

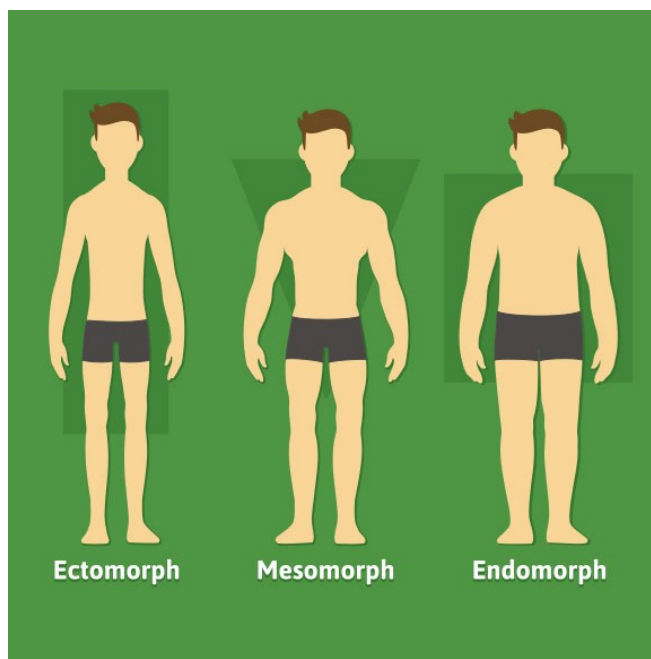


Queensland Government

Healthier. Happier.

Exercising smarter

Exercise smarter. What's your body type



What's your body type

Short. Tall. Athletic. Slender. A bit like a wonky sweet potato. Whether we like it or not, we've all got different body shapes. Not good when it comes to finding the right jeans, and it also affects the way we respond to exercise. In fact, knowing your body type could be the first step to exercising smarter.

Let's start with the facts.

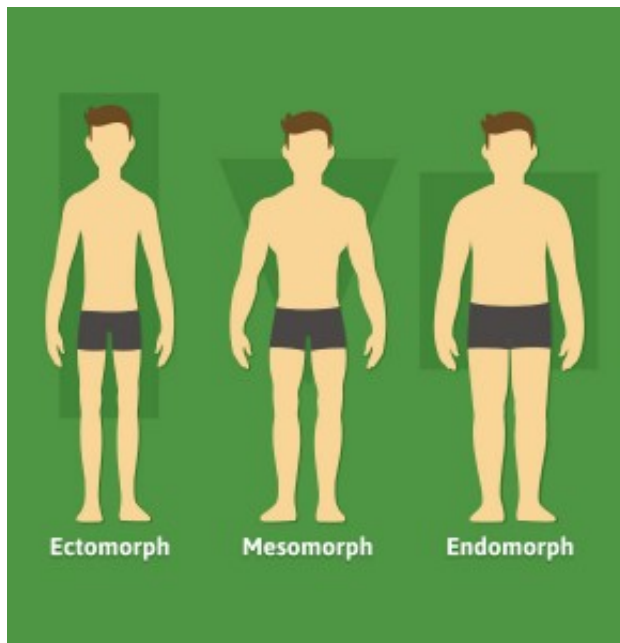
While the women's magazines go for apples, pears and hourglasses, the scientists go for ectomorphs, endomorphs and mesomorphs. These aren't shapes so much as body types.

Ectomorphs: are those long, slim types who never seem to put on weight no matter what they eat. But they also struggle to put on muscle. Think your average marathon runner.

Endomorphs: are the opposite to ectomorphs. They store fat easily and tend to be bigger and rounder, especially in the middle.

Mesomorphs: are Mr and Mrs Muscles. The high metabolism and super responsive muscle cells they're born with burn up kilojoules and spike their regulation of myogenin – the gene responsible for muscle growth.

So what are you?



Of course it's not always as clear cut as this and many people have mixed characteristics, but generally you'll fall naturally into one of these camps because you store fat, burn energy and build muscle in a certain pre-coded way. It's decided by your parents and your parents' parents and your parents' parents' parents and... basically you're born that way. The good news is you can work to your strengths.

If you're a naturally lean ectomorph you might want to investigate exercise that includes resistance training, like a gym circuit, or shorter high intensity workouts using your bodyweight to engage your muscles. If you're going to the gym, focus on compound moves that use multiple muscle groups, such as squats or bench press, rather than isolation moves like biceps curls.

For the naturally curvy endomorphs, your best approach is burning kilojoules, and volume of movement is the key. Regular activity every day is a great way to start, but if you're not one for long walks or jogs, try shorter, high-intensity exercise such as circuit training. You can record it all and proudly stick it to the fridge with our pdf meal and exercise planner.

And here's a tip, putting on some muscle will actually increase your resting metabolism, so add some regular resistance training and you could be burning more kilojoules in your sleep. And remember, don't put your faith in spot reducing (eg doing sit ups to flatten your stomach) because it's just not possible.

And so to the naturally well-built mesomorphs. You're predisposed to build muscle and not store fat, but don't confuse this with being in the best health. When you burn fat and put on muscle just by being you, it's tempting to eat and drink what you like. This means your inner health could be sub-par, . So now's the time to get into a health routine and make the most of what you've got. Choose exercise that motivates you or helps you set goals, like group workouts or training for an event, that way you're more likely to stick to it.

So that's the body type lottery. What do you think? Are you an ectomorph, endomorph or mesomorph? The great thing is that no matter what body type you have, by eating better every day and sticking to a good activity regime you're on your way to the healthiest you. To find out more about your body type or what exercise is best for you, a good idea can be to start with a dietitian or exercise physiologist. It's probably easier and more affordable than you think. Click for our articles on finding the right dietitian and physiologist for you.

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