

Body Image The image of physical self, or body image, is how an individual perceives the size, appearance, and functioning of the body and its parts. It also includes body prostheses, such as artificial limbs, dentures, and hairpieces, as well as devices required for functioning, such as wheelchairs, canes, and eyeglasses. Past as well as present perceptions and how the body has evolved over time are part of one's body image. An individual's body image develops partly from and partly from the individual's own exploration of the others' attitudes and responses to that individual's body. The cognitive is the knowledge of the actual body; the affective includes the sensations of the body, such as pain, pleasure, fatigue, and physical movement. Body image includes clothing, makeup, hairstyle, jewelry, and other things intimately connected to the individual (Figure 39.1). Cultural and societal values also influence body sensations during breastfeeding, touch, and individual's body image. For example, body image develops in infancy as the parents or caregivers respond to the child with strict holding, and touching, and as the child explores the body and the bath. Body image has both cognitive and affective aspects. Body image is the sum of these attitudes, conscious and unconscious, that an individual has toward their body. The various information and entertainment media have played a part over the years in how individuals view themselves and others.