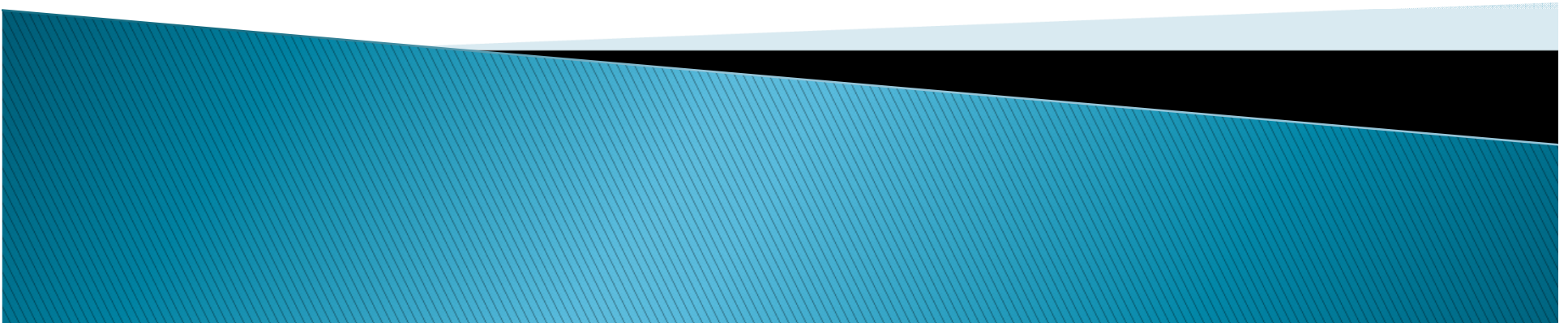


# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

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# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

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# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

## Instructions

### Slides for the Inservice:

- The slides can be shown on computer or projected on a screen using a data projector.
- You can show the slides directly from the Acrobat file by simply clicking on the icon that looks like a computer screen. Or you can go to the tool bar and click on “View” and “Full Screen” to show the slides on your screen.
- Then click the down arrow button or the page down button on your keyboard.

### Presenter’s Notes for the Inservice:

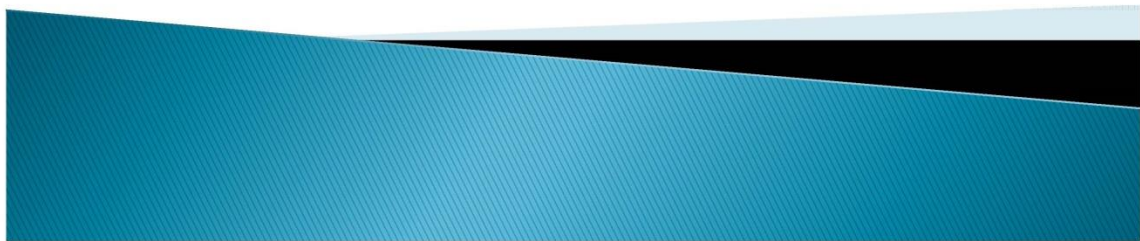
- Review the presenter’s notes prior to presenting the slides.
- The presenter’s notes offer additional information not included on the slides, suggestions for how to present some of the information, and activities you may want to incorporate.

### Handouts for the Inservice:

- Simply copy the handouts and the pre- post-tests for participants.
- Do not provide the answer key for the pre-post tests.
- You can choose to give the test before and after the training, or just after the training to determine the effectiveness of your inservice and whether or not additional training is needed.

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

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# Slides

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

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# Objectives

Participants will learn:

1. The importance of taking accurate heights and weights
2. How to take an accurate height from a standing or reclining position
3. How to take an accurate weight from a standing or sitting position
4. How to determine significant weight changes
5. How to track heights and weights

# Why is it Important to Have Accurate Heights and Weights?

- ▶ Body weight is an indicator of health status
- ▶ Individuals who lose weight unintentionally are at risk for other health problems such as weakness, increased risk of infection, pressure injuries, poor healing, etc.
- ▶ Individuals who gain significant amounts of weight unintentionally may be having problems with heart failure, kidney disease or other conditions

# Why is it Important to Have Accurate Heights and Weights?

- ▶ We must document weights for the MDS and nursing admission assessments
- ▶ The physician, registered dietitian nutritionist and family must be notified of any significant changes
- ▶ The nutrition professionals use the weights as a basis to calculate nutrient needs
- ▶ Weight tracking helps to determine if an individual needs dining or nutritional interventions or other assistance



# Reasonable Body Weights and History

- ▶ It is important to note an individual's usual body weight, and any recent changes in weight
- ▶ It may not be reasonable to think that a person is going to weigh within an ideal weight range due to life weight history
- ▶ If a person was a certain weight their whole life, and now they weigh significantly more or less, there may be cause for concern

