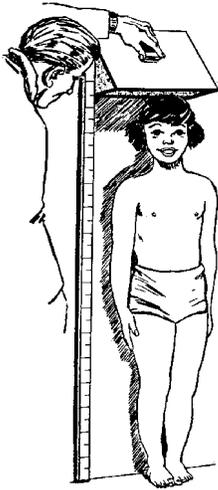


Stadiometer: Device used to measure height



Height

Height is a measure of how tall a person is while they are standing upright. In the WIC Program height is measured on participants who are at least 2 years and one day of age.

Equipment

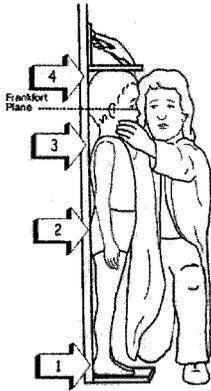
A wall-mounted measuring device that is designed for the purpose of taking standing height is the preferred form of equipment. The measuring device should be placed on a wall that has no baseboard or carpet to interfere with measurements. Baseboards prohibit a person from placing their heels directly against the wall and carpet does not give a firm surface for an accurate measurement. Measuring rods attached to scales are not accurate and should not be used. If information is needed about wall-mounted devices call your nutrition consultant at the State WIC Office.

If a wall-mounted measuring device is not available a tape and head board may be used temporarily. Secure a steel measuring tape to a vertical, flat surface such as a wall. The tape measure should be marked in 1/8 inch increments. The headboard needs to be large enough that when placed on the top of the head it will also touch the wall where the measuring tape is attached (a 6-inch board will usually work). The headboard needs to be able to form a right angle when touching the top of the head and the measuring tape.

A short step ladder may be necessary when performing height measurements for adults so that the measuring tape can be read accurately.

Technique

1. Remove the child's or woman's shoes, hats, and bulky clothing such as coats and sweaters. Undo or adjust hair styles and remove hair accessories that interfere with measurement.
2. The child or woman should stand erect, with shoulders level, hands at sides, knees or thighs together, and his/her weight evenly distributed on both feet. The child's or woman's feet should be flat on the floor with both heels



comfortably together and touching the base of the wall. When possible, all four contact points (i.e., the head, back, buttocks, and heels) should touch the wall while maintaining a natural stance (see figure in left margin). Some participants will not be able to maintain a natural stance if all four contact points are touching the wall. For these participants, at a minimum, two contact points—the buttocks and heels—should always touch the wall.

3. Position the participant's head so that they are looking straight forward.
4. Lower the headpiece until it firmly touches the crown of the head and is at a right angle with the wall. Check contact points as in the figure on the left to ensure that the lower body is still in the proper position and that the heels remain flat on the floor.
5. The measurement is recorded on the growth grid for boys/girls 2-5 years of age or on the Prenatal Weight Gain Grid as appropriate.
6. The information is recorded in the ASPENS system; WICPS105 Update Infant/Child Visit Data for children or WICPS104 Update Woman Visit Data for women.

Maintenance

The measuring device must be kept clean and free of stray marks. The device should be checked monthly to ensure that it is perpendicular to the floor and accurately and firmly attached to the wall. The headboard should be checked for signs of wear and replaced if loose, broken, or no longer creates a right angle with the wall.

Calibration

The measuring device should be compared yearly with a metal tape to make sure it still gives accurate measurements.

Using a Tape Measure Attached to the Wall

1. Select an area where there is no baseboard or carpet and the wall is perpendicular with the floor. Stretching the tape over a baseboard or standing on carpet will distort the measurement.

2. Place the end of the tape measure marked zero on the floor and secure it to the wall.
3. Fully extend the tape upward on the wall. Lightly attach the tape to the wall.
4. Double check placement of the measuring tape paying particular attention to the zero mark. Make sure the zero mark is still at the level of the floor. Also verify that the tape goes straight up the wall and does not veer to one side or the other as it goes up the wall.
5. Secure the measuring tape snugly to the wall to prevent it from being accidentally torn from place.
6. Reinforce the first four inches with tape.



Measurements without a standard measuring device should be rare. All WIC clinics are equipped with measuring devices for height. Call your nutrition consultant if a new measuring device is needed.

Note: Do not use movable measuring rods on platform scales to measure stature. The headbar is unsteady, pliable (it bends), and too narrow to obtain an accurate measurement. The base (weighing platform) also sinks due to the weight of the participant, resulting in an inaccurately shortened height.

#3 Practice!



Answer T (True) or F (False) to each of the following:

1. ____ The height of a participant can be measured with shoes on as long as the clinic is consistent and always measures the participant the same way.
2. ____ When the height of a participant is being measured it is acceptable to let the participant wear shoes as long as the shoes do not have heels (for example tennis shoes or sandals).
3. ____ When measuring a person's height their buttocks and feet at a minimum should be touching the wall.
4. ____ If a standard measuring device is not available, height can be measured using a steel tape measure attached to the wall and a magazine as a headboard.