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## PREVENTION

### Metabolic Syndrome and You

More than one-third<sup>1</sup> of adults in the U.S. and one in five<sup>2</sup> Canadians, have been identified as having metabolic syndrome. While metabolic syndrome is commonly associated with heart disease, what you may not know is that it is also linked to diabetes. The good news is, making simple adjustments to your daily habits can reduce your overall risks.

#### What is metabolic syndrome?

Metabolic syndrome<sup>3</sup> is a condition characterized by a cluster of symptoms associated with increased risks for developing certain chronic health conditions. When chemical reactions and processes within the body do not operate normally, it can lead to negative health outcomes.

#### What are the Risk Factors?

The following characteristics are known risks factors for metabolic syndrome<sup>4</sup>:

- High blood sugars
- High triglycerides
- Low HDL cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Carrying excess weight around the waistline

#### How to Reduce Your Risks

To reduce your risks, focus on these areas.

##### Maintain a healthy weight

Developing healthy eating habits and weaving physical activity into your daily life is the key to maintain a healthy weight. If you are overweight, losing just 5% of your current body weight can reduce<sup>5</sup> your risk of developing metabolic syndrome and diabetes by 58%.

##### Increase physical activity

The best way to improve your HDL cholesterol is through physical activity. Aim for 150 to 300 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise each week.

##### Stay current on preventive care

Be sure to stay up to date on your preventive care, including lab draws and visits to your doctor. Many chronic health conditions can be prevented when identified early.



1. [https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2017/16\\_0287.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2017/16_0287.htm)  
2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3193129/>  
3. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/metabolic-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20351916>

4. <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/metabolic-syndrome>  
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/index.html>



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## Lifestyle Habits That Can Reduce Your Health Risks

We hear a lot of the same recommendations when it comes to maintaining good health. So much so, that you may even tune them out sometimes. As boring as many of them may be, these seemingly insignificant habits can really pay off in the long-run when it comes to your wellbeing.

### Here are some healthy lifestyle habits to focus on to reduce your health risks:

#### Quit tobacco

According to the American Cancer Society, a year after you quit smoking, your risk of heart disease is cut in half. Five years after that, the same goes for your risk<sup>6</sup> of cancer.

#### Get sufficient restful sleep

Aim to get at least seven hours of sleep each day. Insufficient sleep has been linked<sup>7</sup> to abnormal levels of leptin and ghrelin, the key hormones that directly impact appetite and weight regulation.

#### Move your body

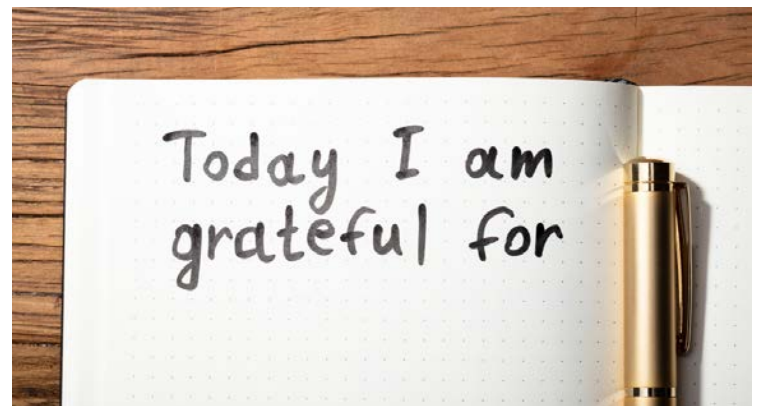
Accumulate at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week. Staying physically active can reduce<sup>8</sup> your risks for cardiovascular disease, depression, and diabetes.

#### Be grateful

Expressing gratitude is linked<sup>9</sup> to lower rates of depression and healthier relationships. Starting a gratitude journal is the easiest way to make gratitude part of your daily life.

