

## **In Need of Waist Management?**

### **Obesity and Insulin Resistance Pave the Way to Heart Disease and Type II Diabetes**

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Does this sound familiar? Over the last several years, you've watched the scales climbing, and no matter what diet you're on, you can't lose the weight. You try working out more, but that doesn't make a big difference. You've cut out virtually all fat from your diet, and that just makes you cranky. You go to see your doctor and she (or he) says that it's a normal part of aging and your metabolism is slowing down.

Poppycock.

No, not the popcorn snack. I mean that's a load of baloney. It's a cop out. And it's as likely as not that your doctor is just as frustrated as you are.

Fortunately, there's another answer, and you CAN do something about this "unexplained" weight gain and inexplicably difficult weight loss.

### **What is going on?**

Back in 1988, Dr. Gerald Reaven, a medical researcher at Stanford University, noticed a correlation between people who exhibited a cluster of biological markers in the body, and them having heart disease or diabetes. The tricky thing is that this cluster of symptoms has no corresponding pain or simple external tell-tale signs. Because it was a group of markers, he called it a syndrome. And because it was underlined by insulin resistance and a breakdown of normal metabolic function, he labeled it Metabolic Syndrome. Ta DAAA.

The metabolic syndrome has become increasingly common in the United States. It's estimated that over 50 million Americans have it. That's 22-25% of Americans. It frequently goes undiagnosed because it doesn't cause pain—we wait until there is a full-blown disease process that can be identified. Metabolic Syndrome is a cluster of serious problems happening in the body. It is also known as Syndrome X, insulin resistance syndrome and, in Australia, it's known as CHAOS.

CHAOS is actually a mnemonic which is a forecast of the problems that can ensue from having a collection of biological issues: **C**oronary Artery Disease; **H**igh Blood Pressure, **A**dult Onset Diabetes (Type 2), **O**besity, and **S**troke. Clever, but not a good forecast.

According to the American Heart Association and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, here is the list of things to examine. They suggest that if you have three of the following, you have the Metabolic Syndrome.

- Central Obesity: For men this means a waist size greater than or equal to 40 inches. For women, a waist size greater than or equal to 35 is the marker.
- Blood pressure greater than or equal to 130/85
- Triglycerides greater than or equal to 150 mg/dL

- Low HDL: For men it's less than 40 mg/dL, and for women it's HDL less than 50.
- Increased Fibrinogen Levels (easy blood clotting)
- Polycystic Ovarian Disease
- Increased VLDL Cholesterol Level
- Insulin resistance (when the body no longer secretes insulin efficiently in response to the normal breakdown of any carbohydrates)
- Elevated fasting glucose of greater than or equal to 100 mg/dL
- Elevated C-Reactive Protein

### **What causes it?**

Increasing numbers of research studies indicate that the underlying problem of many degenerative diseases is insulin resistance. Insulin resistance is a decreasing sensitivity to one's own insulin. That means that due to a constant spike and crash of blood sugar over the years, your body isn't metabolizing as efficiently as it used to. What's more, it may actually be the first step to sliding down the slippery slope towards heart disease and type II diabetes.

### **What can I do to reduce my risk?**

Finally, here's some good news. Metabolic syndrome is completely reversible. Here's the quick five-step answer how to do it:

*Embrace a low-glycemic approach to eating.* Notice I did not say "go on a diet." Follow the 80-20 rule. For 80% of the time, eat foods that are full of fiber, and balanced with protein and fat. Stay away from white sugar and white flour foods. That's right. Cut out the bagel and orange juice for breakfast. You're likely to eat 80% MORE calories during the day when you spike your blood sugar first thing in the morning. And those heart-healthy Cheerios? Nope. Not by themselves. We need to talk.

*Start taking supplements daily.* Everyone needs to be on a multivitamin (Journal of the American Medical Association, 2002). You'll want to take a high-quality, broad-spectrum, pharmaceutical-grade antioxidant, and couple that with a chelated mineral product. For most people, add fish oil, a calcium/magnesium supplement, and grape seed extract, which is proven to be a very effective natural anti-inflammatory.

*Physical Activity—get some!!* Start where you are and slowly build up. This builds healthy habits, success along the way, and you'll be more likely to stick with it than if you jump into 5 times a week aerobics class. Ultimately, you'll want to mix up your cardiovascular activity (get your heart rate up), start some resistance training (weight lifting, calisthenics, bands and ropes), and balance your work out with flexibility training such as stretching and yoga.

*Engage in stress management techniques.* Learn meditation, creative visualization, relaxation exercises, and deep breathing. These are very easy, simple, go-anywhere exercises that can, when practiced regularly, reduce blood pressure and muscle tension without the use of drugs.

*Finally, get some support.* For some, that means engaging the support of your family. For others, it means a coach, a friend, or a group of friends. In short, you want to identify and surround yourself with people who truly want you to succeed in your new lifestyle and get healthier so they can have you around a lot longer.

When you put those five things together, you have an entire system that is the quintessential (pun intended!) healthy living plan.

*Sources: JAMA, Cleveland Clinic, NIH, American Heart Association, Bionutrition.org, familydoctor.org*

For additional information about Sally Galloway, the Center for Health and Harmony, and the QuintEssential Wellness System, please visit [www.CenterForHealthAndHarmony.com](http://www.CenterForHealthAndHarmony.com)