

Insulin Resistance Syndrome

What is insulin resistance syndrome?

Insulin is a kind of hormone. It helps your body store sugar in your tissues. Your body uses stored sugar for energy.

In some people, the tissues stop responding to insulin. We say that these people are resistant to insulin. If you have insulin resistance, your body will pour more and more insulin into your blood, but it will not help you store sugar.

Insulin resistance often goes along with other health problems, like diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and heart attack. When one person has many of these problems together, we call it insulin resistance syndrome.

How would you know you have insulin resistance syndrome?

No simple test can tell that you have insulin resistance syndrome. If one (or more) of the following is true for you, your doctor may suspect you have insulin resistance syndrome:

- One (or more) of your brothers, sisters or parents has been diagnosed with diabetes.
- You have a history of diabetes during pregnancy.
- You have a history of polycystic ovary syndrome.
- You have a blood sugar level that is not quite high enough to be diabetes, but it is higher than normal. It means you have more risk of getting diabetes.
- You are overweight (obese).
- You have more fat around your waist than around your hips.

See the chart on the next page to find out if you are overweight. See the waist-to-hip drawing to the right to find out if you have too much fat in your abdomen (tummy area).

What can You do about insulin resistance?

If you live a healthy lifestyle, you may be able to avoid getting the diseases that are called insulin resistance syndrome. To live a healthy lifestyle, you should do the following:

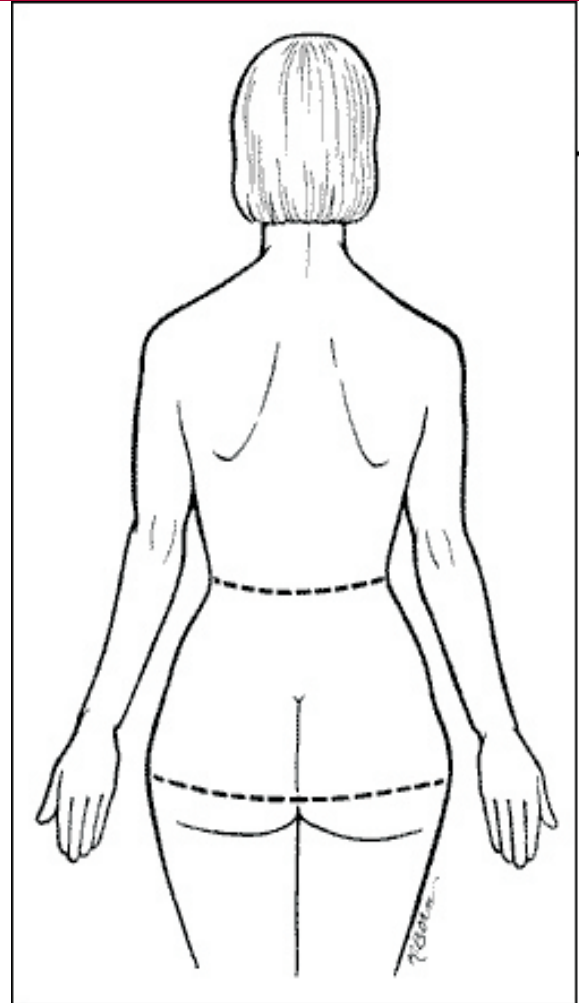
- Keep yourself at a healthy weight. Your doctor will help you get to a healthy weight through diet and exercise. See the BMI chart below to find a healthy weight for your height.
- Keep walking. Walking just 30 minutes each day will help prevent the diseases of insulin resistance syndrome. Other kinds of exercise also help.
- Eat a lot of dietary fiber. Foods high in dietary fiber should be a regular part of your diet. You should eat several servings of fruits, vegetables and whole-grain bread every day.

Waist-to-hip Ratio

To find your waist-to-hip ratio, measure the smallest part of your waist with a tape measure. Don't hold in your stomach while you measure!

Now measure the biggest part of your hips with a tape measure. Measure the part where your buttocks stick out the most.

Divide your waist measurement by your hip measurement. The answer is your waist-to-hip ratio. A ratio that is bigger than 1.0 (for men) or 0.8 (for women) shows that your abdomen is obese. Note: the word "obese" means very much overweight.



Courtesy: American Academy of Family Physicians.

Body Mass Index Chart																	
BMI →	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Height in inches	Body weight in pounds																
58	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167
59	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173
60	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179
61	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	186
62	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191
63	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175	180	186	191	197
64	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180	186	192	197	204
65	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210
66	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216
67	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223
68	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203	210	216	223	230
69	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209	216	223	230	236
70	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243
71	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222	229	236	243	250
72	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228	235	242	250	258
73	144	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235	242	250	257	265
74	148	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241	249	256	264	272
75	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279
76	156	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254	263	271	279	287

BMI means body mass index. To find your BMI, find your height on the left column. Go across on that line until you find your weight. Now go up that column to the BMI number in the first row across the top. If your BMI number is 25 to 29, you are overweight. If your BMI number is 30 or higher, you are obese.