

Maintaining Muscle Mass: Key to Long-Term Health

One of the major problems associated with aging is the loss of muscle mass. This loss leads to progressive loss of strength and is also associated with an increase risk developing heart disease and stroke.

Until recently, there was no practical way to accurately measure muscles mass. The current standard to **estimating** muscle mass is to calculate a patient's Body Mass Index (**BMI**). This method requires the measurement of height and weight, both of which are plugged into a conversion table, which intern calculates a BMI score.

This sore can be misleading. For example, a woman could have a normal BMI score and still have an unhealthy ratio of fat to muscle. Moreover, the score gives them a false feeling of security. These women are often referred as "**skinny fat persons.**"

Fortunately, there are now new devices on the market that accurately measure muscle mass. All a patient needs to do is stand on what looks like a standard bathroom scale. Both hands are then placed on monitoring pads. The measurement takes less than 30 seconds.

I am convinced that every woman 40 years of age or older would benefit from knowing the status of their muscle mass. Women with a normal score could repeat the test every 2-3 years. Women with an elevated ration of fat to muscle would be advised to start muscle and strength building exercises. They would also be advised to have a **yearly measurement of their muscle mass.**

The new technology is just entering the marketplace. It may take a few years before there is widespread adoption by the medical community. However, Breastlink is now looking at a new device that can provide an accurate measurement of muscle mass. It also provides our physicians with important information how to take optimal care of our patients.

If you are interested in seeing the new device that I am so enthusiastic about, we will have it on display at Breastlink of Orange (dates to be determined). Participants can have their muscle mass measured at no cost.

If you are interested, email us at msprouse@beawarefoundation.org.