



Weighing, measuring and calculating BMI in young children

Why is weight important

- Being a healthy weight helps to optimise health outcomes
- Overweight and obesity are associated with greater health risks, even in young children
- The body mass index (BMI) is a measure of weight status that is used for children over 2 years of age

Weighing

1. Place the scales on a hard surface, and not moved around too often
2. Press “on” button. Wait until scales show “0.0”
3. Ask child to stand:
 - Centred on scales
 - Feet evenly apart
 - Hands by the side, not holding onto anything
 - Looking straight ahead and stand still
4. Read and record the measurement to nearest 0.1 kg (or to the nearest 0.05kg if the display flashes between two weights)



Measuring

1. Explain to the child that you are going to measure their height
2. Ask and/or help child to stand:
 - Up straight
 - Feet and heels together
 - Heels back against the upright section of the stadiometer
 - Arms relaxed (floppy) by sides
 - Looking straight ahead at marker on the wall
3. Gently position their head so that their line of vision is parallel with the floor
4. Check that they are in the correct position and bring the set square down to rest on the child's head
5. Crouch down so your eye is level with where the height is shown and record the measurement to nearest 0.1cm
6. Ask the child to step off and step back onto the stadiometer and record a second measurement (you may be surprised by how much repeated height measures can differ)
7. Take an average of the two measurements



Important note: If the two measurements disagree by 0.5cm or more, take a third measurement and calculate an average from the two closest measurements. Record this average in the Child Health Record.