# We Are Responsible For

- ▶ Keeping accurate records of height and ongoing weights on each individual
- ▶ Obtaining and tracking all individuals' monthly weights (and weekly weights if needed)
- ▶ Calculating percentage of weight change each month (or week) on each individual
- ▶ Notifying the family, physician, nursing staff, dietary staff, and care plan team of significant weight changes

# Each Resident Will Be Weighed at Least Monthly

- ▶ Schedule each person for monthly and weekly weights on the same date each month or week
- ▶ Keep accurate records of monthly and weekly weights
- ▶ Percentage of weight change is calculated based on our weight records
- ▶ Provide copies of monthly and weekly weights to all units, nursing, food service manager, dietitian and the care plan team

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights

## Standing Height:

- ▶ To obtain an accurate height, measure the individual without shoes, standing as erect as possible
- ▶ If using the measuring bar on the scale, it should be placed flat on the head
- ▶ Read the measurement on the bar and record immediately

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights

If using a yardstick for standing height:

- ▶ Have the individual stand against a wall, as erect as possible
- ▶ Place the yardstick parallel to the floor, on top of the head
- ▶ Mark the wall at the top of the head, using the yardstick as a guide
- ▶ Measure from the floor to the mark (where the top of the head was)

# How To Obtain a Reclining Height

- ▶ The individual should lie flat, with 1 arm extended in a 90 degree angle to the torso
- ▶ With arm and hand extended straight out, use a tape measure to measure from the middle of the sternum to the tip of the middle finger
- ▶ Double this number for an approximate height in inches
- ▶ Document this as an approximate height

# Unable to Get Accurate Height Measurements

- ▶ If for some reason you are unable to obtain an accurate height measurement, ask the family what the individual's normal height was
- ▶ Document that the family provided the height because you are unable to get an accurate height on the individual

# How to Obtain Accurate Weights

## Balance Scales:

- ▶ Do NOT move scales from place to place
- ▶ Balance the scale back to 0 before and after weighing each time
- ▶ Record the weight immediately after weighing each individual



# How to Obtain Accurate Weights

- ▶ Weigh each person at the same time each month and approximately the same time of day each time
- ▶ Weigh people in light clothing, without shoes, prior to breakfast, after voiding, and with an empty catheter bag (if applicable)
- ▶ Remove prosthetic devices (including braces). Or weigh the prosthetic device itself and subtract its weight from the individual's total weight

# How to Obtain Accurate Weights

- ▶ Document any casts, or appliances such as splints, etc.
- ▶ Assist the individual to use the rest room prior to weighing
- ▶ Empty catheter bags prior to weighing
- ▶ Calibrate scales on a regular schedule (minimum of every 3–4 months)

# Standing Weight

- ▶ Position the individual to stand with feet in the center of the scale (must stand without assistance)
- ▶ When the scale is balanced and has stopped its movement, record the weight
- ▶ Use a chair scale or bed scale for people who need assistance (if the person is unable to stand still and balanced on the scale)

# Chair Weight

- ▶ Position the individual in the center of the chair, with his/her back resting on back of the chair
- ▶ When the scale is balanced and has stopped its movement, record the weight

# Wheel Chair Weights

- ▶ Be sure the chair is free of extra weight (side bags, catheter bags, cushions or other items)
- ▶ Roll the wheel chair onto the wheel chair scale platform. Center the wheel chair on the scale.
- ▶ Weigh the wheel chair and record the total weight of the wheel chair and the individual.
- ▶ Remove the person from the wheel chair. Weigh the wheel chair.
- ▶ Carefully subtract the weight of the wheel chair and record the weight.

# Bed Weights

- ▶ Use the bed scale or lift scale
- ▶ Position the individual comfortably in the scale sling
- ▶ Raise the sling slowly until it is fully suspended and still
- ▶ Read and record the weight immediately

# Significant Weight Changes

- ▶ Compare the new weight with the old weight (from 30 days ago or 7 days ago)
- ▶ Determine significant changes in weights
- ▶ If there is a significant change, reweigh the individual immediately
- ▶ Automatically reweigh anyone with a significant weight
- ▶ Document any differences in weighing technique (variation in date, time of day, amount of clothing, etc.)

