

DID YOU KNOW?

Women and Heart Disease

The facts

The stats don't lie—heart disease is a major concern for women.

Women tend to develop cardiovascular disease 10 years later than men, making it more likely that they may have an accompanying disease that masks heart attack symptoms. Age also makes their chance of survival less likely.

When a heart attack does strike, women under 50 are twice as likely to die as men. The same holds true for bypass surgery, in which twice as many women die.

Over 1/3 of female adults have some form of cardiovascular disease.

Of the women who die suddenly from coronary heart disease (CHD), two-thirds may have no previous symptoms.

A heart attack strikes approximately every 34 seconds — and it doesn't care what gender you are.



Wellness Corner Connection

Take this information to heart!

Debby Schiffer, Wellness Director for BURLCO & TRICO JIFs

A Healthy Heart ...Nothing Beats It!



Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. The month of February is dedicated to raising awareness about heart disease and increasing knowledge about prevention. Educate yourself on the dangers of heart disease and get on track to better heart health now!

A Powerful, Hard-working Muscle

The heart beats about 2.5 billion times over the average lifetime, pushing millions of gallons of blood to every part of the body. This steady flow carries with it oxygen, fuel, hormones, other nutrients, and a host of essential cells. It also removes the waste products of metabolism. When the heart stops, essential functions fail, some almost instantly. That's why it is so important we take care to preserve its proper function.

A key problem that occurs is called atherosclerosis. This is the accumulation of pockets of cholesterol-rich substances inside the arteries. These pockets, called plaque, can limit blood flow through arteries that nourish the heart — the coronary arteries — and other arteries throughout the body. When a plaque breaks apart, it can cause a heart attack or stroke. Although many people develop some form of cardiovascular disease (a catch-all term for all of the diseases affecting the heart and blood vessels) as they get older, it isn't inevitable. A healthy lifestyle, especially when started at a young age, goes a long way to preventing cardiovascular disease. Lifestyle changes and medications can nip heart-harming trends, like high blood pressure or high cholesterol, in the bud before they cause damage. And a variety of medications, operations, and devices can help support the heart if damage occurs.

Best thing is to prevent damage in the first place. I'll explore some of those in this month's newsletter.

Types of Heart Attacks

Acute coronary syndrome (ACS) is when the arteries that carry blood, oxygen, and nutrients get blocked. Heart attacks are a form of ACS. They occur when your heart doesn't get enough blood supply. A heart attack is also known as a myocardial infarction.

The three types of heart attacks are:

- ST segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI)
- non-ST segment elevation myocardial infarction (NSTEMI)
- coronary spasm, or unstable angina

"ST segment" refers to the pattern that appears on an electrocardiogram, which is a display of your heartbeat. Only a STEMI will show elevated segments. Both STEMI and NSTEMI heart attacks can cause enough damage to be considered major heart attacks.

STEMI: The classic or major heart attack

When most people think of a heart attack, they often think of a STEMI. A STEMI occurs when a coronary artery becomes completely blocked and a large portion of the muscle stops receiving blood. It's a serious heart attack that can cause significant damage. A STEMI has the classic symptom of pain in the center of the chest. This chest discomfort may be described as a pressure or tightness rather than a sharp pain. Some people who experience STEMI also describe feeling pain in one or both arms or their back, neck, or jaw.

Other symptoms that may accompany chest pain include:

- nausea
- shortness of breath
- anxiety
- lightheadedness
- breaking out in a cold sweat

NSTEMI heart attacks

Unlike in a STEMI, the affected coronary artery is only partially blocked in a NSTEMI. A NSTEMI won't show any change in the ST segment on the electrocardiogram. A coronary angiography will show the degree to which the artery is blocked. A blood test will also show elevated troponin protein levels. While there may be less heart damage, an NSTEMI is still a serious condition.

CAS, silent heart attack, or heart attack without blockage

The coronary artery spasm is also known as a coronary spasm, unstable angina, or silent heart attack. The symptoms, which can be the same as a STEMI heart attack, may be mistaken for muscle pain, indigestion, and more. It occurs when one of the heart's arteries tightens so much that blood flow stops or becomes drastically reduced. Only imaging and blood test results can tell your doctor if you've had a silent heart attack. There is no permanent damage during a coronary artery spasm. While silent heart attacks aren't as serious, they do increase your risk of another heart attack or one that may be more serious.

Do you know the difference?

Heart attack = blockage in artery

Cardiac arrest = heart may stop or misfire from electrical malfunction in heartbeats.

If heart attack is not treated quickly it could lead to cardiac arrest.

Always call 9-1-1 even if you aren't sure.

If certified, start CPR & get an AED ready if you have access to one until EMS arrive.

Acting quickly is key!

Continued on page 3 "What increases your risk of a heart attack?"