#### Stay connected

Invest in nurturing a supportive network that you can lean on when life feels overwhelming. People who have<sup>10</sup> strong support systems have lower blood pressure and fewer symptoms of depression.



*When it comes to creating the conditions for good health, you hold more power than you realize. Focus on building healthy habits to protect your wellbeing and reduce your overall health risks.*

6. <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/benefits-of-quitting-smoking-over-time.html>  
7. <http://healthysleep.med.harvard.edu/healthy/matters/consequences/sleep-and-disease-risk>  
8. <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/physical-activity-and-your-heart>  
9. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier>  
10. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/social-support/art-20044445>





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## The Microbiome: What it is and Why it is Important

In 2001, the term microbiome began circulating within scientific communities. Defined<sup>11</sup> as an “ecological community of commensal, symbiotic, and pathogenic microorganisms that literally share our body space,” the microbiome has been found to have direct ties to our health.



### What is the Microbiome?

Our bodies contain roughly 100 trillion microorganisms. That is 10 times more than the number of cells in the human body. Weighing up to five pounds by some estimates, these microbes play a role in immune function, metabolism, and weight regulation.

### Why Your Microbiome is Important

The makeup of your microbiome is thought to determine, and sometimes even predict, your health risks. For example, it is now understood that people who are overweight have a different composition of microorganisms than people who are at a healthy weight. This has led some experts to believe that the bacteria in our gut are involved in metabolism and appetite regulation.

### How to Support a Healthy Microbiome

Poor eating habits can result in an imbalance (dysbiosis) of bacteria. Specific foods have been shown to support the good bacteria in your gut, namely probiotics and prebiotics. To support your microbiome, choose more of these foods:

### Probiotics

Probiotics are live bacteria. Fermented and cultured foods are easy to find in most supermarkets, but they can also be prepared at home. Good sources of probiotics include:

- Kombucha
- Yogurt
- Sauerkraut
- Kimchi

**Note:** *Pregnant and breastfeeding women should consult<sup>12</sup> with their doctor before consuming kombucha in the third trimester due to blood thinning properties.*

### Prebiotics

Prebiotics are specific types of plant fibers that support the bacteria living in your digestive tract. Good sources of prebiotics include:

- Jerusalem Artichokes
- Dandelion Greens
- Chicory Root
- Onions
- Asparagus

*Focus on high-fiber plants and fermented foods to support a strong microbiome.*



11. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2792171/>

12. <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/what-are-kombuchas-health-benefits-and-how-much-can-you-safely-drink/>



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# RECIPE

## Prebiotic Chickpea Smoothie Bowl Recipe

### INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup shredded coconut unsweetened
- 1 cup water
- 3 tablespoons hemp hearts
- 1 teaspoon dandelion root
- 2 large bananas frozen
- 1 cup blueberries or blackberries frozen
- ½ cup chickpeas cooked or canned and drained

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. First, to make the coconut milk, blend the shredded coconut and the water in a high-speed blender until smooth. This coconut milk will have some residue, so you have the option to strain it here. Leave the leftover coconut residue in the smoothie for ease and to limit waste.
2. Add all the other ingredients to the blender and blend until smooth. You may need to use the blender mixing apparatus to make sure everything is completely blended and smooth. If the mixture seems too thin, add some more frozen berries or banana. If it is too thick, add some more water.
3. Pour smoothie bowl mixture into two bowls. Top with desired ingredients.
4. Leftovers can be stored in a sealed container in the freezer. Let defrost slightly before eating.

**Total Time:**

10 minutes

**Servings:** 2



### NUTRITION INFO

(per serving)

Calories <i>kcal</i>	475
Carbs <i>g</i>	73
Fat <i>g</i>	15
Protein <i>g</i>	17
Sodium <i>mg</i>	19
Sugar <i>g</i>	29

Source:

<https://theconsciousdietitian.com/all-recipes/break-fast/prebiotic-smoothie-bowl-recipe-chickpeas/#wprm-recipe-container-4277>

