

Metabolic Syndrome Intervention Study among women of reproductive age in Wakiso district, Uganda
Participants Information Leaflet

What is Metabolic Syndrome

Metabolic syndrome is a group of conditions that occur together, and increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.

Women of reproductive age are particularly vulnerable to metabolic syndrome

Women of reproductive age who have metabolic syndrome are at higher risk of developing pregnancy-related complications such as gestational diabetes, hypertension in pregnancy, and preterm delivery.

They are at higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease later in life.

It is therefore important to manage metabolic syndrome among women of reproductive age.

What shows that one has metabolic syndrome?

You may have metabolic syndrome in case you have three or more of the following conditions:

- A large waist size
- High blood pressure
- High blood sugar levels
- High blood triglyceride levels
- Low HDL cholesterol levels

How can I prevent or lower my chances of getting metabolic syndrome or its complications?

We know that metabolic syndrome is preventable.

You should learn about the risk factors of metabolic syndrome and make healthy lifestyle changes.

What are the risk factors of metabolic syndrome?

There are risk factors that you can control and those you cannot control

Risk factors you can control that involve your lifestyle include:

- Being inactive
- Eating an unhealthy diet and large portion sizes
- Not getting enough good quality sleep
- Smoking and drinking a lot of alcohol

Risk factors you may not be able to control

- Age
- Sex
- Family history and genetics.
- Other medical conditions such as those that involve your immune system

What are some of the healthy lifestyle changes you can make to prevent metabolic syndrome?

- Choose heart-healthy food such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and limit saturated fats, sodium (salt), added sugars, and alcohol.
- Eat a variety of vegetables and fruits, legumes (e.g. peas, beans), nuts and coloured whole grains (e.g. unprocessed maize, millet, oats, wheat, brown rice or starchy tubers or roots such as potato, yam or cassava), and foods from animal sources (e.g. meat, fish, eggs and milk).
- Eat a nutritious diet based on a variety of foods - foods of plant origin are preferable to animal origin
- Avoid food(s) rich in refined carbohydrates including foods made from refined wheat, such as white bread, chapatti, cakes and biscuits.
- Limit the intake of sugary soft drinks (sodas) and sweets.
- For snacks, choose raw vegetables and fresh fruit rather than foods that are high in sugar, fat or salt.
- Control fat intake and limit consumption of deep-fried foods such as chips, fried chicken and crisps
- Steam, bake, boil or microwave food to help reduce the amount of added fat.
- Restrict salt intake to approximately one teaspoon (5g) daily.
- Reduce your weight if you are overweight or obese
- Engage in moderate-intensity physical activity (brisk walking, cycling at a moderate pace, swimming at a steady pace, fast cycling) for at least 150 minutes per week or vigorous-intensity physical activity (running, climbing stairs, sports) for at least 75 minutes per week or a combination of both
- Add muscle-strengthening activities (gym, carrying heavy stuff, yoga) of at least moderate intensity for at least 2 days a week
- Limit sedentary time by replacing sedentary time with physical activity of any intensity
- Exercise regularly to manage your weight and keep physically fit.
- Keep your body hydrated by drinking approximately 2 litres of water daily.
- Get enough good quality sleep
- Avoid smoking and alcohol
- Manage your stress levels and keep positive
- Track your blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
- Practice exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months, complementary feeding from 6 months and continuation of breastfeeding up to 2 years of life.
- Seek medical treatment from a qualified health provider if lifestyle changes do not work for you.

Ensure your attendance at the weekly group meetings

Thank you so much!

Source: <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/metabolic-syndrome>