



WellnessBuzz

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Battling the Bulge

According to the Ministry of Health's survey statistics, the prevalence of obesity among adults between 18 and 69 years in Singapore has increased steadily by about 1% from 1992 to 2004. However, a spike from 6.9% in 2004 to 10.8% in 2010 revealed an obesity trend that is alarming. So, what are some measures that can be taken to help Singapore beat the battle of bulge?

An obesity rate of about 10% means that, one out of every 10 Singaporean male or female is exposed to health risks associated with obesity such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, hyperlipidaemia (i.e. excess fat in the blood), hypertension, sleep apnea, cancer, joint problems and psychosocial problems. This upward trend in obesity is a growing concern in Singapore, and is largely attributed to Singaporeans' love for eating and lack of an active lifestyle.

Thus, it is important to maintain an ideal weight and to approach weight management in a sensible manner.

STEP 1 Find out if you are overweight

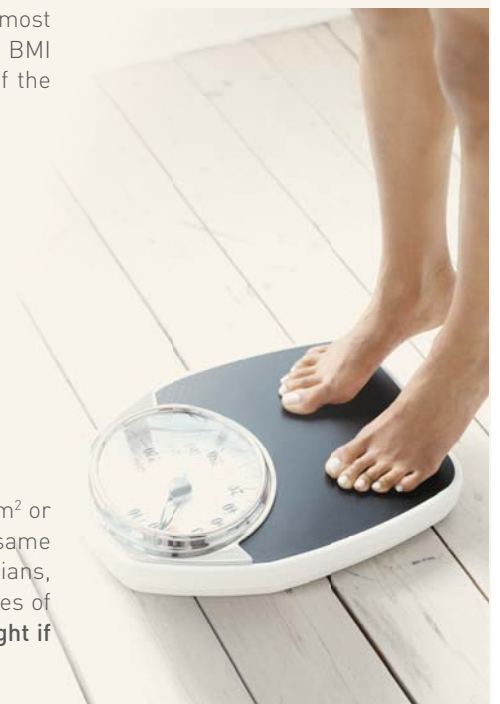
There are various ways of knowing whether one is overweight. The most widely used method is to determine the body mass index (BMI). BMI is calculated by dividing the weight (in kilograms) by the square of the height (in metres).

$$\text{BMI (kg/m}^2\text{)} = \frac{\text{Weight (kg)}}{\text{Height (m)} \times \text{Height (m)}}$$

BMI (WHO)*	Weight Category
≥ 30	Obese
25 - < 30	Overweight
18.5 - 24.9	Healthy weight
< 18.5	Underweight

* Applicable to ages 18 to 69.

Using the BMI method, being overweight means that you have a BMI of 25 kg/m² or more, and being obese means your BMI is 30 kg/m² or more. However, for the same BMI, Asians, including Singaporeans, have more body fat compared to Caucasians, which increases our risk of developing heart disease and diabetes at BMI values of 23 kg/m² and above. So, in the Asian context, **a person is considered overweight if the BMI level exceeds 23 kg/m², and obese if the BMI level exceeds 27 kg/m².**



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Measuring Body Fat

The measurement of body fat is another way of determining if one is overweight. Some regard the body fat percentage as the best measure of an individual's fitness level since it is the only body measurement which directly calculates the particular individual's body composition without taking into consideration the individual's height or weight.

Another reliable method of measuring body fat percentage is through skinfold thickness, in which a pinch of skin is measured by callipers at several standardised points on the body.

The following shows the recommended range of body fat percentage for male and female of different ages.

