

# Care Gram

# Metabolic Syndrome

## What Is Metabolic Syndrome?

Metabolic syndrome is a group of traits and risk factors, which if not treated, can lead to stroke, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, fatty liver disease and several cancers. Metabolic syndrome results from insulin resistance, a condition in which the body does not use insulin like it should. This syndrome also involves abnormal fat tissue deposits and function.

You are more likely to develop metabolic syndrome if you have:

- Extra body fat in and around the stomach
- High triglycerides
- Low HDL cholesterol (good cholesterol)
- High blood pressure
- High fasting blood sugar
- A family history of diabetes

Poor diet choices and a lack of exercise also increase your risk for metabolic syndrome.

## How Do I Know I Have Metabolic Syndrome?

You must have a least 3 of the 5 risk factors listed below to be diagnosed with metabolic syndrome.

- Waistline (measured across the belly)
  - Men – greater than 40 inches
  - Women – greater than 35 inches
- Fasting blood triglycerides greater than or equal to 150mg/dL
- Low Blood HDL (good cholesterol)
  - Men – less than 40mg/dL
  - Women – less than 50mg/dL
- Blood pressure greater than 130/80mm/Hg (American Heart Association guidelines)
- Fasting glucose 100-125mg/dL (fasting glucose over 125 would diagnose diabetes)



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### How Is Metabolic Syndrome Treated?

Losing 5 to 10 percent of your body weight can help prevent metabolic syndrome. Exercising and eating a healthy, reduced-calorie diet can help you lose weight.

- Exercise 30 minutes or more a day, 5 times a week.
  - Choose exercise that will increase your heart rate, such as briskly walking.
  - Also include exercise to build muscle and strength at least 2 times a week. Muscle burns calories and will help you lose weight.
  - Always check with your doctor before starting any new exercise plan.
- Enjoy a healthy diet.
  - Include:
    - A variety of fruits and vegetables – make half your plate fruits and vegetables
    - Whole grains, such as whole wheat bread and brown rice – make at least half of your grains whole grain
    - Low-fat or fat-free dairy foods
    - Lean meats, skinless poultry, non-fried fish and seafood (aim for twice week), and plant-based proteins such as beans, nuts and seeds
    - Plenty of fluids (water is the best for your health)
  - Limit:
    - Alcohol
    - Added sugars, such as sugar-sweetened beverages, candies, sugar, honey and other foods sweetened with sugar
    - Solid fat, such as butter, lard, animal fat, shortening and stick margarine
    - Salt and foods high in sodium
    - Fried foods
- Stop smoking habits. Smoking may increase the “bad” cholesterol levels and insulin resistance. For help, contact a tobacco cessation counselor at (220) 564-7848 (QUIT).

### Follow-Up

- If you would like to know more about metabolic syndrome, contact your doctor or dietitian.
- A dietitian can help you develop a weight loss plan and healthy eating habits. Ask your doctor to refer you to a dietitian.