



NUTRITION

What is a Healthy Weight ?

In general a healthy weight is determined by your BMI (Body Mass Index)

- If your BMI is less than 18.5, you are in the underweight category
- If your BMI is between 18.5 and 24.9, you are in the recommended weight range for your height. But your health may still be at risk if you are not getting regular physical activity and practicing healthy eating
- If your BMI is 25 to 29.9, you are in the overweight category. This may or may not be unhealthy, depending on some other things, like your waist size and other health problems you may have
- If your BMI is 30 or higher, you're in the obese
- To calculate your BMI go to http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm

BMI is one of many measures that should be considered. In addition to other health markers, dancer's should aim to consider a healthy weight for themselves as one that supports their daily classes and rehearsal without injury, unusual exhaustion or other adverse affects.

Adverse Affects on Body Image and Self Esteem

The chronic need to fit in and meet cultural norms about beauty along with the ballet worlds ideas about what constitutes a beautiful dancer's body is quite effective in creating tremendous anxiety about appearance and potential risks for developing eating disorders.



How to Love Your Body (adapted from the blog post "How to Love Your Body Seriously")

- ⇒ Don't just focus on loving your body, focus on loving your self.
- ⇒ Challenge every negative thought
- ⇒ Put Magazines & media in Perspective
- ⇒ Release Expectations



Myths About Body

Image (developed from Kathy

Kater's Body Image Health's "Healthy Body Curriculum")

Myth #1 "How I look" is more important than "who I am." An essential criterion for the "right" look is a thin/lean body.

Myth #2 Anyone can be slim if he or she works at it. Fatter people inevitably eat too much and/or are inactive. Fat is bad/wrong.

Myth #3 based on denial of the universal effects of externally prescribed hunger regulation: Dieting is an effective weight-loss strategy.

Myth #4 based on discounting the value of health; complacency about lifestyle choices that do not result in the desired look: Eat, drink, and be merry! Healthy choices (for health's sake) are too much work.



Did you know?

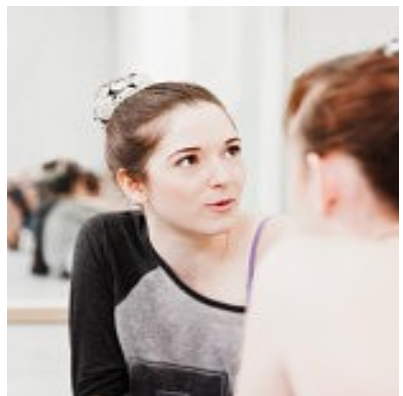
According to the British Dietetic Association, individuals with an eating disorder are believed to have a good comprehension of nutrition. However Beaumont et al. (1981), show that individuals with an eating disorder have sound knowledge of the calorie content of foods, but a poor understanding of the basics of healthy eating, and how to meet their nutritional requirements. Additionally, (Cockfield and Philpot 2009) further point out that individuals with eating disorders tend to have faulty ideas and beliefs towards food.

In the words of a Dancer.

"I started getting preoccupied with my weight and then wanting to be healthy and it triggered my obsession with food and being a certain shape." Victoria Ferguson's experience is widespread among dancers who feel under pressure to look a certain way.

But for the 22-year-old from west London this was not a pressure that stemmed from teachers and artistic directors telling her to lose weight, it was a strain she put on herself that eventually developed into an eating disorder.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-22985310> 2014



Disordered Eating

According to Kathy Kater, the creator of Body Image Health's "Healthy Body Curriculum", since the explosion of visual media in the late 1950s, people no longer assume that other ordinary-looking people should be the basis for comparing their looks. Instead, millions of images of extraordinarily photogenic models all chosen for a particular "look" have revolutionized the value placed on appearances in general and have created a mandate for a slim or lean appearance in particular.

Playing on this human need for inclusion, intensive marketing of a generally unattainable, slim/lean beauty ideal as if this look was normal, especially for girls, but increasingly boys, has been very effective in creating tremendous anxiety about appearance.

Now, add to this, the need to meet the so called "ideal" dancer's body standard. It is no wonder, the risk for developing disordered eating increases in this population.

Nine Truths about Eating Disorders

Truth #1: Many people with eating disorders look healthy, yet may be extremely ill.

Truth #2: Families are not to blame, and can be the patients' and providers' best allies in treatment.

Truth #3: An eating disorder diagnosis is a health crisis that disrupts personal and family functioning.

Truth #4: Eating disorders are not choices, but serious biologically influenced illnesses.

Truth #5: Eating disorders affect people of all genders, ages, races, ethnicities, body shapes and weights, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic statuses.

Truth #6: Eating disorders carry an increased risk for both suicide and medical complications.

Truth #7: Genes and environment play important roles in the development of eating disorders.

Truth #8: Genes alone do not predict who will develop eating disorders.

