

**The Association between Changes in Metabolic Syndrome and Changes in Cost in a
Workplace Population**

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Objective: To determine whether changes in metabolic syndrome (MetS) risks over time are associated with commensurate changes in health care costs, pharmacy costs and short-term disability costs in an employed population.

Methods: A total of 3270 employees of a Midwestern manufacturing corporation participated in a health risk appraisal, biometric screening and in the company's medical plan in 2004, 2005, and 2006. Changes in their MetS risks over time were compared with changes in costs.

Results: Risks for MetS in this manufacturing population are in a constant state of change. Changes in MetS status over time were associated with commensurate changes in health care, pharmacy, and short-term disability costs. Employees who reduced the greatest number of MetS risks over time had the largest cost decrease (-\$437), whereas those who increased the greatest number of risks experienced the largest cost increase (+\$1348).

Conclusions: If organizations are successful in encouraging the high-risk individuals to reduce their risks while also helping the low-risk employees remain low risk, they will improve the health and vitality of employees while also improving cost and productivity outcomes.