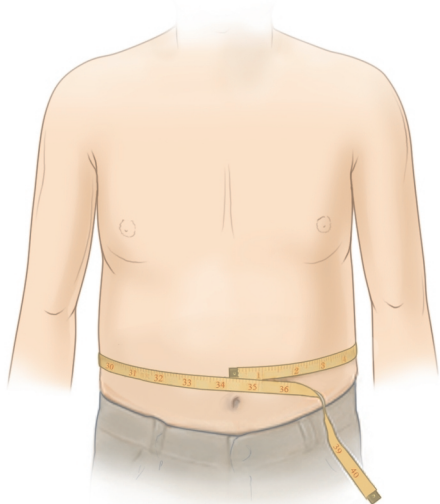


Metabolic Syndrome



Metabolic syndrome is a group of health problems that make it more likely you will have a heart attack or stroke or develop diabetes.

If you have metabolic syndrome, you have at least three of the following:

- You have too much fat around your waist.
- You have borderline or high blood pressure.
- You have borderline or high blood sugar.
- You have high triglycerides, a type of fat in your blood.
- You have low "good" HDL cholesterol.

What causes it?

A combination of your family history (your genes) and an unhealthy lifestyle can cause metabolic syndrome.

Eating too much, gaining weight, and not exercising are the main causes, especially if you tend to gain weight around your waist.

What are the symptoms?

Metabolic syndrome will not make you feel sick. But if you get diabetes or have a heart attack or stroke, you will have symptoms from those problems.

What increases your risk?

You are more likely to have metabolic syndrome if:

- You are older. As you age, your chances rise.
- You are overweight or obese, especially if you carry a lot of weight around your waist and upper body.
- Your family members have or had type 2 diabetes and are or were overweight.
- You have other conditions. For instance, metabolic syndrome is more likely if you have high blood pressure or other problems.
- You are black or Hispanic.

How is it diagnosed?

Your doctor will check your blood pressure, measure your waist, and do fasting blood tests.

If you have metabolic syndrome, your results may include:

Measurement	Result
Waist size	Men: Greater than 40 inches Women: Greater than 35 inches
Triglycerides	150 or higher
HDL cholesterol	Men: Less than 40 Women: Less than 50
Blood pressure	130/85 or higher
Fasting blood sugar	100 or higher

How is it treated?

Get more exercise

Being more active is one of the best ways to treat metabolic syndrome. Being active helps for many reasons:

- It can help you lose weight.
- It lowers blood pressure, triglycerides, and blood sugar.
- It raises HDL, the "good" cholesterol.

Aim for at least 2½ hours of moderate exercise a week. One way to do this is to briskly walk 30 minutes a day, at least 5 days a week. It's fine

to be active in blocks of 10 minutes or more throughout your day and week.

Moderate exercise is safe for most people, but it's always a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting an exercise program.

Change how you eat

Your doctor may tell you to eat less salt and try the DASH diet to lower your blood pressure. The DASH diet is low in fat but rich in low-fat dairy foods, fruits, and vegetables.

To get started:

- Choose low-fat or nonfat cheese, yogurt, and cottage cheese.
- Drink skim (nonfat) or 1% milk.
- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables.
- Eat more whole grains like brown rice and whole wheat bread.
- Choose lean meats, chicken without skin, or fish.
- Eat beans, lentils, and nuts.
- Limit sodium (salt) to less than 2,300 milligrams (mg)—less than 1 teaspoon—a day.

Take medicines if needed

Lifestyle changes, such as exercise, losing weight, and eating healthier, are usually tried first for metabolic syndrome. Your doctor may prescribe medicines for your cholesterol, blood sugar, or blood pressure, if needed.