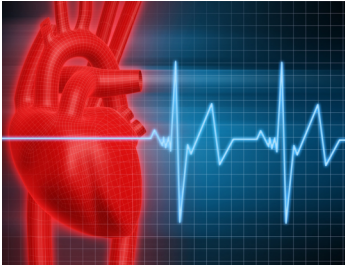


Healthy Living Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2010

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 2



Cardiovascular Risk Factors

Risk Factors You Can Control or Treat:

cholesterol, blood pressure, smoking, physical activity, obesity, diabetes, stress, birth control pills, alcohol, and illegal drugs.

Risk Factors You Can Not Control or Treat:

age, gender, heredity, race, and stroke.

Source: www.goredforwomen.org

Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is a portable electronic device that automatically diagnoses the potentially life threatening cardiac arrhythmias of ventricular fibrillation and ventricular tachycardia in a patient and is able to treat them through defibrillation. Defibrillation is the application of electrical therapy which stops the arrhythmia, allowing the heart to reestablish an effective rhythm. The AED uses voice prompts, lights, and text messages to tell the rescuer the steps to take.

Source: www.americanheart.org

February is Heart Health Month

What is a Heart Attack?

A heart attack occurs when blood flow to a section of heart muscle becomes blocked. If the flow of blood is not restored quickly, the section of heart muscle becomes damaged from lack of oxygen and begins to die.

While a heart attack is the leading cause of death among men and women in the United States, there are now excellent treatments available. Treatment is most effective when started within one hour of the beginning of symptoms. If you think you or someone that you are with is having a heart attack, call 9-1-1 right away.

Signs and symptoms

- Chest discomfort or pain – uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain in the center of the chest that can be mild or strong. The discomfort or pain lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back.
- Upper body discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- Shortness of breath may occur with or before chest discomfort.
- Other signs include nausea (feeling sick to your stomach), vomiting, lightheadedness, or breaking out in a cold sweat.

Source: www.nhlbi.nih.gov

In case of emergency...

- Unlock your door so that paramedics can get in.
- Do not drive yourself. You could have a heart attack while driving and hurt yourself and someone else.

Source: *Queen of Hearts of Foundation*

Steps towards prevention

There are several diagnostic tests that can be used to check a person's cardiac health:

- **EKG (Electrocardiogram):**
An EKG is a simple, painless test that detects and records the heart's electrical activity. The test shows how fast the heart is beating and its rhythm (steady or irregular).
- **Holter Monitors:**
A Holter monitor records the heart's electrical activity for a 24 or 48 hour period. Wearing the monitor during normal daily activities allows your heart to be monitored for a longer time than the standard EKG.
- **Echocardiography:**
This test uses sound waves to gather information about the size and shape of your heart and how well your heart is working.
- **Electrophysiology Study:**
For this test, a thin flexible wire is passed through a vein in your groin (upper thigh) or arm to your heart. The wire records the heart's electrical signals.
- **Stress Test:**
Some heart problems are easier to diagnose when your heart is working hard and beating fast. During stress testing, you exercise (or given medicine if you are unable to exercise) to make your heart work hard and beat faster while heart tests are done.

Source: www.nhlbi.nih.gov

What is a Stroke?

Definition:

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that brings oxygen and nutrients to the brain bursts or is clogged by a blood clot or some other particle. Because of this rupture or blockage, part of the brain does not get the blood and oxygen it needs. Deprived of oxygen, nerve cells in the affected area of the brain die within minutes.

These are two main types of stroke. One is caused by blood clots or other particles (ischemic strokes), and the other by bleeding from a burst blood vessel (hemorrhagic strokes). Ischemic strokes are the most common.

Source: UPSWELLNESSGUIDE

Warning Signs:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance, or coordination.
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.

Any of the above symptoms may be temporary and last only a few minutes. This may be due to a “mini-stroke” called a transient ischemic attack (TIA). TIAs are extremely important indicators of an impending stroke. Do not ignore them. If the symptoms appear, CALL 9-1-1

Source: americanheart.org

Weight-Loss Tip

Keep a Food Diary – Dieters who write down everything that they eat lose twice as much weight as those who do not. Your food diary should include a list of the calories or carbohydrates you consume, including liquid calories. You can write down your intake in a small notebook, on your computer, or in the margin of a calendar or day planner.

Source: dietchallenge.usatoday.com

Women and Heart Disease

Women lack understanding of their risks

Heart disease and stroke kills more women each year than cancer, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and malaria combined. Women are six times as likely to die of heart disease as of breast cancer. Heart disease kills more women over 65 than do all cancers combined. Sixteen or more women worldwide die of cardiovascular disease every minute, on an average. This reveals the lack of knowledge and understanding a majority of women have for their most serious health threat. Despite the fact that minority women face the highest risk of death from heart disease and stroke, they have a lower awareness of the risk factors.

Sources: UPSWELLNESSGUIDE & www.mayoclinic.com

Symptoms of a heart attack for women

The most common symptom of a heart attack in both men and women is some type of pain, pressure, or discomfort in the chest. But, it is not always severe or even the most prominent symptom, particularly in women. Women are more likely than men to have signs and symptoms unrelated to chest pain, such as: neck, shoulder, upper back or abdominal discomfort, shortness of breath, nausea or vomiting, sweating, lightheadedness or dizziness, or unusual fatigue.

Source: www.mayoclinic.com

Get all the Facts About Sodium

It is important to check food labels for the many other forms and names for sodium when trying to adhere to a low sodium diet.

Examples: Sodium Alginate, Sodium Benzoate, Sodium Bicarbonate (Baking Soda), Sodium Citrate, Sodium Chloride, Monosodium Glutamate (MSG), Sodium Sulfide, and Disodium Phosphate.

Source: www.medicinenet.com

Low-Sodium Guidelines

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has definite guidelines for the terms a food company can use when describing the amount of sodium contained in food on packaging.

- **Sodium Free** – Less than 5 mg of sodium in a portion.
- **Very Low Sodium** – Less than 35 mg of sodium in a portion.
- **Low Sodium** – Less than 140 mg of sodium in a portion.
- **Reduced Sodium** – Food contains 25 percent less sodium than the original food item.
- **Light in Sodium** – Food has 50 percent less sodium than the original food item.
- **Unsalted, No Salt Added, or Without Added Salt** – Absolutely no salt has been added to a food that is normally processed with salt.

Source: www.dummies.com

Reducing Sodium

The following are some suggestions for lowering the sodium in your diet:

- Try substituting salt-free seasonings such as lemon juice, vinegar and herbs.
- Drain and rinse canned foods before preparing them to remove some of the salt.
- Substitute fresh fruits and vegetables for canned or frozen versions with added salt.
- Avoid packaged foods such as soups or rice dishes that come with a pack of powdered seasoning.

Source: www.americanheart.org