



Chapter 13

Life-Span Nutrition

A Shape for Every Sport

Directions: Read the following selection. Then answer the questions under *Thinking Critically*, and complete the activities as directed by your teacher.

Everyone is a mixture of three basic body shapes: the “round” or *endomorph* shape, the “muscular” or *mesomorph* shape, and the “long and lean” or *ectomorph* shape. Researchers use a three-number formula to describe an individual’s body shape based on the chart below. First, the person is measured for weight, height, width, circumference, and amount of body fat. The person is then assigned a rating from 1 to 7 for the amount of each body type component, with 1 being the lowest and 7 the highest. A pure endomorph, for example, would be rated 7-1-1; a pure mesomorph, 1-7-1; and a pure ectomorph, 1-1-7.

When researchers measured Olympic athletes, they found that athletes from each sport had specific characteristic body shapes. This doesn’t mean that all swimmers or all shot-putters look exactly alike. However, swimmers tend to look more like other swimmers than like shot-putters.

Determining Body Type

Which of the three body types is most characteristic of your overall appearance? To find out, read the body type chart below.

1. In the space before each trait, write a 1 if trait describes you.
2. Add up each of the columns.
3. Record the three-part number in the space marked *Your Body Type*.

Bear in mind that this activity is designed to give you a general idea of your basic body type. It might also give you some ideas about the advantages of your body type in certain sports. Remember, nature provides variety in human forms. You can’t change your body type, but you can keep fit by making healthful food choices.

Body Type Chart		
Endomorph	Mesomorph	Ectomorph
<input type="checkbox"/> Oval	<input type="checkbox"/> Muscular	<input type="checkbox"/> Angular
<input type="checkbox"/> Heavyset	<input type="checkbox"/> Square shaped	<input type="checkbox"/> Lean
<input type="checkbox"/> Soft	<input type="checkbox"/> Large boned	<input type="checkbox"/> Small boned
<input type="checkbox"/> Round body	<input type="checkbox"/> Shoulders wider than waist	<input type="checkbox"/> Delicate build
<input type="checkbox"/> Pear shaped	<input type="checkbox"/> Gains or loses weight easily	<input type="checkbox"/> Shoulders and hips about the same width
<input type="checkbox"/> Hips wider than shoulders	<input type="checkbox"/> Hard body	<input type="checkbox"/> Tall
<input type="checkbox"/> Has trouble losing weight	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectangular shaped	<input type="checkbox"/> Lightly muscled
<input type="checkbox"/> Underdeveloped muscles	<input type="checkbox"/> Thick skin	<input type="checkbox"/> Stoop-shouldered
<input type="checkbox"/> Over-developed digestive system	<input type="checkbox"/> Upright posture	<input type="checkbox"/> Has trouble gaining weight
Total _____	Total _____	Total _____
Your Body Type: _____ - _____ - _____		

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Thinking Critically

1. Were you at all surprised by what this activity revealed? Explain your answer.

2. What sports do you enjoy playing? Do you excel in a specific sport? Compare and contrast the possible relationship between your body type and this sport.

For Further Study

- ◆ Examine sports magazines to find pictures of athletes performing in a variety of sports. Analyze the body type characteristics of athletes in different fields. Write a brief report based on your findings and submit it to your teacher.
- ◆ Conduct research on athletes and records set in a given sport, such as the marathon, over a period of time. Do any differences exist between the body types of past athletes and those of athletes today who participate in the same sport? List these differences, and describe how they may account for improved performances. Summarize your findings in a brief report to share with the class.
- ◆ Conduct research on recommended eating plans for athletes in various fields. Compare and contrast these eating plans. Why might an athlete in one field have different nutritional requirements than an athlete in a different field? Create a short PowerPoint® presentation to show your findings to the class.