



# Body Mass Index (BMI)

## What is BMI?



- BMI is a measure to check if a child has a healthy weight for their height.

- BMI is calculated using a child's weight and height:

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{weight (kg)}}{\text{height (m)}^2}$$

- The BMI result is interpreted differently for children and adults - children are still growing! Their age, gender, height and weight are all taken into account.
- Charts have been developed internationally. These are specific for child growth and are used to look at BMI results for children of a wide range of cultural backgrounds.



## Why do BMI?

- The World Health Organization (WHO) and National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia (NHMRC) recommend that BMI is used for children as part of an overall growth assessment.
- BMI is a simple and accurate way to tell whether a child's weight is in the healthy range.
- BMI is one part of a broader growth assessment.
- From 2 years of age, the measurement of height, weight and BMI provides a guide that suggests if a child is above, within or below their healthy weight range.
- When children are a healthy weight, they find it easier to play and learn, and feel good about themselves.
- Helping children maintain a healthy weight when they are young can set up their health and wellbeing for life.