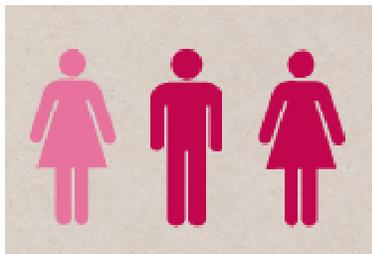


Be In The Know



HEART DISEASE

Is the leading cause of death in the United States and a major cause of disability..



1 IN 3

U.S. adults is currently living with a type of heart disease.

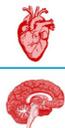


DENTAL HYGIENE

Taking care of your teeth can impact heart health by reducing your chances of having a heart attack or stroke by 50%!

Healthy Heart = Healthy Brain

Research published in the Archives of Neurology suggests that people with low levels of “good cholesterol”, or High-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, may be more likely to develop Alzheimer’s disease. HDL levels can be increased through losing weight, exercising, quitting smoking and eating healthier fats.



Research suggests that morning heart attacks are also most serious (between 6am and noon). The study was the first to link circadian fluctuations to heart attack severity in humans.

The study, conducted by Dr. Ibanez for Spain’s National Center for Cardiovascular Research, also showed that the fewest heart attacks occurred between midnight and 6am.



MORNING IS PEAK TIME FOR HEART ATTACKS



START MOVING

The risk of heart disease doubles in inactive people versus people who get regular exercise. Aerobic activity like running, swimming, jump roping, and biking, are good choices for reducing the risk of heart disease.

STATISTICALLY MOST
**HEART
ATTACKS**
OCCUR ON MONDAYS

**Do you know
YOUR numbers?**



Do you know the heart health numbers that could literally save your life? There are three key numbers you need -- including one surprisingly easy one that could give you a lifesaving preview of your cardiac risk.

- 1.Your blood pressure
- 2.Your cholesterol levels
- 3.Your waist size

Healthy numbers mean a healthy heart. If you follow a healthy lifestyle -- eat a balanced diet, get regular exercise, and avoid smoking -- you can even turn bad numbers around.

Small changes can make a big difference, says Lori Mosca, MD, director of the Columbia Center for Heart Disease Prevention in New York City. "For every point you raise your HDL -- that's the "good" cholesterol -- you reduce your risk of coronary disease by 2%," she says. "So just raising HDL by five points cuts your heart disease risk by 10%!"

If your **waist size** is equal to or more than 35 inches in women and equal to or more than 40 inches in men, it increases your risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, metabolic problems, high blood pressure and abnormal cholesterol. It's easy to measure yourself. Just get a non-elastic tape and measure around your belly button. "If patients lose even 1 inch off their waist, we see improvements in all the other heart health numbers," Mosca says.

When measuring your heart health numbers, don't just look at where you are -- look at where you're going. "Trend lines are important," says Mosca. "If your **blood pressure** is below the cutoff point for high blood pressure, that's good, but if it's been going up, it's still a concern." On the other hand, if your cholesterol is high, but on the way down, pat yourself on the back (and keep exercising).

Don't wait until it's raining to get the roof fixed!!! Make the effort to get your screenings now. Check with your physical to determine what is "normal" for YOU.

For more details on the ranges in which these numbers should be, visit:
<http://www.webmd.com/heart/features/do-you-know-your-heart-numbers>



What increases your risk of a heart attack?

The risk factors for STEMI and NSTEMI are the same:

- high levels of LDL (“bad”) cholesterol
- high blood pressure
- obesity
- sedentary lifestyle
- smoking
- advanced age
- diabetes

There are also risks associated with gender. For example, until age 55 or so, men are at a higher risk of heart attack. After menopause, though, women tend to have similar risks as men. Also, men tend to have problems in the heart’s larger arteries, while women often experience blockage in the smaller arteries of the heart.

Coronary artery spasm risk factors

The factors above also put you at risk of coronary spasm. But having other conditions can increase your risk of coronary artery spasms as well. These conditions include:

- excessive alcohol consumption
- low magnesium levels
- taking drugs for chemotherapy
- migraines
- excess thyroid hormone
- chronic allergy conditions
- smoking

Prevention tips

- Spend at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) per week doing moderate-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking or swimming.
- Follow a heart-healthy diet that focuses on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins (such as fish), beans, lentils, nuts, and olive oil.
- Avoid red meat, processed foods, and beverages with added sugars.
- Stop smoking.
- Take your medications consistently.
- Get 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night.
- Reduce stress.

Spice it Up and Improve Heart Health

Regardless of whether they are dried or fresh, herbs and spices have wonderful health benefits. If you’re trying to prevent heart disease or simply preparing a heart-friendly meal, try to add these herbs and spices in whenever you can.



1. Garlic: Whether raw or ground, no one can deny the healing powers of garlic. If you buy garlic powder though, make sure it is pure with no other ingredients added to it, especially salt. This spice has antioxidants and is used in thinning blood, making it an effective remedy for those with high cholesterol.

