

THE VELMA B. COX FOUNDATION

For Type II Diabetes & High Blood Pressure



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ABDOMINAL FAT & YOUR HEALTH

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Excess weight that has developed overtime and found around the center of the body is called abdominal fat. This can be due to many causes, but the main cause is usually the result of living a sedentary lifestyle which involves consuming a poor diet (Standard American Diet) and lack of exercise.

For most people, this may be an esthetic problem where their clothes don't fit them as they would like. More importantly, having excess fat around the waist (abdominal fat) increases one's risk for high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, stroke, insulin resistance, heart attack, fatty liver, disability, and even death.

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What is the "SAD" (Standard American Diet)?

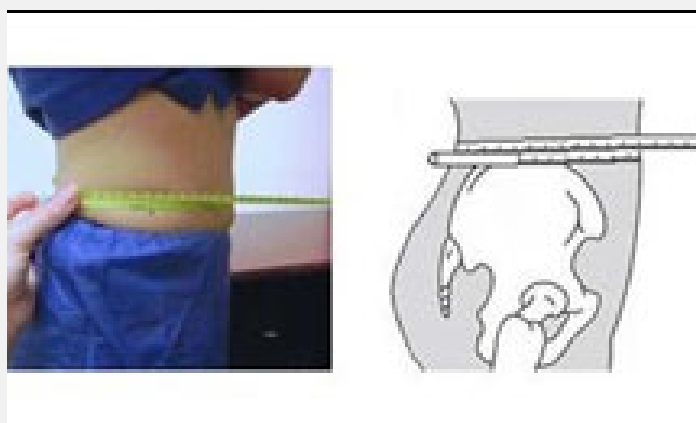
Also known as the Western Diet, the SAD diet is a modern dietary pattern of which includes:

- Fried foods
- Processed foods
- Sodas & fruit drinks (high sugared drinks)
- High intake of red meats
- Processed meats
- High fructose corn syrup & added sugars
- High fat dairy products
- Candies & sweets



In addition to increasing abdominal fat, the regular consumption of these foods increases incidence of elevated cholesterol, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, kidney failure, heart attacks, obesity, and overall premature death.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that your healthcare practitioner utilize waist circumference measurements as a screening tool when assessing your potential risks for these conditions. It is suggested that women should measure less than 35 inches at the waist, while men should measure less than 40 inches at the waist, to reduce risks and concerns for these mentioned conditions.



**This visual from the CDC demonstrates how the waist measurements are conducted. Please note that additional tests may be performed, when diagnosing or assessing risks.*

Steps on How to Measure your Waist Circumference:

- While standing, place a tape measure just above your hipbones-just round your middle section
- The tape measure should be horizontally positioned around the waist
- Be sure to keep the tape measure snug around your waist, while not compressing the skin
- Be sure to measure your waist just after you breathe out

What steps can I take to reduce abdominal fat???

There are so many steps you can take to assure that you maintain a health waist circumference and improve your overall weight and health. Here are a few things you can begin to implement into your lifestyle today:

1. ***Avoid the “SAD”***

This diet (mentioned above) causes you to consume large amounts of calories while reducing your nutrition content. Essentially, you are eating empty calories and simultaneously gaining large amounts of weight.

2. ***Replace caloric drinks (sodas, juice, alcohol, milk) with water.***

In addition to the large amount of inflammation caused by consuming these beverages, large amounts of added sugars or high fructose corn syrup causes increases in blood sugar, which further causes weight gain. Since we are mostly made of water, our organs would readily benefit from the consumption of water throughout the day. While drinking water will help us to detox, hydrate and have great skin, it will also help us to avoid weight gain since it lacks calories.

3. ***Eat more foods with fiber.***

Fiber has so many benefits. Fiber can help us get rid of toxins from our bodies through our digestive system, reduce & maintain a healthy cholesterol and helps to keep you full and satiated much longer. This is beneficial because you will notice that you are less hungry and can go much longer between meals. Some foods with fiber include:

- Blue berries
- Kale
- Broccoli
- Collard greens
- Beans
- Peas
- Cauliflower
- Oatmeal
- Nuts
- Apples (with skin)
- Flaxseeds
- Chia seeds
- Spinach
- Brown rice
- Strawberries
- Pear (with skin)



4. Keep Moving.

Exercise is so important when trying to maintain a healthy waist circumference and overall weight. We cannot spot-lose weight. In other words, we can not do exercises for one specific area on our body. That is not effective. We have to engage in aerobic or cardiovascular activities in which our whole body is working out. Consequently, you will notice loss of weight. CDC recommends that we participate in 30 minutes of moderate activity, for 5 days in the week, for a total of 150 minutes, at minimum.



5. Try to Receive 7-8 Hours of Sleep, Nightly

You were created to sleep in addition to all the other things you were created for. Sleep is also part of your health. Not maintaining a healthy sleep life can stress the body and result in weight gain.

Reducing abdominal fat and maintaining a healthy waist circumference are significant when it comes to reducing your risks for high cholesterol, insulin resistance, high blood pressure, stroke, kidney failure, heart attacks, obesity and overall premature death.

Eliminating the “SAD”, increasing water intake, increasing fiber content, exercising regularly, and seeing that you are maintaining a healthy sleep life are all steps you can take today in order to maintain a healthy waist circumference AND improve your overall quality of life.



References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/index.html>

Disclaimer:

The information presented is for general information purposes only. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. It is highly recommended that before you start any new regimen, please consult with your healthcare provider.