



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at Veritas Risk Services

Calories are a unit of energy, not weight. The calories you eat are either converted to physical energy or stored within your body as fat. As a general rule, 3,500 calories is equal to 1 pound of fat.

ESTIMATED CALORIE REQUIREMENTS

Losing weight and staying fit can be tough if you are unsure of how many calories you should eat each day. To make things a bit easier, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have provided these dietary guidelines for Americans based on age, gender and activity level.

The table shows the estimated amounts of calories needed to maintain balance for various gender and age groups at three different levels of physical activity. The estimates are rounded to the nearest 200 calories. The calorie ranges shown are to accommodate needs of different ages within the group. For children and adolescents, more calories are needed at older ages. For adults, fewer calories are needed at older ages. An individual's caloric needs may be higher or lower than these average estimates.

Physical Activity Level*				
	Age	Sedentary	Moderately Active	Active
Child	2-3	1,000-1,200	1,000-1,400	1,000-1,400
Female**	4-8	1,200-1,400	1,400-1,600	1,400-1,800
	9-13	1,400-1,600	1,600-2,000	1,800-2,200
	14-18	1,800	2,000	2,400
	19-30	1,800-2,000	2,000-2,200	2,400
	31-50	1,800	2,000	2,200
	51+	1,600	1,800	2,000-2,200
Male	4-8	1,200-1,400	1,400-1,600	1,600-2,000
	9-13	1,600-2,000	1,800-2,200	2,000-2,600
	14-18	2,000-2,400	2,400-2,800	2,800-3,200
	19-30	2,400-2,600	2,600-2,800	3,000
	31-50	2,200-2,400	2,400-2,600	2,800-3,000
	51+	2,000-2,200	2,200-2,400	2,400-2,800

These levels are based on Estimated Energy Requirements (EER) equations, using reference heights (average) and reference weights (healthy) for each age and gender group. For children and adolescents, reference height and weight vary. For adults, the reference man is five feet and 10 inches tall and weighs 154 pounds. The reference woman is five feet and four inches tall and weighs 126 pounds. EER equations are from the Institute of Medicine.

*Sedentary means a lifestyle that includes only the light physical activity associated with typical day-to-day life. Moderately active means a lifestyle that includes physical activity equivalent to walking about 1.5 to 3 miles per day at 3 to 4 miles per hour, in addition to the light physical activity associated with typical day-to-day life. Active means a lifestyle that includes physical activity equivalent to walking more than 3 miles per day at 3 to 4 miles per hour, in addition to the light physical activity associated with typical day-to-day life.

**Estimates for females do not include women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

