



GBS HEALTH & WELLNESS

# Metabolic Syndrome Risk Factors

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of conditions that occur together, increasing your risk of heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes.

It is important to think about how metabolic syndrome might apply to you personally. Knowing your risk factors, modifiable or not, will help you be prepared for future possibilities or lifestyle changes to consider.



## Non-Modifiable Risk Factors

### Age

Risk for metabolic syndrome increases as you get older.

### Ethnicity

Ethnicity may play a role in your risk for metabolic syndrome.

### Family History & Genetics

You have a higher risk of metabolic syndrome if others in your family have had diabetes, metabolic syndrome, or any of its associated conditions.

### Sex

In older adults, women have a higher risk of metabolic syndrome than men due to hormone level changes after menopause.

### Other Medical Conditions & Medications

Discuss current conditions and medications with your provider to see if you are at an elevated risk for metabolic syndrome. The following conditions have been associated with increased risk:

- Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease
- Problems with your immune system
- Sleep disorders such as sleep apnea
- Some medicines used to treat allergies, bipolar disorder, depression, HIV, and schizophrenia.

## Modifiable Risk Factors

### Physical Activity

Find an activity you enjoy and do it often, whether that involves going to the gym or riding your bike with family. Aim to achieve 30-minutes of physical activity most days. Spice up your workout routine with the [Spell Your Name Workout](#).

### Diet

Shoot for a balanced diet made up of fruits, veggies, whole grains, and protein. Check out the following recipes for balanced meal ideas: [Asparagus & Salmon Spring Rolls](#), [Black Bean Sweet Potato Boats](#), and [Chocolate Protein Overnight Oats](#).

### Sleep

Aim for 6-8 hours of sleep to give your body the rest and rejuvenation it needs. Focus on sleep quality by assessing your sleep habits and night-time routine. Review [Connect to Your Dreams](#) for tips on how to improve sleep.

### Smoking Cessation

Quitting smoking is the best thing a smoker can do to improve their health, regardless of their age or how long they have been smoking. Reducing this cardiovascular risk also reduces the risk of metabolic syndrome.

### Medications

Discuss the option of starting a medication to help manage blood glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol, and cardiovascular disease risks with your physician.

## Take Action!

After reviewing the above list, determine if there are changes you can make in the near future to help reduce your metabolic syndrome risk. Write down one simple step you can take this week to improve your lifestyle habits.

**Resources**  
[National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute](#)  
[Mayo Clinic](#)