

Metabolic Syndrome

What is the metabolic syndrome?

The metabolic syndrome is characterized by a group of metabolic risk factors in one person. They include:

- Abdominal obesity (excessive fat tissue in and around the abdomen)
- Atherogenic dyslipidemia (blood fat disorders — high triglycerides, low HDL cholesterol and high LDL cholesterol — that foster plaque buildups in artery walls)
- Elevated blood pressure
- Insulin resistance or glucose intolerance (the body can't properly use insulin or blood sugar)
- Prothrombotic state (e.g., high fibrinogen or plasminogen activator inhibitor-1 in the blood)
- Proinflammatory state (e.g., elevated C-reactive protein in the blood)

People with the metabolic syndrome are at increased risk of coronary heart disease and other diseases related to plaque buildups in artery walls (e.g., stroke and peripheral vascular disease) and type 2 diabetes. The metabolic syndrome has become increasingly common in the United States. It's estimated that over 50 million Americans have it.

The dominant underlying risk factors for this syndrome appear to be abdominal obesity and insulin resistance. Insulin resistance is a generalized metabolic disorder, in which the body can't use insulin efficiently. This is why the metabolic syndrome is also called the insulin resistance syndrome.

- Other conditions associated with the syndrome include:
- Physical inactivity
- Aging
- Hormonal imbalance
- Genetic predisposition.
- Periodontal (Gum) Disease – Gum inflammation and infection can be a big factor in Metabolic Syndrome, as it increases C-reactive protein levels and insulin resistance, causing increased blood sugar levels.