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COMMENTARY

## Understanding Metabolic Syndrome: Internal Medicine Perspectives

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### DESCRIPTION

Metabolic syndrome represents a constellation of interconnected metabolic abnormalities, including central obesity, insulin resistance, dyslipidaemia, and hypertension, which collectively increase the risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes mellitus. This commentary explores the complex nature of metabolic syndrome within the realm of internal medicine, examining its epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical implications, and contemporary management strategies. Metabolic syndrome poses a significant public health challenge, affecting millions of individuals worldwide and contributing to the growing burden of cardiovascular disease and diabetes mellitus. Defined by a cluster of metabolic derangements, metabolic syndrome represents a harbinger of adverse health outcomes and underscores the need for early detection, intervention, and preventive strategies. This commentary aims to unravel the complexities of metabolic syndrome, shedding light on its multifaceted nature, clinical significance, and evolving management paradigms. Metabolic syndrome has reached epidemic proportions, with an estimated prevalence ranging from 20% to 30% in the adult population worldwide. Its prevalence is influenced by age, gender, ethnicity, and lifestyle factors, including sedentary behaviour, unhealthy dietary habits, and obesity. Individuals with metabolic syndrome face a substantially increased risk of cardiovascular events, type 2 diabetes mellitus, and all-cause mortality, highlighting the clinical relevance and public health implications of this syndrome. The pathophysiology of metabolic syndrome involves a complex interplay of genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors that contribute to insulin resistance, adipose tissue dysfunction, and systemic inflammation. Central obesity, characterized by visceral adiposity and adipocyte hypertrophy, serves as a key driver of metabolic dysfunction, leading to dyslipidaemia, hyperglycaemia, and hypertension. Dysregulation of adipocytes, cytokines, and inflammatory mediators further exacerbates metabolic derangements, perpetuating a vicious cycle of metabolic dysfunction and cardiovascular risk. Diagnostic criteria

for metabolic syndrome vary slightly among different organizations, but commonly include a combination of central obesity plus two or more additional criteria, such as elevated fasting glucose, elevated triglycerides, reduced HDL cholesterol, and elevated blood pressure. Clinical manifestations of metabolic syndrome encompass a spectrum of cardiovascular and metabolic abnormalities, including abdominal obesity, insulin resistance, atherogenic dyslipidaemia, hypertension, and prothrombotic and proinflammatory states. Metabolic syndrome represents a significant predictor of cardiovascular risk, independent of traditional risk factors such as age, gender, smoking, and family history of cardiovascular disease. Individuals with metabolic syndrome face a two-fold to four-fold increase in the risk of developing cardiovascular disease compared to those without the syndrome. Moreover, metabolic syndrome confers an elevated risk of type 2 diabetes mellitus, chronic kidney disease, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, and certain cancers, further amplifying the burden of morbidity and mortality associated with this syndrome. Lifestyle modifications serve as the cornerstone of metabolic syndrome management, encompassing dietary changes, regular physical activity, weight management, smoking cessation, and stress reduction. Internal medicine practitioners play a pivotal role in counselling patients on adopting healthy behaviours and implementing sustainable lifestyle modifications. Pharmacological interventions, including antihypertensive agents, lipid-lowering medications, insulin sensitizers, and anti-diabetic drugs, are employed judiciously based on individual patient characteristics, cardiovascular risk, and treatment goals. The landscape of metabolic syndrome management continues to evolve, with emerging therapeutic approaches offering promising avenues for improved outcomes.

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### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.