

Children and Adolescents

Body Mass Index For Age

For infants, birth to 36 months, clinical growth charts reflect weight-for-length in addition to length-for-age, weight-for-age- and head circumference-for-age. Infants and children under age 36 months using these charts are to be measured in recumbent length. Specific information regarding infants and toddlers under age two is not included in this toolkit though appropriate growth charts are available from www.cdc.gov/growthcharts.

BMI-for-age is the preferred term for children and adolescents aged 2 to 20 years as BMI is age and gender specific. These children and adolescents are measured with a standing height and utilize charts that have stature-for-age and weight-for-age in addition to BMI-for-age. These standards are reflected in the 2000 CDC Growth Charts. A variety of clinical growth charts are available that include additional percentile lines.

Growth charts are available at www.cdc.gov/growthcharts or are available for purchase from several sources including the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Children and Adolescents 2 to 20 years	
BMI-for-Age	Weight Status/ Children and Adolescents
≤5 th percentile	Underweight
>5 th percentile to <85 th percentile	Healthy Weight
≥85 th percentile to <95 th percentile	At Risk of Overweight
≥95 th percentile	Overweight

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1. **Weigh at each visit.**
2. **Measure height using stadiometer at each visit.**
3. **Calculate BMI and plot on growth chart.**
4. **Inform parent/patient of assessment.**

See How to Weigh and Measure. Practitioners may find a transparent overlay helpful to accurately plot the intersection of weight/BMI and stature on growth charts.