

Health treatments combined with lifestyle changes can help even more if you now have:

- High blood pressure
- High blood sugar or diabetes
- Abnormal blood cholesterol



Helpful Websites and Organizations

CalOptima:

www.caloptima.org/YourGuideToHealth

American Diabetes Association:

www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness

Mental Health America (NMHA):

www.nmha.org

Mental Health Medications

What you need to know about Cardiometabolic Risk



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Mental Health Medications

What you need to know about Cardiometabolic Risk

What does “cardiometabolic risk” mean?

Health care providers use the term “cardiometabolic risk” to refer to your chances of having diabetes, heart disease or stroke. Everyone has some risk factors for these diseases, but it is important to know that diabetes and heart disease are common in people with mental illness.

Certain mental health medications can increase your chance of getting diabetes, heart disease or stroke. To reduce your risk, it is crucial for you to start healthy new habits at the same time you start taking these medications. Talk to your doctor about what your risk level is. Discuss what you can do to live a long and healthy life.

Which medications may affect my risk for diabetes, heart disease or stroke?

Mental health medications that are known to increase the chance of diabetes, heart disease and stroke in adults include but are not limited to:

- Olanzapine (Zyprexa)
- Clozapine (Clozaril)
- Chlorpromazine (Thorazine)

Talk with your doctor to plan for healthy habits now to prevent these likely health problems. If you already have diabetes or heart disease, you may want to ask your doctor if there are other medications with a lower risk that are better for you. Sometimes, it is necessary to take these medications even though they can increase your chance

for these diseases (for example, if they are the only medications that help control your mental illness). In these cases, your doctor can recommend treatments or health habits to keep your risk as low as possible.

Ways to Keep Track

You and your doctor may also want to discuss a routine way to check your:

- Blood pressure
- Blood cholesterol
- Waist measurement and body mass index (BMI)
- Blood sugar



How to Lower Your Cardiometabolic Risk

Many things that cannot change may increase your risk. For instance, your risk goes up with age. Men also have higher risks than women. The good news is that there are things you can do to lower your chance of getting a disease.

Make these lifestyle changes to lower your risk:

- Quit smoking; get help if you need it.
- Lose weight; use a well-thought-out plan.
- Eat healthy food; make better choices.
- Exercise daily in a way that is fun and easy.

