

Cutoffs to Classify Nutritional Status by Age Group and Pregnancy Status

Children 0–59 months

Measure or index	Severe acute malnutrition (SAM)	Moderate acute malnutrition (MAM)	Normal	Overweight	Obesity
Bilateral pitting edema	Any bilateral pitting edema	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Weight	Confirmed weight loss > 5% since last visit			—	—
Mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) (6–59 months)	< 115 mm	≥ 115 to < 125 mm	≥ 125 mm	—	—
Weight-for-height z-score (WHZ) (6–59 months)	< -3	≥ -3 to < -2	≥ -2 to ≤ +2	> +2 to ≤ +3	> +3

Children/Adolescents 5–17 years

Measure or index	Severe malnutrition	Moderate malnutrition	Normal nutritional status	Overweight	Obesity
Bilateral pitting edema	Any bilateral pitting edema	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Weight	Confirmed weight loss > 5% since last visit	—	—	—	—
Mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC)	5–9 years < 135 mm	≥ 135 to < 145 mm	≥ 145 mm	—	—
	10–14 years < 160 mm	≥ 160 to < 185 mm	≥ 185 mm	—	—
	15–17 years < 185 mm	≥ 185 to < 220 mm	≥ 220 mm	—	—
Body mass index (BMI)-for-age z-score	< -3	≥ -3 to < -2	≥ -2 to ≤ +1	> +1 to ≤ +2	> +2

Pregnant/postpartum women

Measure or index	Severe malnutrition	Moderate malnutrition	Normal nutritional status	Overweight	Obesity
Bilateral pitting edema	Any bilateral pitting edema	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Weight	Confirmed unintentional weight loss > 10% since last visit	—	—	—	—
Mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC)*	< 190 mm	≥ 190 to < 220 (or 230)* mm	≥ 220 (or 230) mm	—	—

* Countries may use different MUAC cutoffs for moderate malnutrition in pregnant/postpartum women.

Adults (non-pregnant/non-postpartum) 18 years and over

Measure or index	Severe malnutrition	Moderate malnutrition	Normal nutritional status	Overweight	Obesity
Bilateral pitting edema	Any bilateral pitting edema	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Weight	Confirmed unintentional weight loss > 10% since last visit	—	—	—	—
Mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC)*	< 185 mm	≥ 185 to < 220 mm	≥ 220 mm	—	—
Body mass index (BMI)	< 16.0	≥ 16.0 to < 18.5	≥ 18.5 to < 25.0	≥ 25.0 to < 30.0	≥ 30.0

Source: WHO. 1995. *Physical Status: The Use and Interpretation of Anthropometry: Report of a WHO Expert Committee*. WHO Technical Report Series 854. Geneva: WHO.

* WHO has not established standard MUAC cutoffs to classify nutritional status in adults. The cutoffs presented are suggestions based on current practices.