# Significant Weight Changes

<b>Time Interval</b>	<b>Significant Change</b>	<b>Severe Change</b>
<b>1 week</b>	<b>1-2 %</b>	<b>Greater than 1-2%</b>
<b>1 month</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>Greater than 5%</b>
<b>3 months</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>Greater than 7.5%</b>
<b>6 months</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>Greater than 10%</b>



# Calculating % Weight Change

- ▶ Use the following formula to determine the percent weight change

**% Weight Change =**

$$\frac{\text{Previous Weight} - \text{Current Weight} \times 100}{\text{Previous Weight}}$$

**Reweigh immediately if weight is in question**

# Assure Accurate Weights

- ▶ Weights should be monitored monthly for significant/severe change and documented accordingly
- ▶ A re-weigh is done on any individual with a significant change in weight
- ▶ Re-weighs should be done within 3 days of the original weight, and at approximately the same time of day as the original weight

# Assure Accurate Weights

Investigate the scales:

- ▶ Has there been a recent change in the scales?
- ▶ Is the individual being weighed on a different scale? If yes, note this.
- ▶ Have the scales been calibrated recently?
- ▶ Has the staff that takes the weights changed?

# Assure Accurate Weights

Investigate weighing techniques.

Was the individual weighed:

- ▶ With a new prosthesis, brace, cast or other device?
- ▶ With a gel pad, wheel chair bag, or full catheter bag?
- ▶ At a different time of day or with a different amount of clothing?
- ▶ On a different scale or in a different chair?

# Scale Calibration Concerns

- ▶ Scales are calibrated by the scale company or the maintenance department at least 3 times a year
- ▶ If you think the scales are inaccurate, refer this concern to your supervisor

# Accurate Documentation of Heights and Weights

Please:

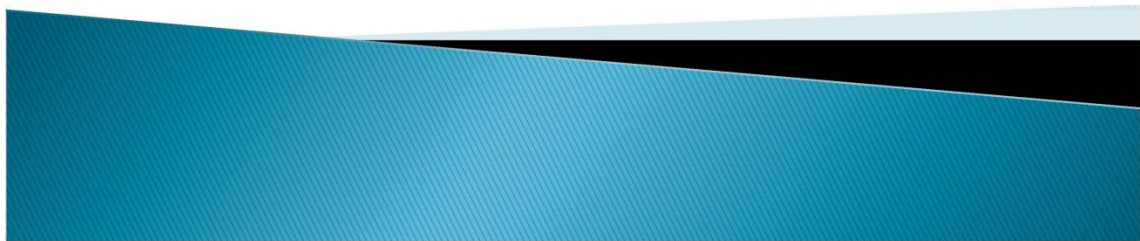
- ▶ Take the time to be sure heights and weights are accurate
- ▶ Use the tools we provide to document heights and weights accurately
- ▶ Assure that the numbers are documented correctly and in the correct place
- ▶ Care will be provided based on this information and it needs to be accurate

# Help Keep Everyone Healthy

- ▶ By taking the time to take accurate heights and weights, you assure that the other members of the team have accurate information
- ▶ This information is used to calculate nutritional needs and monitor changes in health
- ▶ This allows us to provide appropriate interventions for each individual to keep them healthy
- ▶ Thank you for being careful

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

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# Presenter's Notes



# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

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**Audience:** Nursing staff, nursing assistants/aides, therapy personnel if appropriate.

Welcome to our inservice on How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights.

**Presenter Note (Optional):** Before we get started, let's test your knowledge with a short pre-test.

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

## Objectives

Participants will learn:

1. The importance of taking accurate heights and weights
2. How to take an accurate height from a standing or reclining position
3. How to take an accurate weight from a standing or sitting position
4. How to determine significant weight changes
5. How to track heights and weights

Our objectives today are to learn:

1. The importance of taking accurate heights and weights.
2. How to take an accurate height from a standing or reclining position.
3. How to take an accurate weight from a standing or sitting position.
4. How to determine significant weight changes.
5. How to track heights and weights.

### Why is it Important to Have Accurate Heights and Weights?

- ▶ Body weight is an indicator of health status
- ▶ Individuals who lose weight unintentionally are at risk for other health problems such as weakness, increased risk of infection, pressure injuries, poor healing, etc.
- ▶ Individuals who gain significant amounts of weight unintentionally may be having problems with heart failure, kidney disease or other conditions

Keeping records of accurate heights and weights on our residents is important for a number of reasons:

1. Body weight is an indicator of health status.
2. Older adults who lose weight unintentionally are at risk for other health problems such as weakness, increased risk of infection, pressure injuries, poor healing, etc.
3. People who gain significant amounts of weight unintentionally may be having problems with heart failure, kidney disease or other conditions.

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

### Why is it Important to Have Accurate Heights and Weights?

- ▶ We must document weights for the MDS and nursing admission assessments
- ▶ The physician, registered dietitian nutritionist and family must be notified of any significant changes
- ▶ The nutrition professionals use the weights as a basis to calculate nutrient needs
- ▶ Weight tracking helps to determine if an individual needs dining or nutritional interventions or other assistance

(Continued)

4. We must document weights for the MDS and nursing admission assessments.
5. The physician, registered dietitian nutritionist and family must be notified of any significant changes.
6. The nutrition professionals use the weights as a basis to calculate nutrient needs to keep everyone well nourished and hydrated.
7. Weight tracking helps us to determine if an individual needs dining or nutritional interventions, or other assistance.

