



WSL Exercise & Nutrition:

Weight Matters! Lighten Up!

By Jacci Thompson-Dodd, MA, MSSS

Spring is almost here! It is time for new beginnings, fresh starts, and shedding heavy winter clothes. For the sake of your health, consider shedding extra pounds too.

Obesity is the root cause of many health problems such as diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers. For Black women, obesity is an especially insidious risk factor for our health. One recent study suggests that more than 75 percent of African American women are overweight or obese.

It all comes down to Body Mass Index (BMI)—a formula that calculates the ratios of your age, height, and weight. To be considered overweight, your BMI would be between 25 and 29.9. Obesity is defined as a BMI of 30 or higher. To calculate your BMI, use the BMI Calculator from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://tinyurl.com/6bv835>.

This is not to suggest that we should all aspire to be rail thin like the models we see in fashion magazines. Rather, this is about achieving the optimal for YOU, considering your height and bone structure. There is no such thing as one-size-fits all solutions!



By losing just 10 percent of your current body weight, you can reduce your risk of these diseases substantially. We do not endorse fad dieting that deprives your body of essential nutrition just to take excess weight off quickly. Rather, focus on taking it off gradually with quality nutrition, exercise, and along the way learning new behaviors to keep it off.

That's what WHOLE Body Living is all about: learning behaviors to help you attain and sustain your optimal health. We offer easy-to-adopt resources for creating a self-care plan specially tailored to your needs and circumstances. So let's get started on the road to better health—one step at a time. To learn more, visit www.wespeakloudly.com.



Jacci Thompson-Dodd earned a Master of Science in Social Service and a Master of Arts in African American Studies from Boston University. She received her undergraduate degree in Social Welfare from the University of California, Berkeley. She is the founder and director of WeSepakLoudly™, a firm specializing in the health and wellness of African American women based in Seattle, WA.

A member of the Minority Women's Health Panel of Experts for the Office on Women's Health, Ms. Thompson-Dodd serves on two panels for the National Cancer Institute, and the Board of Trustees for Cancer Lifeline. For more information on WeSpeakLoudly, visit, www.wespeakloudly.com.

