



“No nonsense weight management.”

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How Apples Work for Your Waist

By W. Gifford-Jones, MD

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As this long period of isolation eases, are you noticing your friends and neighbours have put on weight around their middles? How unfortunate it is if the coronavirus crisis piles on additional chronic health problems for individuals and society due to weight gain, or what has come to be known as metabolic syndrome.

The World Health Organization defines metabolic syndrome as a new non-communicable disease characterized by abdominal obesity, insulin resistance, high blood pressure, and high blood fats. To make the diagnosis, doctors measure the waistline, blood pressure, and glucose, triglyceride, and cholesterol levels. The risk of metabolic syndrome is a progression to Type 2 diabetes. The prescription to avert this preventable disease is to lose the extra weight through exercise and diet – and then smart weight management for life.

During these days when it is challenging to get an appointment with your doctor, you can measure your middle to learn if you might have a problem. For men, beware of more than 40 inches around the waistline. For women, it's 35 inches. And there's a reason the waistline is the target of attention. Distinct from subcutaneous fat that is immediately under your skin, visceral fat gathers around your vital organs. Visceral fat is more dangerous than other fat because it increases the risk not only for diabetes but also for heart disease, stroke, and Alzheimer's.

So what can you do? You can start by changing your daily routine so that you can lose any weight you may have gained while in isolation. And if you need some help, look to Mother Nature and try her natural remedies first.

One example is the wholesome apple. It's been long celebrated as a healthy choice, and for good reason. New research on apple polyphenols has shown promise in helping reduce visceral fat.

Apple polyphenols are micronutrients packed with antioxidants that help with digestion. Look for them in natural supplements like AppleSlim that help with weight management. Researchers in Japan have conducted clinical trials showing that apple

polyphenols extracted from unripe apples grown in Central Asia reduced visceral fat by 9% over 12 weeks in a cohort of overweight or obese study participants as compared to a similar group offered a placebo. These results were measured using CT scans, as losing weight through diet and exercise can build up muscle, which is heavier than fat, making number of pounds lost a potentially misleading measure on its own.

What exactly are the apple polyphenols doing to help? They are influencing the way your body absorbs food in your diet and transports fats to tissues. Apple polyphenols block the enzymes that break down fats and glucose, leaving them to pass through your system and out the other end.

The benefits go beyond a reduction in visceral fat. Research in animals shows that apple polyphenols promote longevity. Large epidemiological studies have shown that populations consuming high quantities of polyphenols have lower rates of disease.

Weight management is of necessity a personal matter, best achieved with one's own grit or with the help of supplements. But there are societal changes we can and should make too, and no better time than now, while the pandemic offers us the opportunity of a rethink. We need to design our cities and neighbourhoods better, so that people walk or cycle more and drive less. Exercise programs need to be deliberately structured in our schools and workplaces, and health promotion policies should encourage investments in exercise facilities and spaces. Governments and firms need to make healthy food more affordable and convenient. And we need to get creative in how we incentivize people – especially young people – to value healthy choices.

If you want a good place to start, make a visit to your local health food store. You will find people there who understand health promotion and disease prevention. It is a good bet that they will know more about the health benefit of apple polyphenols than the next medical specialist you see.



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