

# THE NEW SILENT KILLER

What you should know about metabolic syndrome



**H**ave you heard about the new silent killer? The latest health hazard? The fatal four? It is a combination of high blood pressure, high blood sugar levels, abdominal obesity, and high cholesterol levels that are collectively known as metabolic syndrome, or sometimes also called Syndrome X.

Unfortunately, a lot of people are undiagnosed with this disease, which makes them at risk for other health complications. Is metabolic syndrome really undetectable? What are the risks? And what can be done to treat or prevent it?

Modernization and technological advancements have made work faster, more efficient, and better in a lot of ways. But these have also contributed to lack of physical activity, a sedentary lifestyle, and poor diet choices such as fast food, sweets, and junk food. These factors contributed to the rising number of individuals who have or are at risk of high blood pressure, high blood sugar levels, abdominal obesity, and high cholesterol levels, the symptoms of metabolic syndrome. Having one of these does not automatically mean that one has the syndrome, but having one or more of these conditions increase the chances of having it.



**SKINVESTING**  
**DR. KAYCEE REYES**

More often than not, these conditions show no initial symptoms, which is why metabolic syndrome is also called a silent killer. Several other factors that increase the risk of metabolic syndrome are age, being overweight, having diabetes or insulin resistance, or the presence of other diseases such as polycystic ovary syndrome and cardiovascular disease. At the same time, if you have metabolic syndrome, the risk of having diabetes and cardiovascular disease increases too, and this cycle of health

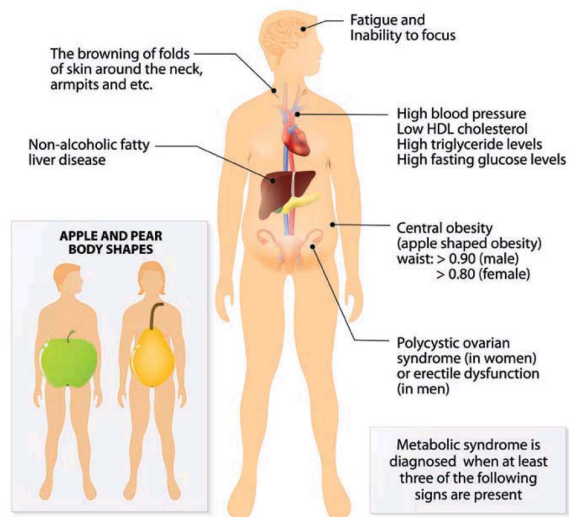
problems make it harder for the individual to overcome it. Usually, a physician will check the patient's waist circumference as it is one of the most visible and tell-tale signs. More than that, the patient will also be tested for blood sugar levels, cholesterol, and triglyceride levels, and will be asked extensively about other diseases and medical history. In the Philippines, one out of three die from non-communicable diseases, with heart disease and diabetes as the top two causes of mortality, according to the Department of Health (DOH). The DOH further states that majority of these cases are caused by lifestyle factors. These statistics show that there may be more Filipinos now than ever that could have metabolic syndrome.

Fortunately, metabolic syndrome can be reversed and prevented. An active lifestyle and healthy food choices (not dieting!) is important in overcoming or preventing it. The key is choosing to be healthy, day in and day out, that can be

*Several other factors that increase the risk of metabolic syndrome are age, being overweight, having diabetes or insulin resistance, or the presence of other diseases such as polycystic ovary syndrome and cardiovascular disease.*

sustained for the long term. Dieting for the sake of losing weight will not keep if off for long, and may result to binge eating, gaining back weight and then some, or more serious health problems later on. Having proper sleep and managing stress may also significantly improve one's health and lower the risk not only of metabolic syndrome, but of other fa-

## THE SYMPTOMS of metabolic syndrome



tal diseases as well. One can maximize technology not by relying on it, but by working with it. Utilizing fitness trackers, motivating oneself to exercise anywhere using mobile apps, joining online forums and clubs that can push one to improve his or her health every day, can make one live better, for longer!

Loving oneself means taking care of your health, too. Metabolic syn-

drome is indeed scary and is a real health threat if not prevented or managed as early as one can. If you start to have one of these symptoms, visit your doctor as soon as you can. Better yet, start living as healthy as you can. Remember, it is never too late to start anew, regardless of your age, the time of year, or where you are. Cheers to your healthiest years ahead!