Female

Age	Underfat	Healthy Range	Overweight	Obese
20-40 yrs	Under 21%	21-33%	33-39%	Over 39%
41-60 yrs	Under 23%	23-35%	35-40%	Over 40%
61-79 yrs	Under 24%	24-36%	36-42%	Over 42%

Male

Age	Underfat	Healthy Range	Overweight	Obese
20-40 yrs	Under 8%	8-19%	19-25%	Over 25%
41-60 yrs	Under 11%	11-22%	22-27%	Over 27%
61-79 yrs	Under 13%	13-25%	25-30%	Over 30%

Body fat percentages for male and female of all ages
Source: World Health Organization (WHO)

STEP 2 Lose weight sensibly

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A safe weight loss programme is designed to help an individual lose not more than 1 kg of body weight in a week. While diet may have a stronger link to instant weight loss than physical activity, the latter has a stronger effect in maintaining weight loss. A weight loss programme should be done by taking into consideration the combination of calorie restriction through diet and total calories burnt through exercise. Do bear in mind that calorie restriction depends on both the quantity and type of food consumed. Generally, sweet and oily food choices are more calorie-dense.

STEP 3 Exercise to burn

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The amount of calories burnt varies widely depending on the intensity level, duration and type of exercise. Effective exercises include brisk walking, jogging, swimming and playing various ball games. As a general goal, aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day. The duration of the exercise should be long enough to 'burn' significant calories. As an example of calories burnt during exercise, a person weighing about 60 kg, running a distance of 2 km could potentially burn 140 calories. That is equivalent to the amount of calories in a can of Coke.

Maintaining a healthy weight through proper diet and an active lifestyle should be as regular as brushing your teeth and combing your hair. Once you get it into a habit, it will boost your ability to become the best that you can be in all other aspects of your life.



Dr Derek Koh is the Head of the Thomson Lifestyle Centre at Thomson Medical Centre and graduated from the National University of Singapore with MBBS in 1992. He completed six years of medical postings in specialist areas such as General Medicine and Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Psychiatry, among others. Dr Koh has been in private practice since 1998, where he worked in various private clinics and hospitals as a family physician.



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Itching for a Cure

Eczema (or atopic dermatitis), an inflammatory skin condition characterised by itchy and red patches of skin, is one of the most common skin problems. With scratching, these patches can become infected. While there is no permanent cure for eczema, there are a few remedies and treatment options that can help us manage the flares.

Eczema may occur in people of all ages, but often starts in infancy and childhood. The majority of people with eczema experience the onset of the disease before the age of five. In Singapore, one in five school-going children suffers from varying degrees of skin problems such as eczema. While up to 75% of children with eczema find their skin condition improve in their adolescence years, the remaining 25% of children may continue to have eczema in adult life.

The commonly affected areas in infants include the face and limbs; while in young children, the skin folds (e.g. the elbow folds, as well as the back of knees and neck) are common sites of eczema.

Treating and Managing Eczema

There are no known quick fixes or miracle cure for eczema. However, some simple skin care remedies and medical prescriptions can help to ease the effects of this troubled skin condition.

1. Cleanse and Moisturise

Frequent moisturising and gentle cleansing of the skin has been known to be effective in the management of eczema, as it helps to preserve the skin's barrier function. For babies suffering from eczema, mothers should cleanse the baby's skin with gentle soaps or soap substitutes. The baby's skin should also be moisturised frequently, including after baths.

Clothing such as wool and linen fabrics that are prone to irritate the skin should be avoided. A better alternative would be cotton clothing which may be more comfortable against the skin.

2. The Right Prescription

While frequent application of moisturisers is essential in managing the effects of eczema, topical and oral medication may be prescribed to relieve itch, reduce inflammation and treat secondary infection.



Topical steroids come in various levels of potency and help to reduce inflammation. However, prolonged use of topical steroids may result in thinning of the skin. For infected skin, oral medication such as antibiotics may be prescribed, while oral antihistamines typically help to relieve itch.

Living with troubled skin conditions such as eczema presents a range of challenges for both patients and their loved ones. But with the right care and treatment that works best for you, the discomforts of the condition can be better managed.