### Reasonable Body Weights and History

- ▶ It is important to note an individual's usual body weight, and any recent changes in weight
- ▶ It may not be reasonable to think that a person is going to weigh within an ideal weight range due to life weight history
- ▶ If a person was a certain weight their whole life, and now they weigh significantly more or less, there may be cause for concern

- When working with documentation for newly admitted individuals, it is important to note their usual body weight, and any recent changes in weight.
- When it comes to ideal body weight ranges, it may not be reasonable to think that a person is going to weigh within an ideal weight range due to life weight history outside of the ideal range.
- If a person was a certain weight his/her whole life, and now he/she weighs significantly more or less, there may be cause for concern.

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

### We Are Responsible For

- ▶ Keeping accurate records of height and ongoing weights on each individual
- ▶ Obtaining and tracking all individuals' monthly weights (and weekly weights if needed)
- ▶ Calculating percentage of weight change each month (or week) on each individual
- ▶ Notifying the family, physician, nursing staff, dietary staff, and care plan team of significant weight changes

When it comes to height and weight documentation, we are responsible for:

- Keeping accurate records of height and ongoing weights on each individual.
- Obtaining and tracking each person's monthly weights (and weekly weights if needed).
- Calculating percentage of weight change each month (or week) on each person.
- Notifying the family, physician, nursing staff, food service staff, and care plan team of significant weight changes.

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

### Each Resident Will Be Weighed at Least Monthly

- ▶ Schedule each person for monthly and weekly weights on the same date each month or week
- ▶ Keep accurate records of monthly and weekly weights
- ▶ Percentage of weight change is calculated based on our weight records
- ▶ Provide copies of monthly and weekly weights to all units, nursing, food service manager, dietitian and the care plan team

- Each person must be weighed at least monthly. Some may be weighed weekly.
- Schedule each person for monthly and weekly weights on the same date each month or week.
- Keep accurate records of monthly and weekly weights.
- Calculate the percentage weight change based on our weight records.
- Provide copies of monthly and weekly weights to all units, nursing, food service manager, registered dietitian nutritionist and the care plan team.

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

### How to Obtain Accurate Heights

#### Standing Height:

- ▶ To obtain an accurate height, measure the individual without shoes, standing as erect as possible
- ▶ If using the measuring bar on the scale, it should be placed flat on the head
- ▶ Read the measurement on the bar and record immediately

Heights must be as accurate as possible because all of the calculations for caloric needs use height as part of the formula for calculation. To ensure each person receives enough calories, please take careful measurements.

#### To measure standing height accurately:

- Measure the individual without shoes, standing as erect as possible.
- If using the measuring bar on the scale, it should be placed flat on the head.
- Read the measurement on the bar and record immediately.

**Presenter Note:** It is best to demonstrate this procedure.



### How to Obtain Accurate Heights

If using a yardstick for standing height:

- ▶ Have the individual stand against a wall, as erect as possible
- ▶ Place the yardstick parallel to the floor, on top of the head
- ▶ Mark the wall at the top of the head, using the yardstick as a guide
- ▶ Measure from the floor to the mark (where the top of the head was)

To measure an accurate standing height if using a yardstick:

- Have the individual stand against a wall, as erect as possible.
- Place the yardstick parallel to the floor, on top of the head.
- Mark the wall at the top of the head, using the yardstick as a guide.
- Measure from the floor to the mark (where the top of the head was).

**Presenter Note:** It is best to demonstrate this procedure.

### How To Obtain a Reclining Height

- ▶ The individual should lie flat, with 1 arm extended in a 90 degree angle to the torso
- ▶ With arm and hand extended straight out, use a tape measure to measure from the middle of the sternum to the tip of the middle finger
- ▶ Double this number for an approximate height in inches
- ▶ Document this as an approximate height

#### Reclining Height:

For individuals who are unable to stand up straight, use the arm span measurement.

1. The person should lie flat, with one arm extended in a 90 degree angle to the torso.
2. With the person's arm and hand extended straight out, use a tape measure to measure from the middle of the sternum to the tip of the middle finger.
3. Double this number for an approximate height in inches.
4. Document that this number as an approximate height using arm span measurement.

**Presenter Note:** It is best to demonstrate this procedure.

### Unable to Get Accurate Height Measurements

- ▶ If for some reason you are unable to obtain an accurate height measurement, ask the family what the individual's normal height was
- ▶ Document that the family provided the height because you are unable to get an accurate height on the individual

- If for some reason you are unable to obtain an accurate height measurement using any of the methods described, ask the family what the individual's normal height was.
- Document that the family provided the height because you are unable to get an accurate height measurement on the individual.

