resistance bands (or use your own body as resistance by adding sit-ups and push-ups to your routine)</p> <p>Always warm up and stretch before exercising</p>
Muscle Endurance	The ability of the body's muscles to contract for extended periods of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increases metabolism – Reduces fatigue – Improves posture – Reduces injuries 	<p>Plan full-body workouts that include all of the muscle groups</p> <p>Change your strength-training routine every month to continually increase endurance</p>
Cardiorespiratory Endurance	The ability of the body's heart, blood vessels, and lungs to supply fuel during sustained physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Delivers oxygen and nutrients to tissue – Removes waste products – Maintains overall heart health 	<p>Aerobic exercise (walking, running, etc.)</p> <p>Dancing</p> <p>Swimming</p> <p>Bicycling</p>
Body Composition	The relative amount of fat verses muscle, bone, and other vital body parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Describes the percentage of fat-free mass (muscle, bone and water) in the body 	<p>Aerobic exercise (walking, running, etc.)</p> <p>Resistance exercise</p>
Flexibility	The range of motion around a joint in the body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improves circulation – Improves athletic performance – Reduces injuries 	<p>Always stretch before and after exercise</p> <p>Avoid hunching over when sitting</p>

Sources:

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