

Understanding BMI

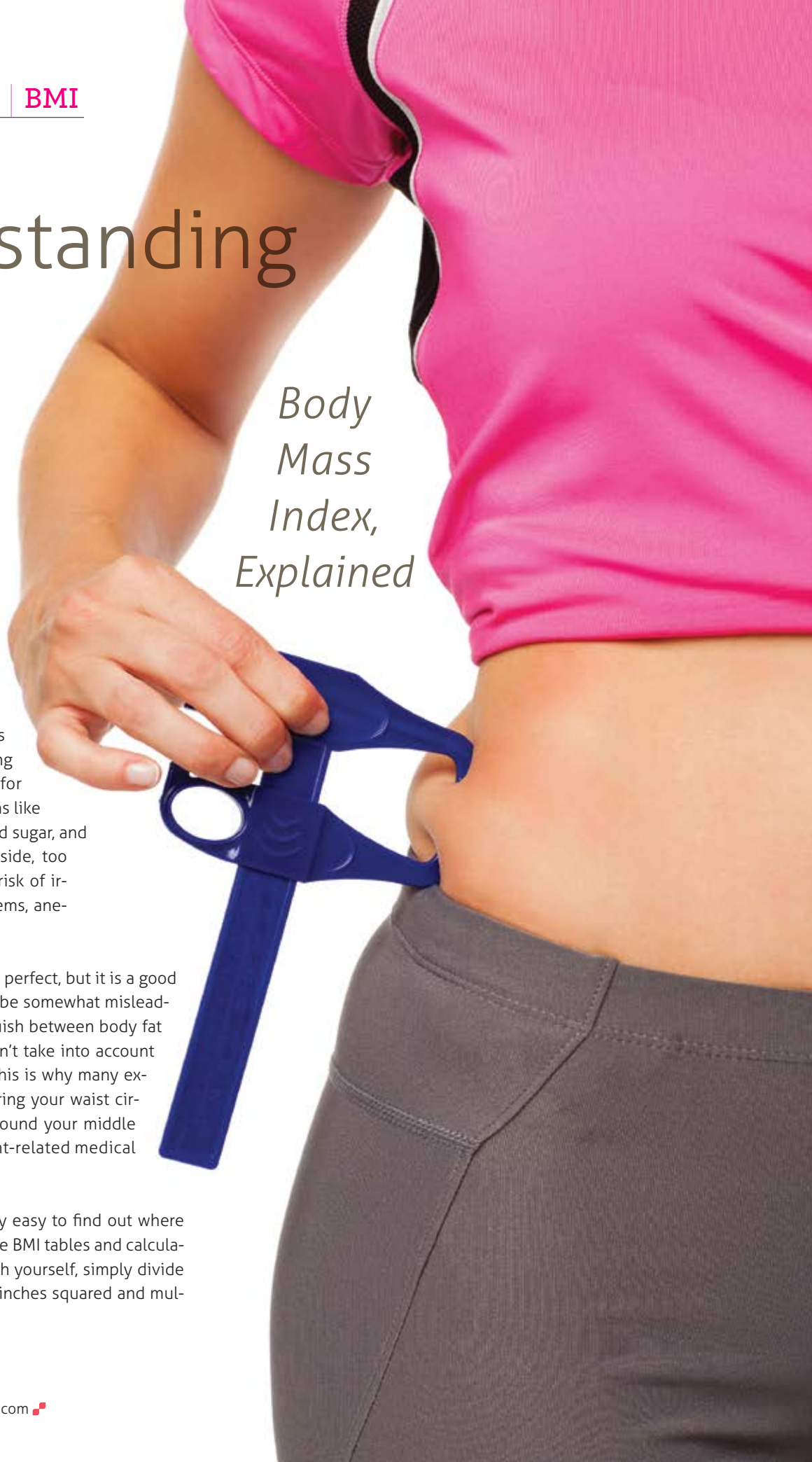
Body Mass Index, Explained

What it is: BMI is the tool experts use to calculate body fat. Essentially, it is a measure of your weight in relation to your height. It's an important measurement because too little or too much body fat can lead to serious health risks.

A healthy range: Experts say a healthy BMI range falls between 18.5 and 24.9. Going over this can put you at risk for developing medical conditions like high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and high cholesterol. On the flip side, too little body fat can put you at risk of irregular periods, fertility problems, anemia, and bone loss.

Accuracy level: The tool isn't perfect, but it is a good health indicator overall. It can be somewhat misleading because it doesn't distinguish between body fat and lean body mass and doesn't take into account the location of the body fat. This is why many experts recommend also measuring your waist circumference—extra pounds around your middle can increase your risk of weight-related medical conditions even further.

Find out your BMI: It's pretty easy to find out where you stand with dozens of online BMI tables and calculators. If you want to do the math yourself, simply divide your weight by your height in inches squared and multiply that number by 703.



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