2. Cinnamon: Although this is used to add flavor to coffee and pies, cinnamon is actually quite useful in the kitchen. Add this to your dishes to help lower your blood sugar levels, while improving your insulin sensitivity. Cinnamon also has antioxidants that help remove toxins in the body.

3. Onion: Lower your blood pressure by adding onions to your meals. Aside from that, onions can reduce the unhealthy fats found in your blood. Onions also prevent blood clotting and can also lower your blood sugar, which is why it is popular to diabetic patients as well as those with heart diseases.

4. Ginger: Ginger also acts like garlic, which can help thin the blood. In most places, ginger is used to help digestion and other tummy problems. It can also treat nausea for patients who take morphine or codeine. When it comes to aiding the heart, it is considered an anti-inflammatory spice and can help relax the blood vessels.

5. Turmeric: A distant cousin of ginger, turmeric is very popular because of its health benefits that it owes from curcumin. This spice is used for curry powder, giving it its distinctive color. Meanwhile, curcumin is a compound that has several healing powers. Some researchers believe that it can cure arthritis and even prevent Alzheimer’s disease. Turmeric is a heart-friendly spice that can prevent blood clotting and lower blood pressure. It can also raise good cholesterol levels by up to 30%.





Valentine's Day Fun Heart Facts

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, I thought it would be interesting to share some "Fun facts" about the heart. But learning these facts can be more than mere entertainment. These facts will also educate you on just how amazing the heart is and why it's so critical we help our own stay strong and continue working properly.

- ♥ The heart weighs less than one pound. The average weight for women is eight ounces and for men, 10 ounces.
- ♥ Your heartbeats with enough strength to shoot blood a distance of 30 feet.
- ♥ Your left lung is smaller than your right one to make room in your chest cavity for your heart.
- ♥ On average, a million barrels worth of blood is pumped through the heart in a lifetime.
- ♥ Every year, your heart beats approximately 35 million times. That is 100,000 beats per day and 70 beats per minute. Over the course of a lifetime, that adds up to an average of 2.5 billion heartbeats.
- ♥ Your heart is made up almost entirely of muscle. It is strong enough to lift approximately 3,000 pounds – roughly the weight of a compact car.
- ♥ The blood vessels fed by your heart are more than 60,000 miles long. According to The Cleveland Clinic, they could wrap around the world twice.
- ♥ Clench your fists and put them side by side. This is roughly the size of your heart. A child's heart is approximately the size of on clenched fist on an adult hand.
- ♥ Women's hearts beat faster than male hearts.
- ♥ Morning is peak time for heart attacks. The majority of heart attacks happen during the hours of 8 and 9 in the morning. Most heart attacks happen on Mondays.
- ♥ For men, there is a strange link between the ring finger and the heart. According to scientific studies, the longer a man's ring finger is, the lower his chance of having a heart attack.
- ♥ You really can have a "broken heart." When you experience an emotionally difficult event, like a death of a loved one or the end of a romantic relationship, your body releases stress hormones. These hormones can sometimes cause symptoms similar to those of a heart attack. In some cases, these hormones can cause an actual heart attack.

Spaghetti Squash & Chicken with Avocado Pesto

Recipe
Corner

"Give pesto pasta a healthy makeover with this easy recipe that combines low-carb spaghetti squash with high-protein chicken breast. Top this powerhouse combo with homemade basil pesto that gets a creamy upgrade from ripe avocados to complete a mouthwatering chicken dinner."

Ingredients

- 1 (2½ pound) 2½- to 3-pound spaghetti squash, halved lengthwise and seeded
- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 cup packed basil leaves
- ¼ cup unsalted shelled pistachios
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic
- ¾ teaspoon salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper, divided
- 5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 pound skinless, boneless chicken breasts, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Coat a large rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. Place squash, cut-side down, on one side of the prepared pan. Bake until tender, about 45 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, combine avocado, basil, pistachios, lemon juice, garlic, ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper in a food processor. Pulse until finely chopped. Add 4 tablespoons oil and process until smooth.
4. Ten minutes before the squash is done, toss chicken, the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and the remaining ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper together in a medium bowl. Spread the chicken in an even layer on the empty side of the baking sheet. Return to the oven and bake until just cooked through, about 10 minutes.
5. Using a fork, scrape the squash from the shells into a large bowl. Add the chicken and toss gently to combine. Serve topped with the pesto.

For Dessert have a little Dark Chocolate



Dark chocolate may lower your risk of heart disease by reducing blood glucose and bad cholesterol while boosting levels of good cholesterol. The reason: Chocolate contains compounds called flavanols, which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

What is it about dark chocolate? The answer is plant phenols— cocoa phenols, to be exact. These compounds are known to lower blood pressure. Chocolates made in Europe are generally richer in cocoa phenols than those made in the U.S. So if you're going to try this at home, remember: **The darker (%) the better.**

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