Dr Tan Hiok Hee is a dermatologist with expertise in various aspects of medical and cosmetic dermatology. He was formerly a Senior Consultant and Assistant Director at the National Skin Centre (NSC), Singapore. He helmed the Department of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) Control and was also Chief of the Cutaneous Infections unit at NSC, and the Consultant in charge of the Acne clinic. During his time as a registrar undergoing specialist training, he was the recipient of two National Medical Research Council grants, for which he conducted research on the use of molecular techniques in STI diagnosis and antibiotic resistance amongst acne patients.

Dr Audrey Tan completed her basic medical education (MBBS) at the National University of Singapore in 1996. After receiving her postgraduate degree in Internal Medicine (MRCP, UK) in 2000, she specialised in Dermatology, achieving her specialist accreditation in Dermatology in 2004 (FAMS). She trained in various aspects of Medical and Inpatient Dermatology at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada in 2005 and 2006 under the Human Manpower Development Programme of the Ministry of Health. During her fellowship, she also participated in Dermatology research related to connective tissue and rheumatological diseases.

An Addictive Matter

Mr A's leisure drinking activity with friends soon became a daily drinking routine that he couldn't stop. Alcohol had become a constant companion in his life that he could not live without. Like Mr A, countless others have also become addicted to certain substances or activities. But the question is, what can we do to help them kick the addictive habit?

Addiction is a progressive brain disorder. It usually begins as an activity to cope with life problems, bad feelings and unhappy events. An addiction is always adaptive at first and makes the person feel good such that he wants to continuously indulge in the activity. This activity can be drug use, alcohol drinking and gambling, among others.

While the exact nature of addiction is still unknown, research has linked it to the involvement of the brain's reward centre. What we do know is that addiction develops as a result of a combination of factors such as genetics, social environment, personal factors (e.g. poor stress coping skills) and the type of drug taken.

Addiction can be generally classified under substance addiction and behavioural addiction. In Singapore, common substance addictions include alcohol, heroin, codeine (i.e. a type of medicine used to treat moderate pain) and benzodiazepine (i.e. a type of tranquiliser). Behavioural addictions include pathological gambling (i.e. impulsive gambling), sex addiction and computer addiction.

Treating Addiction

Addiction is a complex problem and treatment is needed to address the many aspects including the biological, psychosocial, behavioural and spiritual. The most effective approach usually involves the integration of several types of treatment, which include the following:

Detoxification

Following a period of heavy and sustained alcohol or drug use, most individuals develop significant physical and psychological symptoms. While some of these symptoms can be resolved with rest, the

addiction of substances such as alcohol, opiates and tranquilisers usually require medically supervised detoxification. Because addiction can affect the brain's neurochemistry and general physical health, medical expertise of addiction psychiatrists is necessary. Detoxification must be followed by continued rehabilitative treatment for lasting improvement.

Rehabilitation and relapse prevention

The rehabilitation phase of treatment may involve individual or group counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy (i.e. a type of psychotherapeutic treatment), pharmacotherapy (i.e. a therapy involving safe and appropriate use of prescription drugs) or participation in support groups. Medications can be used to help re-establish normal brain function, prevent relapse and diminish cravings. Specific addiction counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy techniques help individuals to recognise their condition and to encourage or sustain change. These therapy sessions also help individuals understand the reasons behind the addiction, as well as to identify, avoid and cope with their triggers and prevent relapses.

Psychiatric consultation

An addictive disorder often co-occurs with another psychiatric disorder such as depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorder. The relationship between addictive disorder and the co-occurring psychiatric disorder is complex, and management of co-occurring psychiatric condition is an essential component of addiction treatment.

Kicking an addiction is not easy. But with a good understanding of the triggers, knowledge of treatment options, and support from loved ones, addiction can be overcome.

