

Are These Numbers Killing Your Children?

Higher than healthy numbers in your child's body mass, cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar – or a history of these problems in your family – could add up to health problems we used to associate only with adults.

What is Metabolic Syndrome?

Metabolic Syndrome or Syndrome X is a condition that could put your child or teenager at serious health risk, whether due to genetics or lifestyle choices. Poor dietary habits and an inactive lifestyle in children may increase their risk of heart disease, diabetes, and stroke at a young age.

Is your child or teenager at risk?

Risk factors include:

- Overweight, especially in the belly area (shaped like an apple, not a pear)
- High blood pressure
- Blood sugar over 100
- Diabetes, high cholesterol, or heart disease in parents or family history
- Smoking and/or contact with secondhand smoke

If your child has 3+ risks, please talk with his or her doctor. Your actions now could extend and improve the quality of his or her life.

Recommendations for your pediatrician or family doctor:

- Body Mass Index (BMI) measured every physical
- Blood pressure taken in ages 3+
- Cholesterol screenings in ages 5+ if there are no family risk factors. Ages 2+ if parents have high cholesterol (240+) or family has heart disease

What can you and your child or teenager do to reduce or eliminate risks?

Talk with your pediatrician or family doctor about lifestyle changes, such as

- A diet low in sodium (less than 2000-3000 mg/day), saturated and trans fats
- Choose fruits, vegetables, lean meats and low-fat dairy
- Running, walking the dog, swimming, biking for at least 30-60 minutes daily
- Maintain healthy weight or BMI
- Do not smoke and avoid secondhand smoke
- Keep blood pressure within acceptable range



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Source: NHANES III and <http://www-hsc.usc.edu/~goran/PDF%20papers/R35.pdf>

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