



Metabolic Syndrome – The Silent Killer Stalking Your Family.

Low energy, weight gain around the mid section, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, problems balancing blood sugar levels and being overweight in general; any of these conditions may be the early warning signs you are unknowingly suffering from a condition called Metabolic Syndrome.

Recent studies have estimated that over 60 million Americans suffer from insulin resistance, a condition which is the direct result of unhealthy blood sugar balance. This may result in blood sugar levels alternating between being too high and then too low and is one of the possible warning signs of metabolic syndrome. Most often this condition goes unrecognized and untreated, and can lead to severe long term complications such as damage to nerves, eyes, blood vessels, kidneys and pancreas and is associated with increased risk of developing diseases such as cardiovascular disease (heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure) and diabetes. Think your kids are safe? Think again. *New studies indicate that children are suffering from the effects of this disease earlier and earlier. The result of this disturbing trend is that even children without diabetes may be suffering and yet show no overt signs or symptoms.*

What Causes Metabolic Syndrome?

Metabolic syndrome is essentially a disruption in the chemical messengers or signals which help the body process and use sugar. When previously healthy fat cells begin to produce inflammatory messengers (called cytokines), fat and sugar burning genes in the body get switched off resulting in more fat storage. Essentially these cytokines decrease the efficiency of the proteins which carry sugar into the cells fuel burning areas, leading to excess blood sugar and insulin and ultimately weight gain and over all poor health.

Lack of exercise, being overweight, stress, unhealthy diet and imbalances in hormones are major contributing factors in the development of this condition. Refined sugars and carbohydrates, bad fats and bad proteins are absorbed more readily into the blood stream causing an unhealthy surge in insulin. This causes blood sugar spikes and crashes, which can lead to binge eating, sugar cravings, low energy and more hormone disruption. Unhealthy cells then increase production of the bad cytokines which in turn changes the genetic information in cell, resulting in more cytokine production. In general this interferes with the body's ability to burn fat and sugar and leads to decreased metabolism and energy production.

How Can I Protect My Family From Metabolic Syndrome?

In order to prevent and treat this silent killer, you need to switch the fat and sugar burning genes on in the cells. This will lead not only to a healthy weight and more energy over all, but will also help prevent degenerative diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. While healthy eating (through proper balance of good carbohydrates, fats, protein and fiber along with whole natural foods) and regular exercise is important, there are several nutrients which help support healthy cells and proper insulin signaling. CLA (conjugated linoleic acid), vanadium, chromium, alpha lipoic acid and biotin have all been shown to effectively support healthy cell function. There are also many blood and salivary hormone tests available to help you determine your potential for developing this insidious condition, allowing your health care provider to determine the most suitable and effective nutrients for you.

Dr. Valerie Franc is a Naturopathic Doctor and certified hypnotherapist. Along with her general practice, she offers courses in naturopathic nutrition and meditation and regularly participates in an Evening With The Experts at M&Y Chiropractic. For more information please feel free to contact her office in Newmarket at 905-898-6644 or her office in Markham at 905-201-6497.