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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Managing Metabolic Syndrome after Allogeneic Stem Cell Transplant

This information explains what metabolic syndrome is and how to prevent and manage the problems that cause it after your allogeneic stem cell transplant.

Metabolic syndrome is a combination of problems, including high blood sugar, abdominal obesity (too much weight around your waist), cholesterol levels that are too high or too low, and high blood pressure. If you have 3 or more of these problems, you have metabolic syndrome.

Metabolic syndrome makes you more likely to get heart problems, such as a heart attack or stroke, and diabetes. You can check whether you have metabolic syndrome by comparing your information to the information in the table below.

Having an allogeneic stem cell transplant makes you more likely to have the problems associated with metabolic syndrome. In fact, as many as half of all people who have an allogeneic stem cell transplant develop these problems because of the effects of radiation, chemotherapy, and medications to suppress their immune system. Low testosterone, an underactive thyroid gland, and graft versus host disease (GvHD) after transplant also add to the risk. The best way to prevent or manage metabolic syndrome, or any of the problems in it, is with lifestyle changes, such as eating a heart-healthy diet and exercising regularly.

Sometimes people need to gain weight after transplant. Make sure you talk with your healthcare provider or dietitian about what kind of foods you should eat. If you need to gain weight after your transplant, eat high calorie nutritious foods, such as avocado, nuts, seeds, olive oil, hummus, eggs, and salmon instead of high calorie foods without much nutrition, like ice cream and cookies. This will help you gain weight while still following a heart-healthy diet.

If your healthcare provider wants you to follow a low-microbial diet, you can still eat lots of heart-healthy foods like whole grains (such as brown rice and whole-wheat bread), legumes (such as lentils and beans), and most well-washed fruits and vegetables. For more information, read the resource *Low-Microbial Diet* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/low\\_microbial\\_diet](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/low_microbial_diet)) or ask to speak with a dietitian.

Exercising regularly can also help you manage the problems that cause metabolic syndrome. Talk with your healthcare provider about exercising after your transplant. If you have numbness in your feet, osteoporosis, or if you bruise easily, speak with your healthcare provider. A physical therapist can teach you exercises that are safe for you to do if you have any concerns about starting an exercise routine.

For more information about how to prevent or manage the problems that cause metabolic syndrome, watch the videos below. If you have any questions or concerns, talk with your healthcare provider or dietitian.

**Table 1. If you have 3 or more of these problems, you have metabolic syndrome**

| <b>Waist Circumference</b> |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Men                        | 102 centimeters or bigger |
| Women                      | 88 centimeters or bigger  |
| <b>Triglycerides</b>       |                           |
| 150 or higher              |                           |
| <b>HDL Cholesterol</b>     |                           |
| Men                        | Less than 40              |
| Women                      | Less than 50              |
| <b>Blood Pressure</b>      |                           |
| 130/85 or higher           |                           |
| <b>Fasting Glucose</b>     |                           |
| 110 or higher              |                           |

The following video explains what you can do to manage abdominal obesity (belly fat) after your allogeneic stem cell transplant.

 Please visit [www.mskcc.org/pe/abdominal\\_obesity\\_allogeneic](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/abdominal_obesity_allogeneic) to watch this video.

The following video explains what you can do to control your blood pressure after your allogeneic stem cell transplant.

 Please visit [www.mskcc.org/pe/blood\\_pressure\\_allogeneic](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/blood_pressure_allogeneic) to watch this video.

The following video explains what you can do to control your blood sugar after your allogeneic stem cell transplant.

 Please visit [www.mskcc.org/pe/blood\\_sugar\\_allogeneic](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/blood_sugar_allogeneic) to watch this video.

The following video explains what you can do to control your cholesterol after your allogeneic stem cell transplant.

 Please visit [www.mskcc.org/pe/cholesterol\\_allogeneic](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/cholesterol_allogeneic) to watch this video.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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