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

### How to Obtain Accurate Weights

#### Balance Scales:

- ▶ Do NOT move scales from place to place
- ▶ Balance the scale back to 0 before and after weighing each time
- ▶ Record the weight immediately after weighing each individual

For scales to take accurate weights, they must be cared for properly.

Here are some tips for balance scales:

- Do NOT move scales from place to place. If for some reason, scales must be moved, be sure to recalibrate the scale prior to use.
- Balance the scale back to 0 before and after weighing each time.
- Record the weight immediately after weighing each individual.

### How to Obtain Accurate Weights

- ▶ Weigh each person at the same time each month and approximately the same time of day each time
- ▶ Weigh people in light clothing, without shoes, prior to breakfast, after voiding, and with an empty catheter bag (if applicable)
- ▶ Remove prosthetic devices (including braces). Or weigh the prosthetic device itself and subtract its weight from the individual's total weight

- Weigh each person at the same time each month.
- Weigh each person at approximately the same time of day each time.
- Weigh each person in light clothing, without shoes, prior to breakfast, after voiding, with an empty catheter bag (if applicable).
- Remove prosthetic devices (including braces). Or weigh the prosthetic device itself and subtract its weight from the individual's total weight.

### How to Obtain Accurate Weights

- ▶ Document any casts, or appliances such as splints, etc.
- ▶ Assist the individual to use the rest room prior to weighing
- ▶ Empty catheter bags prior to weighing
- ▶ Calibrate scales on a regular schedule (minimum of every 3–4 months)

- Document any casts, or appliances such as splints, etc.
- Each person should be assisted to use the rest room prior to weighing. Catheter bags should be emptied prior to weighing.
- Calibrate scales on a regular schedule (minimum of every 3-4 months).

### Standing Weight

- ▶ Position the individual to stand with feet in the center of the scale (must stand without assistance)
- ▶ When the scale is balanced and has stopped its movement, record the weight
- ▶ Use a chair scale or bed scale for people who need assistance (if the person is unable to stand still and balanced on the scale)

To take weights of individuals who can stand on a scale independently, without assistance:

1. Position the individual to stand with feet in the center of the scale (must be able to stand without assistance).
2. When the scale is balanced and has stopped its movement, record the weight.
3. Use a chair scale or bed scale for people who need assistance (if the person is unable to stand still and balanced on the scale)

**Presenter Note:** It is best to demonstrate this procedure.

### Chair Weight

- ▶ Position the individual in the center of the chair, with his/her back resting on back of the chair
- ▶ When the scale is balanced and has stopped its movement, record the weight

For those individuals who need to be weighed in a chair scale:

- Position the person in the center of the chair, sitting with his/her back resting on the back of the chair.
- When scale is balanced and has stopped its movement, record the weight.

**Presenter Note:** It is best to demonstrate this procedure.



### Wheel Chair Weights

- ▶ Be sure the chair is free of extra weight (side bags, catheter bags, cushions or other items)
- ▶ Roll the wheel chair onto the wheel chair scale platform. Center the wheel chair on the scale.
- ▶ Weigh the wheel chair and record the total weight of the wheel chair and the individual.
- ▶ Remove the person from the wheel chair. Weigh the wheel chair.
- ▶ Carefully subtract the weight of the wheel chair and record the weight.

For those people who need to be weighed in their wheel chairs, a wheel chair scale is used.

- Be sure the chair is free of extra weight (i.e. side bags, catheter bags, cushions or other items).
- Roll the wheel chair onto the scale platform. Center the wheel chair on the scale.
- Weigh the person in the wheel chair and record the total weight of the wheel chair and the person.
- Remove the person from the wheel chair. Weigh the wheel chair.
- Carefully subtract the weight of the wheel chair and record the weight.

**Presenter Note:** It is best to demonstrate this procedure.

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

### Bed Weights

- ▶ Use the bed scale or lift scale
- ▶ Position the individual comfortably in the scale sling
- ▶ Raise the sling slowly until it is fully suspended and still
- ▶ Read and record the weight immediately

For people who must be weighed in a reclining position in bed:

- Use the bed scale or lift scale.
- Position the person comfortably in the scale sling.
- Raise the sling slowly until it is fully suspended and still.
- Read and record the weight immediately.

**Presenter Note:** It is best to have nursing demonstrate this procedure.

### Significant Weight Changes

- ▶ Compare the new weight with the old weight (from 30 days ago or 7 days ago)
- ▶ Determine significant changes in weights
- ▶ If there is a significant change, reweigh the individual immediately
- ▶ Automatically reweigh anyone with a significant weight
- ▶ Document any differences in weighing technique (variation in date, time of day, amount of clothing, etc.)