Dr Thomas Lee Kae Meng obtained his basic medical degree (MBBS) and Master of Medicine (Psychiatry) from the National University of Singapore. He is also a Certified Substance Abuse Counsellor, Certified Gambling Addiction Counsellor and Certified Clinical Supervisor in addiction counselling. In 2007, he was awarded a Health Manpower Development Programme (HMDP) scholarship by the Ministry of Health for training in gambling addiction treatment at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Dr Tan Hwee Sim obtained her basic medical degree (MBBS) from the University of Adelaide, Australia and her Master of Medicine (Psychiatry), from the National University of Singapore. She is trained in a broad range of mental health conditions and has diverse experience in mental health through her work experience in various countries (Singapore, Australia, USA). She is both a Certified Substance Abuse Counsellor and Certified Gambling Addiction Counsellor.



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Novena Specialist Center

The following clinics are just three that are available at the Novena Medical Center and Novena Specialist Center. To look for a specific healthcare and medical specialist, please refer to the directory listed at the back of this booklet.



Thomson Lifestyle Centre

Thomson Lifestyle Centre sets out to provide total healthcare and support in a holistic way. Available at the Lifestyle Centre is a range of health screening and wellness programmes that are tailored according to each individual's medical profile. These programmes are designed to treat various health conditions through early detection and preventive care, as well as to promote wellness and a healthy lifestyle.

Thomson Lifestyle Centre

10 Sinaran Drive #10-14/15
Novena Medical Centre, Square 2,
Singapore 307506
Telephone: (65) 6352 6550 / (65) 6352 6559
Fax: (65) 6352 6551
Email: lifestyle@thomsonmedical.com
Website: www.thomsonlifestylecentre.com



Thomson Specialist Skin Centre

Thomson Specialist Skin Centre is a one-stop specialist dermatology clinic that provides evidence-based, outpatient medical services and treatments for a wide range of skin, hair and nail problems, as well as screening and treatment of sexually transmitted infections. The Centre's team of experienced specialists is accredited by the Ministry of Health and registered with the Specialist Accreditation Board, and is trained in the diagnosis and management of various medical and cosmetic skin conditions.

Thomson Specialist Skin Centre

10 Sinaran Drive #10-05
Novena Medical Center, Square 2,
Singapore 307506
Tel: (65) 6397 6006
Fax: (65) 6397 6116
Email: contact@thomsonspecialistskin.com
Website: www.thomsonspecialistskin.com



The Resilienz Mind Psychological Medicine and Counselling Centre

The Resilienz Mind Psychological Medicine and Counselling Centre is a mental health and addictions treatment clinic. By providing specialised assessment and treatment for a range of psychological and psychiatric conditions such as addictions, depression, anxiety and insomnia, the Centre aims to exceed the expectations of every client through quality mental health service that is delivered with care, compassion and sincerity.

The Resilienz Mind Psychological Medicine and Counselling Centre

8 Sinaran Drive #04-01
Novena Specialist Center Singapore 307470
Tel: (65) 6659 6830 Fax: (65) 6659 6827
Email: clinic@resilienzmind.com.sg Website: www.resilienzmind.com.sg

CLINIC / SPECIALTY

A Life Clinic
General Practice
#11-20
Tel: +65 67372283

About Braces Dental Surgery
Dentistry
#10-21
Tel: +65 63977177

Advance Renal Therapy
Renal Medicine & Kidney Dialysis
#11-14
Tel: +65 63976468

Ageless Revival Medical Centre
General Practice with Aesthetic Services
#10-31
Tel: +65 63976878

Ambulatory SurgiCare
General Surgery
#09-01
Tel: +65 63976979

American International Clinic
Internal Medicine
#10-10
Tel: +65 63977129

Braces & Aesthetics Dental Clinic
Dentistry
#10-36
Tel: +65 67322706

Centre for Ear Nose Throat Allergy & Sleep
ENT (Ear, Nose, Throat)
#11-23
Tel: +65 65860988

Centre for Hands & Reconstructive Microsurgery (Novena) Pte Ltd
Hand Surgery
#11-17
Tel: +65 63976850

