



**Dear Dr. Hoo,**

**I've been seeing the term "metabolic syndrome" in the mainstream media. Can you elaborate on this condition?**

Metabolic Syndrome or Syndrome X is a condition that was first reported in 1988 and is considered a powerful independent risk factor for mortality and morbidity associated with cardiovascular disease. A frightening statistic puts 1 in every 4 persons in North America at risk for developing Metabolic Syndrome.

The syndrome involves a cluster of symptoms that are often associated with diabetes mellitus and cardiovascular diseases. The cluster may include high blood pressure, high blood sugar, high cholesterol, increased waist to hip ratio and/or obesity, as well as a reduced sensitivity of our cells to insulin with resultant inflammation.

The book by Reaven entitled "Syndrome X: Overcoming the Silent Killer That can Give you a Heart Attack" maintains that the first line of treatment for this condition is dietary and lifestyle changes. These changes may include the following simple interventions:

- eat foods that are low in glycemic index
- eat smaller portion meals more frequently through the day to reduce glycemic load
- Eliminate intake of refined carbohydrates (eg. pop, pastries) and processed foods
- exercise three to five times per week (at least 30 minutes each time) to improve lean muscle mass and decrease fat mass

While the suggestions above are essential, additional nutritional support may be required. These may include essential fatty acids like fish oils, chromium picolinate and herbs such as cinnamon bark and green tea leaf extract.

It is imperative however, that if you have metabolic syndrome, please consult with your healthcare provider to ensure that your healthcare goals are addressed or call us for further information.

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