Once the weights have all been taken, we need to determine any significant weight changes:

- Compare the new weight with the old weight (from 30 days ago or 7 days ago).
- Determine whether there is a significant change (see next slide).
- If there is a significant change, reweigh the person immediately.
- Automatically reweigh anyone with a significant weight change (a gain or loss of 5% gain in 1 month, 7.5% in 3 months, or 10% in 6 months).
- Document any differences in weighing technique (variation in date, time of day, amount of clothing, etc.).

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

### Significant Weight Changes

Time Interval	Significant Change	Severe Change
1 week	1-2 %	Greater than 1-2%
1 month	5%	Greater than 5%
3 months	7.5%	Greater than 7.5%
6 months	10%	Greater than 10%

Significant and severe weight change is defined as follows: (Review the chart in the slide).

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

### Calculating % Weight Change

- ▶ Use the following formula to determine the percent weight change

$$\% \text{ Weight Change} = \frac{\text{Previous Weight} - \text{Current Weight} \times 100}{\text{Previous Weight}}$$

Reweigh immediately if weight is in question

Use the following formula to determine the percent weight change.

Percent weight change equals:

$$\frac{\text{Previous Weight minus Current Weight} \times 100}{\text{Previous Weight}}$$

Reweigh immediately if weight is in question.

**Presenter Note:** If your facility has easy to use charts to calculate weight change, please share that information and how to use the charts. If your facility uses a computerized system, explain how the documentation is done and what the procedure is to notify the care team of significant changes.

### Assure Accurate Weights

- ▶ Weights should be monitored monthly for significant/severe change and documented accordingly
- ▶ A re-weigh is done on any individual with a significant change in weight
- ▶ Re-weighs should be done within 3 days of the original weight, and at approximately the same time of day as the original weight

- Weights should be monitored monthly for significant or severe change and documented accordingly.
- A re-weigh is done on any person with a significant change in weight from one weighing to the next.
- Re-weighs should be done within 3 days of the original weight, and at approximately the same time of day as the original weight.
- Document these weights carefully and follow facility procedures.

### Assure Accurate Weights

Investigate the scales:

- ▶ Has there been a recent change in the scales?
- ▶ Is the individual being weighed on a different scale? If yes, note this.
- ▶ Have the scales been calibrated recently?
- ▶ Has the staff that takes the weights changed?

If you suspect inaccuracies in weights, investigate the scales:

- Has there been a recent change in the scales?
- Is the person being weighed on a different scale? Document any changes in scales. For example, an individual is usually weighed on a wheel chair scale, but has recently been switched to a bed scale. This must be noted on the weight sheets. There may be a weight variation between scales.
- Have the scales been calibrated recently?
- Has the staff that takes the weights changed?

### Assure Accurate Weights

Investigate weighing techniques.

Was the individual weighed:

- ▶ With a new prosthesis, brace, cast or other device?
- ▶ With a gel pad, wheel chair bag, or full catheter bag?
- ▶ At a different time of day or with a different amount of clothing?
- ▶ On a different scale or in a different chair?

You may also want to investigate weighing techniques:

- Was the person weighed with a new prosthesis, brace, cast or other device?
- Was the person weighed with a gel pad, wheel chair bag, or full catheter bag?
- Was the person weighed at a different time of day or with a different amount of clothing?
- Was the person weighed on a different scale or in a different chair?



### Scale Calibration Concerns

- ▶ Scales are calibrated by the scale company or the maintenance department at least 3 times a year
- ▶ If you think the scales are inaccurate, refer this concern to your supervisor

Scales need to be calibrated regularly to remain accurate.

- Scales are calibrated by the scale company or the maintenance department at least 3-4 times a year.
- If you think the scales are inaccurate, you should refer this concern to your supervisor.

Note: The facility may wish to check the scale prior to calling the scale company. Weigh three 20 pound bags of flour or some other pre-weighed items to determine if scales are off balance. It is best to use something that weighs at least 60 pounds.

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

### Accurate Documentation of Heights and Weights

Please:

- ▶ Take the time to be sure heights and weights are accurate
- ▶ Use the tools we provide to document heights and weights accurately
- ▶ Assure that the numbers are documented correctly and in the correct place
- ▶ Care will be provided based on this information and it needs to be accurate

Please:

- Take the time to be sure that heights and weights are accurate.
- Use the forms (or computer system) we provide to document heights and weights.
- Take the time to assure that the numbers are documented correctly and in the correct place.
- Much of the care that will be provided as a result of this information is dependent on accuracy of height and weight documentation on an ongoing basis.

**Presenter's Note:** Share the forms and/or computer program as applicable and discuss any needed details.

### Help Keep Everyone Healthy

- ▶ By taking the time to take accurate heights and weights, you assure that the other members of the team have accurate information
- ▶ This information is used to calculate nutritional needs and monitor changes in health
- ▶ This allows us to provide appropriate interventions for each individual to keep them healthy
- ▶ Thank you for being careful

Accurate height and weight records are crucial to maintaining the health of the people we serve.