Truth #9: Full recovery from an eating disorder is possible. Early detection and intervention are important.

Produced in collaboration with Dr. Cynthia Bulik, PhD, FAED - The Academy of Eating Disorders

Types of Eating Disorders

Anorexia Nervosa

is characterized by an abnormally low body weight, intense fear of gaining weight and a distorted perception of body weight.

People with anorexia usually severely restrict the amount of food they eat. They may control calorie intake by vomiting after eating or by misusing laxatives, diet aids, diuretics or enemas. They may also try to lose weight by exercising excessively.

Some people with anorexia binge and purge, similar to individuals who have bulimia nervosa. However, people with anorexia generally struggle with an abnormally low body weight.

Bulimia

People with bulimia may secretly binge — eating large amounts of food — and then purge, trying to get rid of the extra calories in an unhealthy way.

Purging bulimia. You regularly self-induce vomiting or misuse laxatives, diuretics or enemas after bingeing.

Non-purging bulimia. You use other methods to rid yourself of calories and prevent weight gain, such as fasting, strict dieting or excessive exercise.

Bulimics usually have a normal weight

Mayo Clinic



Changing Our Ideals About the Ideal Dancer's Body

Katherine Brooks wrote an excellent article for The Huffington Post entitled "These Women are Changing the Way We View Body Love in Dance" 9/11/14 . It features professional dancers, choreographers and artistic directors who are redefining what a dancer's body should, can and does look like.

According to the article, Tamar Rojo, the artistic director of the English National Ballet , has made it known that she is not interested in employing underweight dancers.

She brought in a sports scientist to overhaul the dancer's training in a way that treats them like elite athletes. She notes that as a result injuries and recuperation times have decreased . Additionally, a psychologist was hired to help dancers cope with the pressures of performing at such a high level..

She further notes that she had times in her dancing career when she felt lonely and as if she could not cope . She felt that she could not share this with her manager for fear of having parts taken away from her.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/09/11/body-image-dance_n_5798654.html

Resources

The following organizations provide assistance with disordered eating and issues related to improving self esteem.

National Eating Disorder Association (NEDA feeding hope)

- the leading 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization in the United States advocating on behalf of and supporting individuals and families affected by eating disorders. Find them online at [www. Nationaleatingdisorders.org](http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org). Be sure to explore the video links on the following page -
- <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/videos-eating-disorders>
- or contact them at 1 800-931- 2237

Mental Fitness, Inc

- goal is to use their proprietary mapping system to connect evidence-based prevention programs to schools and communities to build resilience in all youth.
- <http://www.mentalfitnessinc.org/>

Body Image Health

- Provides a comprehensive curriculum to address body image, eating disorders, self esteem, health and fitness with the goal of teaching kids to care for—instead of compare—their bodies.
- <http://bodyimagehealth.org/>

Eat 26 Self Test

- The Eating Attitudes Test (EAT-26) is probably the most widely used standardized self-report measure of symptoms and concerns characteristic of eating disorders.
- The EAT-26 has been particularly useful a screening tool to assess "eating disorder risk" in high school, college and other special risk samples such as athletes. Screening for eating disorders is based on the assumption that early identification can lead to earlier treatment, thereby reducing serious physical and psychological complications or even death.
- The EAT-26 is not designed to make a diagnosis of an eating disorder or to take the place of a professional diagnosis or consultation. The EAT-26 alone does not yield a specific diagnosis of an eating disorder. Neither the EAT-26, nor any other screening instrument, has been established as highly efficient as the sole means for identifying eating disorders.
- <http://eat-26.com/> to take the Test Anonymously

Types of Eating Disorders Continued

Binge Eating Disorder (Mayo Clinic)

One consumes unusually large amounts of food and feels unable to stop eating. Almost everyone overeats on occasion, such as having seconds or thirds of a holiday meal. But for some people, excessive overeating that feels out of control and becomes a regular occurrence crosses the line to binge-eating disorder. When you have binge-eating disorder, you may be embarrassed about overeating and vow to stop. But you feel such a compulsion that you can't resist the urges and con-

Online Videos to View with Family and Friends

- **The Starving Art**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9C1xnm7rhz0>
- **Eating Disorders in Dancers**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llnKW2zlxSg>
- **Food as Coping Mechanism**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9ap3HntQbg>
- **Eating Disorders in Dancers**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjuXFG3zI-E>
- **The Face of Eating Disorders**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRjM2QJ_o4M
- **Signs You Might have and Eating Disorder**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsEMkL4kUFo>
- **How and Eating Disorder Develops**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STkBb9mo0fQ>
- **The Perfect Image**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRuCI5PvApU>
- **Before and After Treatment - Eating Disorders Help**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyPchtvEBNM>
- **My Eating Disorder Story**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqthZ0cKrt8>
- **Dying to Dance Full Movie**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HI5wW4Z-rx8>