



The Beacon

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Med-Cert Medical Management Resources

“Guiding your way to better health management”

What is Metabolic Syndrome?

According to the American Heart Association, 47 million Americans have it. That's almost a staggering one out of every six people. The syndrome runs in families and is more common among African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans. The risks of developing metabolic syndrome increases as you age.

Understanding Metabolic Syndrome

Metabolic syndrome is not a disease in itself. Instead, it's a group of risk factors - high blood pressure, high blood sugar, unhealthy cholesterol levels, and abdominal fat.

Obviously, having any one of these risk factors isn't good. But when they're combined, they set the stage for grave problems. These risk factors double your risk of blood vessel and heart disease, which can lead to heart attacks and strokes. They increase your risk of diabetes by five times.

The good news is that metabolic syndrome can be controlled, largely with changes to your lifestyle.

Risk Factors for Metabolic Syndrome

According to the American Heart Association and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, there are five risk factors that make up metabolic syndrome. To be diagnosed with metabolic syndrome, you would have at least *three* of these risk factors.

Large Waist Size	<i>For men:</i> 40 inches or larger <i>For women:</i> 35 inches or larger
Cholesterol: High Triglycerides	<i>Either</i> 150 mg/dL or higher <i>or</i> Using a cholesterol medicine
Cholesterol: Low Good Cholesterol (HDL)	<i>Either</i> <i>For men:</i> Less than 40 mg/dL <i>For women:</i> Less than 50 mg/dL <i>Or</i> Using a cholesterol medicine
High Blood Pressure	<i>Either</i> Having blood pressure of 135/85 mm Hg or greater <i>or</i> Using a high blood pressure medicine
Blood Sugar: High Fasting Glucose Level	100 mg/dL or higher

What Causes Metabolic Syndrome?

Experts aren't sure why metabolic syndrome develops. It's a collection of risk factors, not a single disease. So it probably has many different causes. Some risk factors are:

- **Insulin resistance.** Insulin is a hormone that helps your body use glucose as energy. In people with insulin resistance, the insulin doesn't work as well so your body keeps making more and more of it to cope

with the rising level of glucose. Eventually, this can lead to diabetes. Insulin resistance is closely connected to having excess weight in the belly.

- **Obesity -- especially abdominal obesity.** Experts say that metabolic syndrome is becoming more common because of rising obesity rates. In addition, having extra fat in the belly seems to increase your risk.
- **Unhealthy lifestyle.** Eating a diet high in fats and not getting enough physical activity can play a role.
- **Hormonal imbalance.** Hormones may play a role. For instance, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) -- a condition that affects fertility -- is related to hormonal imbalance and metabolic syndrome.

If you've just been diagnosed with metabolic syndrome, you might be anxious. But think of it as a wake-up call. It's time to get serious about improving your health. Making simple changes to your habits now can prevent serious illness in the future.

Med-Cert provides:

Utilization Management, Maternity Management, Large Case and Wellness Disease Management, Transplant Coordination and Stop Loss Assessments

For information on any of our services, please call 866-261-5657 (toll free). We are on the Internet. Visit us at:

www.medcertinc.com

5 Signs Your Workout Is Too Easy

So you've been working out for a while, and it's starting to feel comfortable -- too comfortable. It's time to make it more challenging again.

1. You do the same moves over and over.

Once you've found a program you like, you want to keep at it, which is great -- but you also need to switch it up.

The solution: First, make sure you have a well-rounded fitness program that includes aerobic exercise, resistance training, and stretching. Then, every week to 4 weeks, change one thing about your workouts

2. You're talking with friends the entire time.

Having a workout buddy can encourage and motivate you, but the time you spend together is for getting in shape.

The solution: Save the major discussions for the coffee shop. When you exercise at a moderate level, the idea is to work hard enough so that you can only get out a few choppy sentences, not easily carry on a full conversation.

3. You're engrossed in TV, a magazine, or something online.

Exercising while watching TV, or reading on cardio machines, can help motivate you to move, but it can be difficult to get to and maintain the right intensity with these distractions.

The solution: Doing most of your workouts without the added entertainment.

4. You've barely broken a sweat.

If you didn't sweat a drop during your entire workout, even if you were exercising in the cold, then your workout was too easy.

The solution: Push yourself into the sweat zone. Don't work so hard that you risk injury, but pick up the pace or intensity so that your sweat-wicking clothes have something to wick.

5. You don't feel like you've done anything.

Be honest with yourself. It's OK to modify for your skill level or scale back when something feels too difficult, but you don't want to completely let yourself off the hook.

Please note:

Our office will be closed on Monday, September 1st in observance of Labor Day!

DON'T FORGET TO PRECERTIFY

Med-Cert's Toll-free Precert Telephone Number is (800)-356-7126 and should be reflected on your health insurance ID cards.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the employee/participant/member to make sure precertification has been done. Many plans will reduce your benefit amount if you fail to precertify.

Group Health Plans vary from one employer to the next so it is important for you to know what your health plan requires. Call the customer service representative for your health plan if you have questions.

Below is a list of some of the common Standard Precertification Notification Requirements.

- *Inpatient Hospital Stays*
- *Inpatient Treatment for Mental and Emotional Conditions or Substance Abuse*
- *Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy*
- *Skilled Nursing Care*
- *Outpatient Stays over 12 hours*
- *Outpatient Surgeries*
- *Physical Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Speech Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Home Health Care*
- *Hospice Care*
- *Maternity – on confirmation of pregnancy (or at least 2 months prior to delivery) and again on admission for delivery*
- *Outpatient Procedures – refer to your Employee Benefit Plan booklet as some plans require precertification for outpatient procedures*

Recipe Corner

Rice Noodles with Beef & Peanut Sauce



Ingredients

- 4 oz rice noodles
- ¼ cup creamy peanut butter
- 3 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 Tbsp reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 Tbsp dark sesame oil
- ½ to ¾ tsp crushed red-pepper flakes
- ½ lb thickly sliced reduced-sodium deli roast beef, sliced into strips
- 3 cups shredded Napa cabbage (about ¼ head)
- 1 cup snow peas, trimmed and halved
- 2 scallions, chopped
- ¼ cup chopped roasted peanuts

Directions

1. **SUBMERGE** and soak noodles in hot water 10 to 12 minutes.
2. **WHISK** peanut butter, vinegar, soy sauce, ginger, oil, and red-pepper flakes in small bowl.
3. **TOSS** with drained noodles, beef, cabbage, and peas.
4. **TOP** with scallions and peanuts.



This newsletter is brought to you courtesy of Med-Cert, Inc. Our sources for this edition are Web MD and Prevention Magazine.