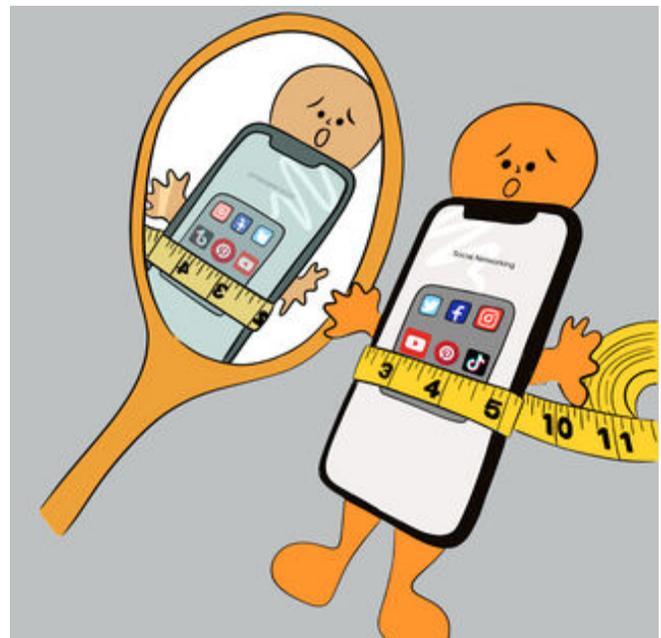
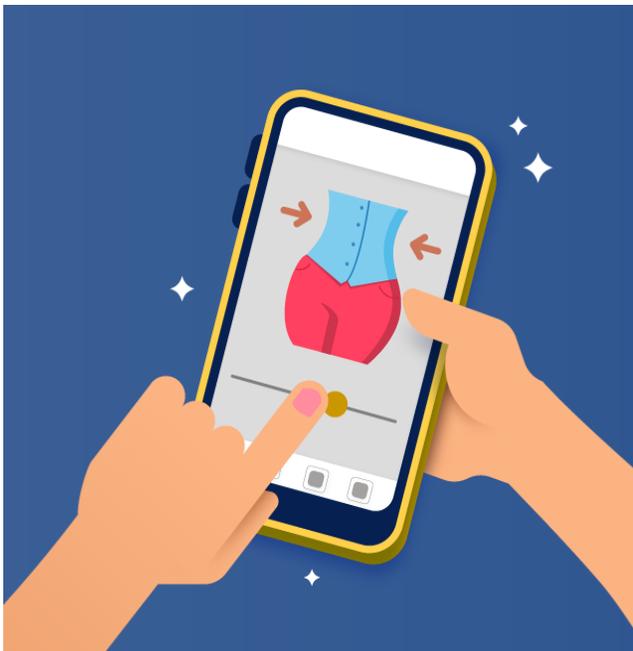


# Social Media's Impact on Our Body Image and Mental Health

By: Tara Abdelnour on December 2, 2022



Although social media may have its advantages, it also has the ability to enhance our vulnerabilities and negatively impact our mental health, especially in the sense of it affecting people's perceptions of their body image.

Tiktok, Facebook, Instagram, and many more social media sites, contain images, videos, texts, etc., which have profound psychological consequences for people's body image. Content on these sites causes us to constantly compare our bodies to the person behind the screen, despite knowing that their body/appearance may be photoshopped or that they

may be posing/the picture is taken at a good angle. This leads us to question if our bodies are 'good enough constantly.' 'Good enough' to be posted on social media. 'Good enough' to be classified as beautiful. 'Good enough' to be complimented on.

We become discouraged, insecure, and hateful of the way we look because we believe that there is only one body type that is considered to be beautiful and accepted by others. It can be triggering, which leads us to fall deep (or even deeper) into diet culture traps, such as believing commercials that encourage skipping eating certain foods, such as carbs, for the sole purpose of being one step closer to achieving society's 'ideal' body type. People have also begun to believe that they should be exercising in order to "earn" calories so that they can eat more. Social media convinces us that in order to be "summer body ready," our bodies must look like what is being advertised and trendy at that point in time; even if it means cutting down on important food groups and overexercising, all of which affect our physical and mental wellbeing in the short and long term.

Due to the never-ending body shaming and body-checking posts on social media, people have begun to hate what they see in the mirror. It has been increasingly hard for people to love their bodies, especially when social media convinces them that you do not look as beautiful as if you were as skinny or as thick as society tells you to be.

I am here to remind you that your body is beautiful the way it is. What has personally worked, and what I recommend you to try is the following. Firstly, repeating daily affirmations to yourself in front of the mirror, such as stating, "I am beautiful. I am enough," can help change your perspective about the way you perceive your body over time and the way you talk about it. To add, understanding that food is fuel is so important. Social media can trigger and worsen eating disorders, so it is crucial to understand that without nourishing your food properly, you will lack energy, your brain will be less active, and your muscles will not work to their greatest extent. Lastly, and my personal favorite tip, is to change the focus of your social media feed and who you choose to follow. Unfollow any accounts that speak negatively about certain bodies and, instead, follow accounts that promote healthy living with factual information and body positivity.

I believe that your body is beautiful just the way it is, and I hope that, one day, you will value and love it for all that it is, as well.

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