

Metabolic Syndrome

What Is Metabolic Syndrome?

The term metabolic syndrome is more and more common these days, but not everyone knows what it means. That's why, this month, we're focusing exclusively on issues surrounding this topic. But first things first—here's a definition:

- “Metabolic” refers to biochemical processes that keep your body functioning normally and “syndrome” is a group of related symptoms.
- Simply put, “metabolic syndrome” is the name for a group of risk factors that increase your odds of developing serious health problems such as coronary heart disease, diabetes and stroke.

section **01**

Your November Activity: Know Your Risk Factors

Are you suffering from or at risk for metabolic syndrome?



Metabolic Risk Factors

The five risk factors detailed below can occur individually but are often found together. A person must have at least three of the risk factors to be diagnosed with metabolic syndrome.

- 1. A large, round waistline.** Excess fat around the stomach is a bigger predictor of coronary heart disease than excess fat stored in other parts of the body.
- 2. High triglyceride levels.** Your body converts calories it can't immediately use into triglycerides, which are a type of fat found in the blood. High levels also lead to coronary heart disease.
- 3. Low HDL cholesterol levels.** The so-called “good” cholesterol, HDL actually helps remove cholesterol from your arteries. That means a low HDL cholesterol level can lead to clogged arteries and coronary heart disease.
- 4. High blood pressure.** Blood pressure is a measure of the force of your blood pushing against the walls of your arteries as your heart pumps. High blood pressure can be a sign of tension or abnormal stress, and if it stays high over time, it can damage your heart.
- 5. High fasting blood sugar.** Even mildly high blood sugar could be an early indicator of diabetes.

Note: *If you're on medication to treat this condition, you're still considered to have this risk factor*



section

01

Combating Metabolic Syndrome

Do you have three or more risk factors? If so, you're at increased risk for coronary heart disease, diabetes and stroke—and the danger grows with each metabolic risk factor you add. How can you stem the tide and take back your health?

- **Be more active.** Being overweight goes hand-in-hand with many of the metabolic risk factors. Get moving to lose weight and improve your health! As always, consult your physician before beginning any exercise program.
- **Improve your diet.** Eat a low-fat, heart-healthy diet complete with vegetables and lean meats to improve your cholesterol and blood pressure.
- **Have your insulin levels checked.** The hormone insulin helps your cells convert blood sugar into energy; insulin resistance occurs when your body cannot process insulin properly and can lead to high blood sugar levels, which is a metabolic risk factor.

section

02

Do You Have Healthy Numbers?

It's important to know if your numbers fall within the healthy range for the four measurable metabolic risk factors.

1

Triglycerides have a normal range of less than 150 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL), or 8.3 millimoles per liter (mmol/L).

2

HDL cholesterol level should be at least 40 mg/dL or 2.2 mmol/L, with 60 mg/dL / 3.3 mmol/L considered preventative against heart disease.

3

A healthy **blood pressure** is a top number (systolic) below 120 millimeters of mercury (mm Hg) and a bottom number (diastolic) below 80 mm Hg.

4

For someone without diabetes, a **healthy fasting blood sugar level** should be under 100 mg/dL / 5.6 mmol/L.

Get Informed, Make a Change, and Be a Healthier You

A rise in obesity rates has also led to a rise in metabolic syndrome. However, it's important to remember that we can all combat metabolic syndrome simply by making healthier lifestyle choices. **If you are concerned about your health or know you have at least three metabolic risk factors, take the first step and call your doctor!** After you get the go-ahead to start exercising, all you need is a plan. After all, a little willpower and long-term commitment go a long way—especially since you'll become more and more motivated to live healthy as you start to feel the results of increased activity and better nutrition.

November Recipe

Herb Turkey Roast

Enjoy a great meal and terrific leftovers with this healthy turkey roast.

Total Time (Cook and Prep): 70 minutes
Servings: 8

INGREDIENTS

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 2 lbs. boneless turkey breast, skinned | 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped |
| 1/2 teaspoon salt | 1 tablespoon fresh sage, chopped |
| 1/2 teaspoon black pepper | 1 tablespoon fresh thyme, chopped |
| 2 teaspoons lemon peel, shredded | 6 garlic cloves, minced |
| 3 tablespoons lemon juice | 1 cup chicken broth |
| 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil | 1/4 cup dry white wine |
| 1 tablespoon fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped | |

INSTRUCTIONS

- Season turkey breast with kosher salt and pepper, and place turkey in a shallow roasting pan.
- In a small bowl, combine lemon peel, lemon juice, olive oil, parsley, the rosemary, sage, thyme, and garlic. Rub herb mixture over turkey breast.
- Preheat oven to 400°F/204°C and roast turkey for 15 minutes. Pour broth and wine over turkey.
- Reduce oven temperature to 350°F/177°C. Roast turkey about 25 minutes more or until turkey is tender and no longer pink (170°F/77°C), spooning juices in pan over turkey every 10 minutes.
- To serve, slice turkey. Spoon some of the cooking juices from the roasting pan over individual servings. Sprinkle with the remaining tablespoon of parsley.



NUTRITION INFO:

170 calories
4 g fat
71 mg cholesterol
284 mg sodium
2 g carbohydrates
0 g fiber
28 g protein

Know Your Risk Factors

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How to Determine Your Risk Levels

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Research Worksheet

To determine your personal risk levels, simply visit your doctor. After you have a little blood drawn and a blood pressure test is performed, fill in the fields below:

My triglyceride level: _____

My HDL cholesterol level: _____

My blood pressure: _____

My (fasting) blood sugar level: _____

No matter where your numbers fall, it's a great idea to talk to your doctor about your results and changes you can make to live a healthier lifestyle.

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Employer Activity Tracking

Please complete the following information and submit it to your employer to receive credit for this activity:

Name:

Date:

Did you schedule or confirm a doctor's appointment?

YES NO

If no, are you otherwise aware of your metabolic syndrome risk level?

YES NO

November

Metabolic Syndrome and

→ YOU ←



What is it?

Learn how to tell if you're at risk and what you need to know to protect yourself:

- Be more active
- Improve your diet
- Have your insulin levels checked

Your Activity

Know Your Risk Factors

Are you suffering from or at risk for metabolic syndrome? Your first tip is to know the big five risk factors and what they mean. For instance, did you know that excess fat around the stomach is a bigger predictor of coronary heart disease than excess fat stored in other parts of the body? You do now!



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