

Title: Preventing Diabetes in patients with Metabolic Syndrome

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Date: 7/15/2009

Key words: Metabolic Syndrome, Syndrome X, Dysmetabolic Syndrome, acarbose, Hypoglycemic Agents, Diabetes

Abstract:

Patients with Metabolic Syndrome have an increased risk of developing Diabetes compared to those with impaired glucose tolerance alone. Treatment with acarbose has been shown to reduce the risk of developing Diabetes from 18.7% to 13.5% in patients with Metabolic Syndrome. This provides a relative risk reduction of 27% per year. The number needed to treat to prevent diabetes over 3.3 years was 5.8 in those patients with Metabolic Syndrome. In patients without Metabolic Syndrome, the intervention was less successful with a number needed to treat of 16.5.

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Preventing Diabetes in patients with Metabolic Syndrome

What is metabolic syndrome?

-Metabolic Syndrome is a state in which people are obese, have elevated fasting blood glucoses, are hypertensive and have elevations in their cholesterol.

What does this mean for me?

-Many people with Metabolic Syndrome progress to Type 2 Diabetes, a disease in which the body is unable to use sugar in the blood and can cause many health problems involving the eyes, kidneys and heart.



If I have been diagnosed with Metabolic Syndrome, what should I do?

-You should speak with your doctor about possibly adding a hypoglycemic agent to your treatment on top of diet modification and exercise.

What can I do about it?

-Up until now, the recommended treatment for Metabolic Syndrome was change in diet and exercise, but now there is evidence that medications may help prevent Diabetes as well.

What medications can I take?

-A recent study on the oral hypoglycemic drug (one that lowers blood glucose) acarbose has been shown to reduce the risk of developing Diabetes in patients with Metabolic Syndrome by 27% over one year. Additionally, for every 6 people treated over a 3-year period, one case of diabetes is prevented.

What are the side effects of acarbose?

-The most common side effects include intestinal gas, abdominal pain and diarrhea. Other side effects may be experienced as well and should be reported to your doctor immediately.