

Metabolic Syndrome X

THE SILENT KILLER

One in three North Americans have metabolic syndrome X, yet most don't know they do. Many of the diseases we normally associate with aging—weight gain, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and loss of mental clarity—are in many cases the result of the ever-growing epidemic known as, metabolic syndrome X.

“Not to worry,”

you're told. “Just watch what you eat and try to lose those few extra pounds—your cholesterol and blood pressure are starting to creep up.”

As you leave your doctor's office you feel quite satisfied that all is well for someone in his mid 40s. After all, you're getting older now; maybe you won't have that second piece of pie tonight after your pasta dinner.

What you're not told is that a cluster of conditions is threatening to derail your health in the not to distant future. The conditions are collectively known as metabolic syndrome X, and include abnormal levels of LDL cholesterol and triglycerides, being overweight, high blood pressure, and insulin resistance.

At the very heart of metabolic syndrome X is insulin resistance—the inability of the body to properly metabolize glucose (sugars) and an increased amount of insulin in the blood. The result is a condition that wreaks havoc throughout the body, causing many of the degenerative diseases we now have come to associate with aging.

Metabolic Syndrome X is best described as a lifestyle condition resulting from the typical Western diet. Today in North America and Europe the typical individual eats lots of simple carbohydrates (sugars), plenty of saturated and trans fats, receives little quality nutrition from the food, and is physically inactive. Thirty years of this lifestyle places the body under great stress so that it finally starts to fail. It's system overload. In the case of metabolic syndrome X, cells begin to resist the uptake of sugar causing energy shortages and high levels of insulin in the blood. It is the insulin resistance and sugar intolerance that basically sets the stage for all the other health problems that are part of metabolic syndrome X—weight problems, heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, high triglycerides and cholesterol, and the rapid advance of aging.

Since metabolic syndrome X is a lifestyle condition, reducing the risk and eliminating metabolic syndrome X will require lifestyle changes.

How big is the risk? Jack Challem, health researcher and author

of *Syndrome X* states, “We believe syndrome X is a disorder that most people seriously risk developing by the time they reach middle age, if not before. Metabolic Syndrome X can explain why you feel lousy today—such as being tired and fuzzy minded. It can also age you faster than normal, setting the stage for catastrophic health problems, such as heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's, cancer and other related diseases . . . We now know that eating large amounts of dietary carbohydrates (such as sweets, pastas, and breads) can raise cholesterol, triglyceride, and insulin levels. We know also that elevated insulin can promote obesity and high blood pressure. It is a frightfully common, and often ignored, disorder that can derail your health.”

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