- By taking the time to take accurate heights and weights, you assure that the other members of the team have accurate information.
- This information is used to calculate nutritional needs and monitor changes in health.
- This allows us to provide appropriate interventions for each individual to keep them healthy.
- Thank you for being careful to take and document accurate heights and weights.

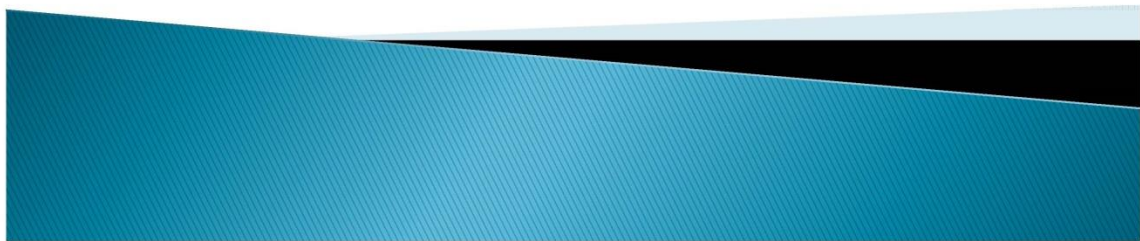
**Presenter Notes:**

Questions and Answers.

Optional: Post-test.

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

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# Handouts

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

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### Objectives

Participants will learn:

1. The importance of taking accurate heights and weights
2. How to take an accurate height from a standing or reclining position
3. How to take an accurate weight from a standing or sitting position
4. How to determine significant weight changes
5. How to track heights and weights

### Why is it Important to Have Accurate Heights and Weights?

- ▶ Body weight is an indicator of health status
- ▶ Individuals who lose weight unintentionally are at risk for other health problems such as weakness, increased risk of infection, pressure injuries, poor healing, etc.
- ▶ Individuals who gain significant amounts of weight unintentionally may be having problems with heart failure, kidney disease or other conditions

### Why is it Important to Have Accurate Heights and Weights?

- ▶ We must document weights for the MDS and nursing admission assessments
- ▶ The physician, registered dietitian nutritionist and family must be notified of any significant changes
- ▶ The nutrition professionals use the weights as a basis to calculate nutrient needs
- ▶ Weight tracking helps to determine if an individual needs dining or nutritional interventions or other assistance

### Reasonable Body Weights and History

- ▶ It is important to note an individual's usual body weight, and any recent changes in weight
- ▶ It may not be reasonable to think that a person is going to weigh within an ideal weight range due to life weight history
- ▶ If a person was a certain weight their whole life, and now they weigh significantly more or less, there may be cause for concern

### We Are Responsible For

- ▶ Keeping accurate records of height and ongoing weights on each individual
- ▶ Obtaining and tracking all individuals' monthly weights (and weekly weights if needed)
- ▶ Calculating percentage of weight change each month (or week) on each individual
- ▶ Notifying the family, physician, nursing staff, dietary staff, and care plan team of significant weight changes

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

## Each Resident Will Be Weighed at Least Monthly

- ▶ Schedule each person for monthly and weekly weights on the same date each month or week
- ▶ Keep accurate records of monthly and weekly weights
- ▶ Percentage of weight change is calculated based on our weight records
- ▶ Provide copies of monthly and weekly weights to all units, nursing, food service manager, dietitian and the care plan team

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights

### Standing Height:

- ▶ To obtain an accurate height, measure the individual without shoes, standing as erect as possible
- ▶ If using the measuring bar on the scale, it should be placed flat on the head
- ▶ Read the measurement on the bar and record immediately

## How to Obtain Accurate Heights

If using a yardstick for standing height:

- ▶ Have the individual stand against a wall, as erect as possible
- ▶ Place the yardstick parallel to the floor, on top of the head
- ▶ Mark the wall at the top of the head, using the yardstick as a guide
- ▶ Measure from the floor to the mark (where the top of the head was)

## How To Obtain a Reclining Height

- ▶ The individual should lie flat, with 1 arm extended in a 90 degree angle to the torso
- ▶ With arm and hand extended straight out, use a tape measure to measure from the middle of the sternum to the tip of the middle finger
- ▶ Double this number for an approximate height in inches
- ▶ Document this as an approximate height

## Unable to Get Accurate Height Measurements

- ▶ If for some reason you are unable to obtain an accurate height measurement, ask the family what the individual's normal height was
- ▶ Document that the family provided the height because you are unable to get an accurate height on the individual

## How to Obtain Accurate Weights

### Balance Scales:

- ▶ Do NOT move scales from place to place
- ▶ Balance the scale back to 0 before and after weighing each time
- ▶ Record the weight immediately after weighing each individual

