



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI | Ohio

Metabolic Syndrome

Metabolic syndrome is a group of conditions that raises the likelihood for cardiovascular disease and premature death:

- Abdominal obesity → waist circumference is greater than
 - 40 inches in men
 - 35 inches in women
- Abnormally high LDL “bad” cholesterol level (encourages ‘plaque’ build up in blood vessels)
- Abnormally low HDL “good” cholesterol level (discourages ‘plaque’ build up in blood vessels)
- High blood pressure
- Inability of the body to use insulin or blood sugar (Diabetes Mellitus)
- Increased tendency to form blood clots
- Tobacco use

There are two things that clients can do to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, lose weight and stop smoking.

Weight Loss

Contrary to popular belief, persons with mental illnesses are:

- Self-conscious about their weight
- Interested in reducing their weight
- Can make the choice to improve their health

Losing only 2-6% of body weight can decrease:

- Cardiac events by 30-40%
- High blood pressure by 20-40%
- Incidence of diabetes by 30-60%

Key elements to lifestyle changes include diet and exercise:

- Reducing calorie intake = weight loss
- Exercising 30 minutes a day (does not have to be all at one time) = improved physical health
- Increasing social supports = enhanced commitment to lifestyle changes

Smoking Cessation

Myth	Fact
To quit smoking all you need is will power	Only 3% of people who quit “cold turkey” succeed
People with mental illness are more addicted to nicotine and are unable to quit	Studies show that nicotine replacement therapy and psychotherapies are effective
Light or low tar cigarettes are safer	No such thing as safe smoking
“Natural” tobacco and clove cigarettes are healthier	They increase your risk of cancer, heart disease and emphysema
People with mental illness should smoke to reduce symptoms	There are more effective ways that do not hurt your health

How Do I Help My Client Quit Smoking?

Use the 5Rs and 5As

- **RELEVANCE:** Make quitting relevant to the person
- **RISKS:** Share the risks of continued smoking
- **REWARDS:** Show what they can gain
- **ROADBLOCKS:** Identify ways to remove barriers to quitting
- **REPETITION:** Reinforce motivational message at every contact

- **ASK:** Identify and document tobacco use
- **ADVISE:** Quitting smoking is the most important thing you can do for your health
- **ASSESS:** Willingness to make an attempt to stop/give it a try
- **ASSIST:** For those ready to try, provide or refer to counseling and medication
- **ARRANGE:** Follow up with supportive contacts (Ohio quit line: 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669)

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