

METABOLIC SYNDROME & HEALTH

Consumption of sugar and insulin resistance go beyond the obvious problems of obesity, diabetes and high cholesterol. Sugar has been linked to fatigue, high blood pressure, fatty liver, atherosclerosis, yeast overgrowth, magnesium loss, acidic pH, calcium/phosphorus imbalance, polycystic ovary disease, endocrine problems, a systemic inflammatory state, impaired fibrinolysis and pro coagulation, and an environment that favors neoplastic (cancer) growth, and more.

The average American consumes nearly 200 pounds of refined sugar each year, and we get half of our calories from refined carbohydrates. This creates vitamin deficiency and insulin insensitivity. Other factors that contribute to the metabolic syndrome include stress, poor sleep habits, lack of exercise, and exposure to toxins.

Our blood sugar is controlled by insulin and glucagon. The excessive consumption of sugar and refined carbohydrates causes the body to become less sensitive to insulin—a condition that will lead to the metabolic syndrome or syndrome X, and can eventually lead to type-2 diabetes. According to the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Syndrome X is present if three or more of these things are present:

- Waist measurement greater than 40 inches in men or 35 inches in women
- Triglycerides greater than 150 mg/dl
- HDL less than 40 mg/dl in men or less than 50 mg/dl in women
- Blood pressure that is 135/85 or greater
- Fasting blood glucose of 110 mg/dl or greater

It is reported that 25% of all Americans have Syndrome X. It is becoming more and more of a problem because we are eating too much refined food. It can result in diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. Eating sweets and starch causes the body to produce insulin. If the consumption of refined food is excessive and habitual, the body becomes less responsive to the insulin—a condition known as “insulin resistance”. The body produces more and more insulin, but responds to it less. Excess insulin production causes a variety of problems. For one thing, insulin causes the body to store calories. If you want to lose weight, you have to get insulin production under control. This means avoiding sweets and starch. Insulin resistance can also lead to high cholesterol. The pattern is typically high triglycerides and LDL (bad) cholesterol and low HDL (good) cholesterol. Americans currently spend \$25 billion each year on cholesterol lowering medication. It is interesting to note that cholesterol lowering drugs work by suppressing the enzyme HMG CoA reductase in the liver. That enzyme is actually stimulated by insulin production.

Another thing that few people realize is that eating refined sugar actually contributes to inflammation. So, if you are recovering from an injury or are in pain, eating sugar and refined carbohydrate can contribute to your suffering. Refined food and excess insulin production can really undermine your health.

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