



Are you an Apple or a Pear?

By Sue Knorr

Find out whether body shape alone reveals what's really happening on the inside. Most of us have heard of the pear-shaped body versus the apple-shaped body. These two shapes are a reference to where you carry your body fat. You are pear shaped if the widest part of your body is below the waist. If you are bigger around the middle, upper back and shoulders, with thinner arms and legs, you are apple shaped. The two types of stored fat associated with the pear and apple-shaped bodies are subcutaneous fat, which is not harmful, and visceral fat, which collects around your organs and is deadly. The fat that deposits on the hips and thighs and gives you a pear shape is subcutaneous fat. People commonly think the apple-shaped person has a lot of visceral fat and is more apt to suffer the dangerous consequences of obesity. This is not necessarily true. Abdominal fat can be composed of both subcutaneous and visceral fat. It's possible to look like an apple but have lower levels of visceral fat. Outside body shape alone is not a fail-safe indicator of what is happening inside your body.

Obesity begins with excess arachidonic acid (AA).¹ AA is increased in the bloodstream by eating too much of it (fatty red meats and egg yolks are rich in AA) and also by consuming too much carbohydrate, which causes the body to produce AA. To make a long story short, the body is very efficient at protecting itself. Your fat cells store AA within them to prevent it from doing harm. These cells continue to fill with increasing amounts of AA until they are no longer able to contain it all. Then your fat cells begin pumping out inflammation into your bloodstream. Visceral fat, the dangerous form of stored fat I mentioned earlier, causes inflammation to be constantly released into your bloodstream. This increases the level of inflammation in every cell in your entire body. So, the fatter you are, the more inflammation your body generates. Incidentally, the more inflammation you generate, usually the fatter you become. This type of inflammation is thought to be at the basis of many of today's most insidious diseases, such as

heart disease, cancer and Alzheimer's. Due to the fact that increased inflammation is silent (it has no signs), these devastating diseases can be brewing in the body for years, long before they present symptoms. As Dr. Sears tells us, excess cellular inflammation is the underlying cause of weight gain, the acceleration of chronic disease, and decreased physical emotional and mental performance.

Now imagine if you could halt this dangerous cellular inflammation in its tracks while it's still silent, before your body reaches the stage of full-blown disease. It's easier than you might think. The Zone Diet and fish oil are the keys to reducing inflammation. Diet is first and foremost your best bet for producing the least amount of cellular inflammation. Fish oil puts you on the fast track to reducing your existing inflammation. The omega-3 fatty acids in Zone fish oil are building blocks for making powerful anti-inflammatory hormones. Fish oil lowers the level of cellular inflammation in the body in a very short time.

How much fish oil do you need? That depends on the amount of inflammation you have. The best way to determine your level of silent inflammation is with the AA/EPA test. This is an easy finger-prick test available from Zone Diagnostics. You can learn more about it at www.ZoneDiagnostics.com. Next time you look in the mirror, don't be fooled by the apple or pear shape you might see. In the words of Dr. Sears, "Test, don't guess." • After all, you have nothing to lose but your excess pounds.

Until next time, Happy Zoning! 1 Sears, B. *The Anti-Inflammation Zone*. pg. 237

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