ClearSK™ Medi-Aesthetics Clinique (Novena)
Aesthetic Services & Wellness Care
#10-01
Tel: +65 63977250

Clinic 10
Preventive Healthcare
#09-31
Tel: +65 63360504

Compass Medical Group
Health Screening
#10-28
Tel: +65 66353525

Cozy Dental Group
Dentistry
#08-15/16
Tel: +65 63976566

CSK Novena Laser Aesthetic Clinic
Aesthetic Services & Wellness Care
#10-26
Tel: +65 63977050

Dr Roby Marcou Developmental and Behavioural Paediatric Clinic
Developmental and Behavioural Paediatrics
#10-12
Tel: +65 63976637

Fema Clinic & Surgery
Medical Clinic
#09-01
Tel: +65 68543720

Healthway Medical Assessment Centre
Wellness Care
#10-06
Tel: +65 62382290

CLINIC / SPECIALTY

H L Kong Medical Oncology Centre
Medical Oncology
#11-08
Tel: +65 63977123

K O Chan Ear Nose Throat Sinus & Sleep Centre
ENT (Ear, Nose, Throat)
#10-11
Tel: +65 63976454

LifeSource Medical Centre
Aesthetic & Regenerative Medicine
#11-16
Tel: +65 63976080

Lim K.A Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
Oral & Maxillofacial
#09-25
Tel: +65 62353688

Loke Skin Clinic
Dermatology
#09-13
Tel: +65 63374926

LQ Dental Centre
Dentistry
#11-10
Tel: +65 65380890

Medfast Medical Centre
Health Screening
#11-27
Tel: +65 62223373

MHC Medical Centre (Novena)
General Practitioner
#09-10
Tel: +65 63976568

Naaman Skin and Laser Centre
Dermatology
#09-27
Tel: +65 63972833

Neuglow The Aesthetics Doctors
Aesthetic Services
#10-35
Tel: +65 63972552

Nihon Premium Clinic
Japanese Medical & Specialists Healthcare
#11-12
Tel: +65 63972002

Nobel Psychological Wellness
Psychiatry
#09-35
Tel: +65 63972993

Noel Leong Fertility and IVF
IVF Obstetrics and Gynaecology
#09-14
Tel: +65 62556883

Novena Children Clinic
Paediatric Medicine
#10-32
Tel: +65 63976960

Novena Dental Aesthetic Practice Pte Ltd
Dentistry
#09-34
Tel: +65 63977097

Novena Heart Centre
Cardiology & Cardiothoracic Surgery
#09-05
Tel: +65 63972004

Novena Medical Center Family Clinic
General Practice
#11-19
Tel: +65 63977318

CLINIC / SPECIALTY

Novena Medical Screening Centre
Health Screening
#08-23
Tel: +65 65132770

Novena Psychiatry Clinic
Psychiatry
#10-18
Tel: +65 63972688

Novena Surgery
Day Surgery
#08-18
Tel: +65 63079956

OrthoSm;e Dental Practice LLP
Dentistry
#09-29
Tel: +65 63976880

Parkway Laboratory Services Ltd
Medical Lab Testing
#08-01
Tel: +65 63976930

Preventicine Centre Pte Ltd
Preventive Healthcare
#09-24
Tel: +65 63338489

Profile Dental Surgery Pte Ltd
Oral / General Dentistry
#09-32
Tel: +65 63396806

Psych & Psych Consultants Pte Ltd
Psychological Services
#10-25
Tel: +65 63976554

