

Wellness Paper Program “Living with Diabetes”

Diabetes and Metabolic Health

People with **diabetes** are more likely to be overweight, to have high blood pressure and high cholesterol. At least one out of every five overweight people has several metabolic problems at once, which can lead to serious complications like heart disease. "**Cardiometabolic risk**" means that if you have one of these problems, you are at higher risk for having the others.

You may have heard the term "metabolic syndrome" to describe cardiometabolic risk. The term has been used to describe cardiometabolic risk factors, primarily overweight, type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure. It's better to think of these factors simply as raising your cardiometabolic risk. There doesn't seem to be enough evidence to say that these factors represent a "syndrome," and scientists don't even agree on what the various components of the "syndrome" are. The important thing for you is to know whether you have any of these risk factors, and if so to take active steps to improve them.

Obesity and Fat

Being overweight or obese is a leading risk factor for type 2 diabetes. A healthy weight is measured by your body mass index (BMI). A BMI of 25 or more is considered overweight. A BMI of 30 or more is obese. If your BMI is over 25, you are at higher risk. In addition to how much you weigh, where your extra fat is stored can also affect your health. Having an "apple shaped" body (extra fat around your middle) rather than "pear shaped" body (extra fat around your hips) raises risk for heart disease.

High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure and type 2 diabetes often go hand-in-hand. High blood pressure, or hypertension, increases your chances for heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease. At least 40% percent of people with diabetes have high blood pressure, which often leads to stroke. High blood pressure may make stroke more likely in people with diabetes.

Blood Fats

Your body stores fat for future use for energy. Some of these fats, or lipids, are stored in your blood. Some are good for the body, like HDL cholesterol, which helps protect your heart. In general the higher your HDL, and the lower your LDL, the better. Triglycerides are another kind of blood fat that raises your chances for a heart attack or stroke if your levels are too high.

Insulin Resistance

Insulin helps the cells of the body use sugar, or glucose, as fuel. Insulin resistance occurs when the cells no longer respond well to insulin. The cells don't get the fuel they need and the body keeps making more insulin in an effort to lower blood glucose levels. Insulin resistance may be a key component of cardio-metabolic risk, and may cause problems to develop.

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"Living with Diabetes"**

Name: _____ **Dept Name:** _____

Dept Number: _____ **Wellness Captain:** _____

Are you, a spouse, or a co-worker enrolled in the St. John's Wellness Incentive Program?
Yes or No

Directions: This is an **Employee Wellness Paper Program**. By answering the questions and returning the program to your Wellness Captain, with your completed log you will receive 50 Education Program points.

1. True or False (Circle One) People with diabetes are more likely to be overweight, to have high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
2. True or False (Circle One) Being overweight or obese is not a leading risk factor for type 2 diabetes.
3. What percentage of those with diabetes also have high blood pressure?
 - a. At least 10%
 - b. At least 20%
 - c. At least 30%
 - d. At least 40%
4. True or False (Circle One) Insulin resistance occurs when the cells no longer respond well to insulin.
5. True or False (Circle One) Having an "apple shaped" body (extra fat around your middle) rather than "pear shaped" body (extra fat around your hips) raises risk for heart disease.

Answers:

1. True 2. False 3. D 4. True 5. True