



Metabolic Syndrome Promotes Chronic Disease

Metabolic syndrome is the most insidious promoter of chronic disease, such as heart disease and cancer, in the U.S. and much of the world today. If you avoid metabolic syndrome, you'll greatly decrease your risk of ill health, even as you age. Let's take a look at how metabolic syndrome promotes chronic disease.

What is metabolic syndrome?

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of signs and symptoms unified by one mechanism: insulin resistance.

You have metabolic syndrome if you have any three of the following five risk factors ([ref.](#)):

- large waistline
- high triglycerides
- low HDL cholesterol
- high blood pressure
- high fasting blood sugar.

One way to look at metabolic syndrome is as a pot belly along with insulin resistance.

High prevalence of metabolic syndrome

This is where things get scary.

Metabolic syndrome is extremely prevalent, and is closely tied to the obesity epidemic.

Among American men, metabolic syndrome increase with age.

- In men from age 20-39, the rate of metabolic syndrome is 20%.
- In men from 40-59, the rate is 41%.
- In men 60 and up, the rate is 52%. ([Ref.](#))

Among all U.S. adults, as many as 52% are diabetic or pre-diabetic. ([Ref.](#))

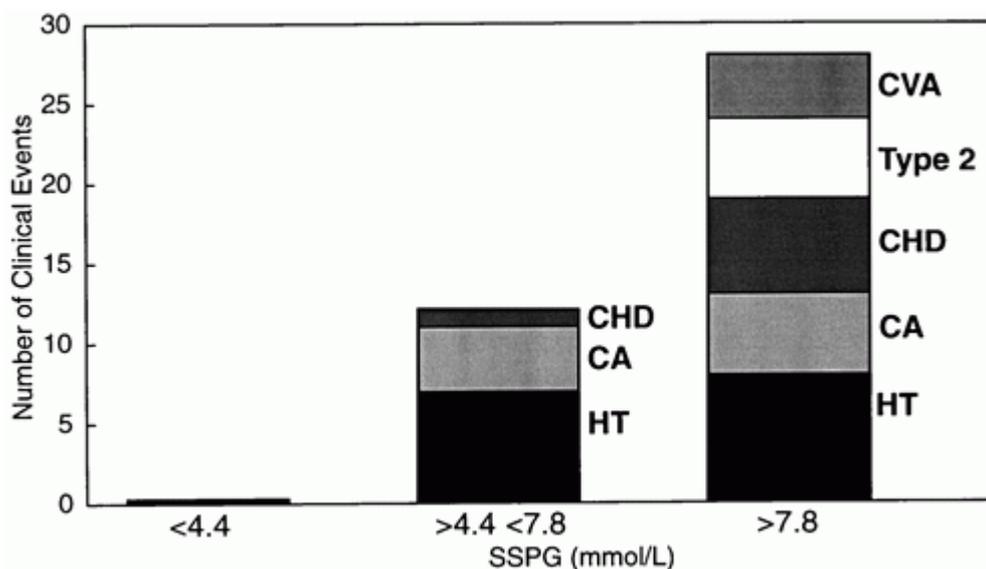
These numbers may undercount the true rate, since [a large fraction of the population, as much as 80%, may have some degree of insulin resistance.](#)

If you look at the people around you, that isn't hard to imagine, as hardly anyone is in good shape.

Metabolic syndrome greatly increases disease risk

Just insulin resistance alone may account for most increased risk of chronic disease.

In a well-known study, Reaven and colleagues measured insulin resistance in a group of healthy people, divided them into tertiles (thirds), and followed them for 6 years. They looked at how many in each group developed heart disease, stroke, hypertension, cancer, and diabetes. Results below.



No one in the lowest third group developed any of those diseases. All of those who did develop them were in the upper two thirds of insulin resistance. (Discussed [here.](#))

Imagine adding hypertension or high triglycerides or any of the other risk factors.

Metabolic syndrome increases the risk of heart disease three times, and risk of diabetes five times. ([Ref.](#))

Visceral (abdominal) fat, or central obesity, is highly associated with metabolic syndrome.

Men with high visceral fat have around a 5-fold increased risk for prostate cancer. ([Ref.](#))

Women with high visceral fat have a nearly 10-fold risk of breast cancer. ([Ref.](#))

As you can see, metabolic syndrome entails huge risks for heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.

If the Reaven study is more widely applicable, virtually all of the risk is seen in those with metabolic syndrome and/or insulin resistance.

The good news is, if you stay free of metabolic syndrome, your risk of these diseases is very low.

Metabolic syndrome: the modern condition

Why is there so much metabolic syndrome?

The conditions of modern times increase its incidence, which is highly correlated to obesity.

(Although don't be complacent if your weight is normal. A large number of normal weight people, "skinny-fat", have deranged glucose metabolism, if not frank metabolic syndrome.)

[The processed food trifecta of refined carbohydrates, sugar, and seed oils](#) lies behind the increase in obesity and metabolic syndrome.

Add to that 24/7 availability of garbage food, and [the couch potato lifestyle](#) so many of lead, and you've got the recipe for insulin resistance, metabolic syndrome, and chronic disease.

How to prevent metabolic syndrome

Only around 10% of people at age 70 are free from chronic disease and frailty. [Only 1% of those 85 and up are completely healthy.](#)

If you want to be among them, you must stay free of metabolic syndrome.

How to do this?

1. Stay lean. Avoid ultra-processed foods, with their refined carbs, seed oils, and sugar. Eat low-carb.
2. Deplete glycogen. The storage form of carbohydrates is glycogen, and depleting it regularly increases insulin sensitivity and decreases your odds of being overweight. You do this through resistance training, intermittent fasting, and avoiding refined carbohydrates and sugar.

That's it.

If you want to live in good health and free from disease, you can't take the path that most of our countrymen are taking.

Average people have average health and an average lifespan, which is currently a paltry 76 for men, and 81 for women.

PS: If you need to lose weight and you want to save yourself years of poor results with bad information, I've put everything in a simple guide for you. [The World's Simplest Fat-Loss Plan.](#)