Radiologic Clinic
X-Ray Services
#08-02
Tel: +65 63976686

Roots! Advanced Endodontics
Endodontics
#11-32
Tel: +65 63972939

Singapore Aesthetic Centre
Aesthetic Services
#08-12
Tel: +65 68371000

Singapore Lipo, Body & Face Centre
Aesthetic Services
#08-05
Tel: +65 67361000

Singapore Sports Medicine Centre
Sports Medicine
#08-08
Tel: +65 67371000

Smile Avenue Dentistry Pte Ltd
Orthodontics
#11-18
Tel: +65 63972818

Smile Makers Dental Clinic
Dentistry
#09-26
Tel: +65 63972739

Soon Diabetes Thyroid and Endocrinology Clinic
Endocrinology
#10-08
Tel: +65 63977101

Specialist Eye & Eyelids Centre
Ophthalmology
#09-11
Tel: +65 63976101

CLINIC / SPECIALTY

Specialist Oral Surgeons
Oral & Maxillofacial
#09-25
Tel: +65 63976638

SportsMed Central
Sports Medicine
#10-13
Tel: +65 64796822

Stellar Medical Aesthetic Clinic
Aesthetic Services
#11-31
Tel: +65 63972722

The Oral Care Centre
Dentistry
#10-17/29
Tel: +65 63976990

The Plastic Surgery Practice
Plastic Surgery
#11-33
Tel: +65 63976618

The Rafflesian Clinic & Surgery
Medical & Aesthetic Services
#11-06
Tel: +65 63382740

The Revival Medical Centre
General Aesthetic & Regenerative Medicine
#10-16
Tel: +65 63972472

The Sloane Clinic Plastic Surgery Centre
Plastic Surgery
#08-35
Tel: +65 63976848

Thomson Lifestyle Centre
Wellness Care
#10-14
Tel: +65 63526550

Thomson Paediatric Centre
Paediatric Medicine
#09-02
Tel: +65 62563291

Thomson Specialist Skin Centre
Dermatology
#10-05
Tel: +65 63976006

Thomson Women Cancer Centre
Breast, Colorectal & Gynaecology
#09-15
Tel: +65 65918218

United Specialist Centre
Multi-Disciplinary Medical Services,
Physiotherapy and Podiatry Services
#09-07/08
Tel: +65 63977077

Winslow Clinic
Psychiatry
#09-23
Tel: +65 63977309

Yap & Ang Surgical Associates
General & Plastic Surgery
#11-03
Tel: +65 68368238

CLINIC / SPECIALTY

Centre For Assisted Reproduction Pte Ltd
Obstetrics & Gynaecology
#05-05/6
Tel: +65 66596638

Medical Associates Centre
General Practitioner
#04-06
Tel: +65 62351062

Novena Colorectal Centre
Colorectal Surgery/Gastrointestinal
Endoscopy
#05-07/08
Tel: +65 63610230

CLINIC / SPECIALTY

Poon & Phay Dental Surgeons Pte Ltd
Prosthodontics/Periodontics
#05-01
Tel: +65 63383623

Sincere IVF Center Pte Ltd
Fertility
#06-09/10/11
Tel: +65 65070766

Sincere Medical Specialist Center For Women
Obstetrics & Gynaecology/Fertility/Breast
Surgery/Cosmetic/Plastic Surgery/Health
Screening
#06-08/16/17/18/19
Tel: +65 65070766

CLINIC / SPECIALTY

The Resilienz Mind Psychological Medicine and Counselling Centre
Psychiatry
#04-01
Tel: +65 66596830

Thomson Dental Centre
General Dentistry
#07-08/16/17/18/19
Tel: +65 62550770

Thomson Dental Surgeons
General Dentistry/Orthodontics/Endodontics/
Periodontology
#05-12/13
Tel: +65 67379831

CLINIC / SPECIALTY

Thomson Fertility Centre Pte Ltd
IVF (In-Vitro Fertilisation)/Obstetrics &
Gynaecology
#07-02/3/4/5/6/7
Tel: +65 62527766

Thomson Specialist Dentistry
Orthodontics/Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons
#07-08/16/17/18/19
Tel: +65 62550770

Tucker Medical
Medical Oncology & General Medicine
#04-03
Tel: +65 66596918