

## Your Body Composition

An important test that we perform is a Bio Impedance Analysis (BIA). BIA testing assesses body composition (the amount of fat and muscle in your body). This is important information because the fat you can see in the mirror is not all the fat there is in the body. There is also fat that you can't see in the mirror called visceral fat or organ fat. Your body needs a certain amount of visceral fat, but too much can be harmful. Even people who appear to be lean can have an excess of visceral fat, a condition sometimes referred to as TOFI (thin outside, fat inside). Visceral fat wraps around your pancreas, liver, intestines, and vital organs and can increase your risk of serious health issues such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure, and others.

Over the last few decades, there has been a tremendous focus on "weight loss" and any number of people have undergone grueling diets and punishing exercise regimes, at the expense of their health, in trying to achieve what is viewed as the "ideal" weight. Pounds have been the target but very often the pounds shed were muscle, not fat, which only increased the body's fat percentage.

Losing muscle can be very hard on your immune system, your [adrenal glands](#), your cardiovascular system, your hormonal system, your respiratory system, and can cause any number of health issues. In fact, losing muscle instead of losing fat is so unhealthy that some people would have been better off not having lost any weight at all. Healthy, sustainable weight loss must target fat and not pounds.

A BIA test will tell us the amount of muscle and the amount of fat in your body. That gives us a better overall measure of your general health than just weight. It tells us whether too high a percentage of fat compared to the percentage of muscle should

be addressed as a matter of health. BIA testing does away with "weight loss" as the goal and properly focuses on fat loss and muscle gain as the goal, an important distinction.

BIA testing also measures metabolic rate (the number of calories burned at rest without exercise), hydration level and also tells us the overall health of the cells.

BIA testing is painless and non-invasive. Pads similar to those used for an EKG are attached to your hand and your foot. An impulse is transmitted between the pads and measurements are recorded.

BIA testing is used at the beginning of a program to determine a baseline and then re-done during the program to measure progress.