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

## How to Obtain Accurate Weights

- ▶ Weigh each person at the same time each month and approximately the same time of day each time
- ▶ Weigh people in light clothing, without shoes, prior to breakfast, after voiding, and with an empty catheter bag (if applicable)
- ▶ Remove prosthetic devices (including braces). Or weigh the prosthetic device itself and subtract its weight from the individual's total weight

## How to Obtain Accurate Weights

- ▶ Document any casts, or appliances such as splints, etc.
- ▶ Assist the individual to use the rest room prior to weighing
- ▶ Empty catheter bags prior to weighing
- ▶ Calibrate scales on a regular schedule (minimum of every 3–4 months)

## Standing Weight

- ▶ Position the individual to stand with feet in the center of the scale (must stand without assistance)
- ▶ When the scale is balanced and has stopped its movement, record the weight
- ▶ Use a chair scale or bed scale for people who need assistance (if the person is unable to stand still and balanced on the scale)

## Chair Weight

- ▶ Position the individual in the center of the chair, with his/her back resting on back of the chair
- ▶ When the scale is balanced and has stopped its movement, record the weight

## Wheel Chair Weights

- ▶ Be sure the chair is free of extra weight (side bags, catheter bags, cushions or other items)
- ▶ Roll the wheel chair onto the wheel chair scale platform. Center the wheel chair on the scale.
- ▶ Weigh the wheel chair and record the total weight of the wheel chair and the individual.
- ▶ Remove the person from the wheel chair. Weigh the wheel chair.
- ▶ Carefully subtract the weight of the wheel chair and record the weight.

## Bed Weights

- ▶ Use the bed scale or lift scale
- ▶ Position the individual comfortably in the scale sling
- ▶ Raise the sling slowly until it is fully suspended and still
- ▶ Read and record the weight immediately

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

## Significant Weight Changes

- ▶ Compare the new weight with the old weight (from 30 days ago or 7 days ago)
- ▶ Determine significant changes in weights
- ▶ If there is a significant change, reweigh the individual immediately
- ▶ Automatically reweigh anyone with a significant weight
- ▶ Document any differences in weighing technique (variation in date, time of day, amount of clothing, etc.)

## Significant Weight Changes

Time Interval	Significant Change	Severe Change
1 week	1-2 %	Greater than 1-2%
1 month	5%	Greater than 5%
3 months	7.5%	Greater than 7.5%
6 months	10%	Greater than 10%

## Calculating % Weight Change

- ▶ Use the following formula to determine the percent weight change

**% Weight Change =**

$$\frac{\text{Previous Weight} - \text{Current Weight} \times 100}{\text{Previous Weight}}$$

**Reweigh immediately if weight is in question**

## Assure Accurate Weights

- ▶ Weights should be monitored monthly for significant/severe change and documented accordingly
- ▶ A re-weigh is done on any individual with a significant change in weight
- ▶ Re-weighs should be done within 3 days of the original weight, and at approximately the same time of day as the original weight

## Assure Accurate Weights

Investigate the scales:

- ▶ Has there been a recent change in the scales?
- ▶ Is the individual being weighed on a different scale? If yes, note this.
- ▶ Have the scales been calibrated recently?
- ▶ Has the staff that takes the weights changed?

## Assure Accurate Weights

Investigate weighing techniques.

Was the individual weighed:

- ▶ With a new prosthesis, brace, cast or other device?
- ▶ With a gel pad, wheel chair bag, or full catheter bag?
- ▶ At a different time of day or with a different amount of clothing?
- ▶ On a different scale or in a different chair?



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# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

## Pre/Post Test

### True/False (*Circle your choice*)

1. An accurate weight is a required part of the assessment process.  
**True**                      **False**
2. If a resident tells you a verbal height, you don't have to measure them.  
**True**                      **False**
3. When a resident is unable to stand, you don't have to weigh them.  
**True**                      **False**
4. Significant weight changes can indicate a change in health status or condition.  
**True**                      **False**
5. A significant weight change would be a 5% gain or loss of weight from one month to the next.  
**True**                      **False**
6. If a significant weight change is noted, the resident should be reweighed immediately.  
**True**                      **False**
7. The dietitian can do a thorough nutrition assessment without a height or weight.  
**True**                      **False**
8. Arm span measure is an acceptable way to measure height if a person is unable to stand upright.  
**True**                      **False**
9. There is no acceptable way to get a weight for a bed bound person.  
**True**                      **False**
10. It is not important to know what a resident's normal adult weight has been.  
**True**                      **False**

# How to Obtain Accurate Heights and Weights

## Answer Key

1. True
2. False
3. False
4. True
5. True
6. True
7. False
8. True
9. False
10. False



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- Kerrie Jung, RD, CD

