

HEALTH REPORT

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WHAT IS METABOLIC SYNDROME?

This very serious, yet not widely known, condition affects a whopping 7 million adults in the United States (almost 25 percent) and may even overtake smoking as the leading risk factor for heart disease in the near future.

So what is this condition? Not all doctors agree on the definition or cause of metabolic syndrome. The cause might be insulin resistance. Insulin is a hormone your body produces to help you turn sugar from food into energy for your body. If you are insulin resistant, too much sugar builds up in your blood, setting the stage for disease.

Metabolic syndrome is diagnosed when a person has at least three of these heart disease risk factors:

- A large waistline. This is also called abdominal obesity or “having an apple shape.” Excess fat in the abdominal area is a greater risk factor for heart disease than excess fat in other parts of the body, such as on the hips.
- A higher than normal triglyceride level in the blood. Triglycerides are a type of fat found in the blood.
- A lower than normal level of HDL (high-density lipoprotein cholesterol) in the blood. HDL is considered “good” cholesterol because it lowers your chances of heart disease. Low levels of HDL increase your chances of heart disease.
- Higher than normal blood pressure. Blood pressure is recorded as two numbers, usually written one on top of or before the other, such as 120/80. The top or first number, called the systolic blood pressure, measures the pressure in the bloodstream when your heart beats. The bottom or second number, called the diastolic blood pressure, measures the pressure in your bloodstream between heartbeats when the heart is relaxed.
- Higher than normal fasting blood sugar (glucose). Mildly high blood sugar can be an early warning sign of diabetes.

What can you do to help eliminate this condition and its symptoms? Start with a low-carb and low sugar diet. Studies have found magnesium to lower the risk and treat metabolic syndrome. Find a Wellness Care professional (chiropractor or acupuncturist or both) to help you find the best way to diagnose and treat metabolic syndrome or any of the above listed health conditions.