

CONNECT CARE 3

Your Personal Healthcare Advocate

Metabolic Syndrome

Metabolic syndrome is a name for a group of risk factors that occur together and increase the risk for coronary artery disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes, according to the National Institute of Health.

Metabolic syndrome is becoming more and more common in the United States. Researchers are not sure whether the syndrome is linked to one single cause, but all of the risks for the syndrome are related to obesity.

The two key risk factors for metabolic syndrome are:

- Extra weight around the middle and upper parts of the body
- Insulin resistance. The body uses insulin less effectively than normal. Insulin is needed to help control the amount of sugar in the body. As a result, blood sugar and fat levels rise.



Other risk factors include:

- Aging
- Genes that make you more likely to develop this condition
- Hormone changes
- Lack of exercise
- People who have metabolic syndrome often have two other medical problems that can either cause the condition or make it worse:
 - Excess blood clotting
 - Increased levels of blood substances that are a sign of inflammation throughout the body

Metabolic syndrome is present if you have three or more of the following signs:

- Blood pressure equal to or higher than 130/85 mmHg
- Fasting blood sugar (glucose) equal to or higher than 100 mg/dL
- Large waist circumference (length around the waist): Men - 40 inches or more, Women - 35 inches or more
- Low HDL cholesterol: Men - under 40 mg/dL, Women - under 50 mg/dL
- Triglycerides equal to or higher than 150 mg/dL

The goal of treatment is to reduce your risk of heart disease and diabetes. Your doctor will recommend lifestyle changes or medicines to help reduce your blood pressure, LDL cholesterol, and blood sugar.

Steps in treating metabolic syndrome:

Lose weight. The goal is to lose between 7% and 10% of your current weight. You will probably need to eat 500 - 1,000 fewer calories per day to attain this goal. Get 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise, such as walking, 5 - 7 days per week. Lower your cholesterol using weight loss, exercise, and cholesterol-lowering medicines, if needed. Lower your blood pressure using weight loss, exercise, and medicine, if needed. Some people may benefit from daily low-dose aspirin. People who smoke should quit.

Please contact your physician or health care provider to discuss your risk of metabolic syndrome and treatment options.

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medical or social
service concern?
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www.ConnectCare3.com*

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Taking a Stand

Our modern sedentary lifestyles are taking a toll. Sitting for the majority of the work day has become the norm for many. Add up the time spent sitting at work, commuting, and sitting at home and many of us are sitting an average of 7.7 hours per day which accounts for approximately 55% of our awake time.

Medical experts have begun referring to long periods of physical inactivity and its negative consequences as "Sitting Disease."

The astonishing numbers, as published by the American Cancer Society in 2010 in the American Journal of Epidemiology, paint a grim picture.

Women who were inactive and sat over 6 hours per day were 94% more likely to die than those who were physically active and sat 3 hours per day or less. Men who were inactive and sat over 6 hours per day were 48% more likely to die than their standing counterparts.

The negative effects of sitting are just as strong in people who exercised regularly.

Standing up and moving around just a little more each day tones muscles, improves posture, increases blood flow throughout the body, boosts metabolism and increases overall productivity.



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"I am very thankful that my employer offers ConnectCare3 services to us as part of our medical benefits. I had no idea how to get help for the injuries I sustained when my doctor's suggestions were not working. I will always be grateful for the guidance I received from my ConnectCare3 nurse to help me find the resources I needed to return to all the activities I enjoy."

~Tammy Kline, Harrisburg, PA



In mid-2011 I realized that I had been experiencing tendonitis and bursitis in my left Achilles tendon for three years. The podiatrist I was seeing had given me cortisone shots, stretching exercises, and advised I rest it. Nothing really worked. I was a marathon runner, not totally compliant with resting it, and ran whenever I felt well enough to do so.

In December 2011 I injured the big toe on my right foot. I continued to run, but it didn't seem to be healing. An X-ray revealed it was broken.

In early 2012 I was in pain from both issues and having trouble walking. I didn't know what treatment was best. Should I get physical therapy? It was at this time that a representative from ConnectCare3 visited my office to explain the benefits of their service. I recall as she was speaking that I was wondering, "Could they help me?" I contacted them right away and they helped me immensely. One of their nurses located a foot and ankle specialist, and I also began physical therapy. After three months of therapy, my symptoms had greatly improved.

In September 2012 I started having pain in my lower back. The pain radiated down into my buttocks, leg, and extended into my foot. Getting through the day was a struggle as I was in constant pain. Getting in and out of my car was painful, and I couldn't sleep at night. An MRI revealed a bulging disc. My PCP prescribed some painkillers and steroids by mouth. He also recommended that I get physical therapy, but it was too painful for me to endure. The physical therapist said I needed an injection in order to tolerate the therapy. I contacted a local pain management clinic. My call was ignored for one week, even though my PCP had indicated I needed this injection ASAP. I called ConnectCare3, and they came to my rescue again! One of their nurses was able to facilitate an appointment at another pain management clinic. I received the injection and was able to begin physical therapy.

After a second injection three weeks later, I was 75-80% back to normal and continued physical therapy for three months. I am able to do a lot now but not totally pain-free. I participate in cross-fit workouts at my gym three times each week. It is my understanding that strengthening one's core will also help to strengthen your back. I'm also playing softball again this season. Even though I'm in my mid-50's, I feel like I'm "holding my own" against younger participants.

I am very thankful that my employer offers ConnectCare3 services to us as part of our medical benefits. I had no idea how to get help for the injuries I sustained when my doctor's suggestions were not working. I will always be grateful for the guidance I received from my ConnectCare3 nurse to help me find the resources I needed to return to all the activities I enjoy. My brother and I always wanted to participate in The Amazing Race. Perhaps it's not too late!

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