1. **What is Body Mass Index?**
   Body mass index (BMI) is a number calculated from a child’s height and weight (age 2 and older). BMI is an inexpensive and easy-to-perform method of screening for weight categories that may lead to health problems. For children and teens, BMI is age and gender specific and is often referred to as BMI-for-age. (Source: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov))

2. **What is a BMI percentile?**
   After BMI is calculated for children and teens, the BMI number is plotted on the CDC BMI-for-age growth charts (for either girls or boys) to obtain a percentile ranking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEIGHT STATUS CATEGORY</th>
<th>PERCENTILE RANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underweight</td>
<td>Less than the 5th percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Weight</td>
<td>5th percentile to less than the 85th percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overweight</td>
<td>85th to less than the 95th percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obese</td>
<td>Equal to or greater than the 95th percentile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **How is BMI used with children and teens?**
   BMI is used as a screening tool to identify possible weight problems for children and teens. The CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommend the use of BMI-for-age to screen for overweight and obesity in children beginning at 2 years of age. BMI is not a diagnostic tool. For example, a child may have a high BMI-for-age and gender, but to determine if excess fat is a problem, the health care team would need to perform further assessments. These assessments might include evaluations of diet, physical activity, family history, skin fold thickness, and other appropriate health screenings.

4. **What about the growth chart?**
   This is where the beauty of pediatrics shines through. We love our growth charts. The tracking of BMI over time on a CDC BMI-for-age growth chart provides clinical information for assessment, education, and intervention.

5. **How do you take a proper height and weight measurement of a patient 2 years or older?**
   For detailed instructions on this, visit the *Measuring and Weighing* tab in this toolkit.
6. **How do I calculate BMI?**
   The majority of health care practices use an electronic medical record (EMR) and BMI is calculated automatically. However, you can also calculate BMI yourself by following the steps below:
   Use a BMI wheel, calculator (see below for a link to the CDC), or the BMI formula:

   \[
   \text{BMI (English)} = \frac{\text{weight (lb)}}{[\text{height (in)} \times \text{height (in)}]} \times 703 \\
   \text{BMI (Metric)} = \frac{\text{weight (kg)}}{[\text{height (cm)} \times \text{height (cm)}]} \\
   \]

   **BMI Percentile Calculator for Children and Teens:**

7. **How do I take a proper weight and length measurement of a patient less than 2 years old?**
   For detailed instructions on this, visit the *Measuring and Weighing* tab in this toolkit.

8. **What does 5-2-1-0 stand for?**
   - **5 or more** fruits & vegetables
   - **2 hours or less** recreational screen time*
   - **1 hour or more** of physical activity
   - **0 sugary drinks, more water**
   *

9. **What is the science behind the 5-2-1-0 message?**
   There is a scientific rationale supporting each component of the 5-2-1-0 message. The 5-2-1-0 message is an easy way to begin an open discussion about the ways to increase physical activity and healthy eating. For more information on this, visit the *Step 1: Engage* tab of this toolkit.

10. **Will discussion of the 5-2-1-0 message lead to an increase in eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa?**
    There is no current evidence that bringing up healthy behaviors in a positive manner leads to disordered eating. The 5-2-1-0 message provides an easy way to discuss general health subjects that apply to everyone. Its purpose is to spread healthy behaviors. A study in a medical journal (Austin, et al., Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, vol. 159: 225-230) supported the idea that interventions like *Let's Go!* may actually help prevent eating disorders in early adolescent girls.