

# Metabolic Syndrome

## What is metabolic syndrome?

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of metabolic risk factors. Patients who present with these risk factors together have a greater chance for future cardiovascular problems than any one factor presenting alone. As an example, alone, high blood pressure is a serious condition but combined with high fasting glucose levels and abdominal obesity, this patient could be diagnosed with metabolic syndrome. Due to the combination of factors, the greater the risk this patient will have cardiovascular problems.

Metabolic syndrome is a serious health condition that affects about 34 percent of adults, putting them at higher risk of diabetes, stroke, cardiovascular disease and diseases that can be related to the fatty buildup in artery walls. Being overweight or obese, physical inactivity and genetic factors can all be included as underlying causes of metabolic syndrome.

People with metabolic syndrome are at an increased risk for the following:

- ▶ Coronary heart disease and heart attack
- ▶ Stroke
- ▶ Atherosclerosis, peripheral vascular disease
- ▶ Type 2 diabetes

## Why does metabolic syndrome occur?

While some people may be genetically prone to develop insulin resistance or metabolic syndrome, other people may develop metabolic syndrome:

- ▶ Men are more likely than women
- ▶ Consuming a diet high in carbohydrates—more than 60 percent of daily caloric intake from carbs
- ▶ Putting on excess body fat
- ▶ Failing to get enough physical activity

## How is metabolic syndrome diagnosed?

Metabolic syndrome may occur in a person with three or more of the following measurements:

- ▶ Abdominal obesity (waist circumference of more than 40 inches in men; 35 inches or more in women)
- ▶ HDL cholesterol of less than 40 mg/dL in men or less than 50 mg/dL in women
- ▶ Triglyceride level of 150 milligrams per deciliter of blood (mg/dL) or greater
- ▶ Systolic blood pressure (top number) of 130 millimeters of mercury (mm Hg) or greater, or diastolic blood pressure (bottom number) of 85 mm Hg or greater
- ▶ Fasting glucose of 100 mg/dL or greater

Metabolic syndrome is a serious condition; however, you can reduce your risks significantly by:

- ▶ Increasing your physical activity
- ▶ Working with your primary care physician to help monitor and manage your glucose, cholesterol and blood pressure
- ▶ Choosing a heart-healthy diet rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables and fish
- ▶ Losing weight

*About Metabolic Syndrome. (2014, October 24). Retrieved April 26, 2016, from [www.heart.org/HEARTORG](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG)*

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