
Moderate Weight Loss Reduces Risk Of Heart Disease

Evidence shows that even a moderate weight reduction in obese people could save them a lifetime of health problems, especially heart disease. An estimated 50 million Americans have the potentially serious metabolic syndrome, a clustering of risk factors that leads to heart disease.

Doctors at the Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center in Houston have demonstrated a significant motivation to drop even a modest amount of weight. That is good news when America is facing an epidemic of obesity.

"Obesity appears to be the central component of the metabolic syndrome. Our study have shown that weight loss of as little as 6.5 percent in individuals with the disease results in substantial reductions in blood pressure, glucose, triglycerides and total cholesterol, all factors that lead to heart disease," said Christie Ballantyne, M.D., director of the Center for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention at the Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center and Baylor College of Medicine. "These impressive results occur early in the weight loss, well before individuals even begin to approach their ideal body weight."

Every risk factor of the metabolic syndrome can be tied to increased risk for heart disease. However, research shows that all risk factors were reduced by even moderate weight loss, and equivalent benefits from medications may have required three different drugs for blood pressure, lipids and glucose. Continued weight loss shows significant improvements in both blood pressure and triglycerides.

The study demonstrates that weight loss is an effective tool to lessen the cardiovascular risk factors associated with the metabolic syndrome, and therefore should be the first option when treating the disease.



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