

Healthy Living Newsletter

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Live, Take Charge, Change

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Heart Disease and Medications

Aspirin – Aspirin helps to lower the risk of a heart attack for those who have already had one. It also helps to keep arteries open in those who have had a previous heart bypass or other artery-opening procedure such as coronary angioplasty.

Digitalis – It makes the heart contract harder and is used when the heart's pumping function has been weakened; it also slows some fast heart rhythms.

ACE (angiotensin converting enzyme) inhibitor – It stops the production of a chemical that makes blood vessels contract and is used to help control high blood pressure and for damaged heart muscle.

Beta blocker – It slows the heart and makes it beat with less contracting force, so blood pressure drops and the heart works less hard.

Nitrates (including nitroglycerin) – Relaxes blood vessels and stops chest pain.

Calcium channel blocker – It relaxes blood vessels and is used for high blood pressure and chest pain.

Source:
www.nhlbi.nih.gov/actintime/hdm/hdm.htm



Brown Goes *Red* Day (Feb. 6)

The month of February is highlighted by the “Go Red For Women” campaign, which is sponsored by the American Heart Association and celebrates the energy, passion, and power women have to band together and wipe out heart disease.

10 Ways to Love Your Heart

- Get regular checkups.
- Know your blood pressure and cholesterol numbers.
- Follow your doctor's recommendations for diet and exercise.
- Take prescribed medications as directed.
- If you smoke, quit now.
- Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical exercise each day.
- Eat a heart-healthy diet, including fruits and vegetables, whole-grain foods, and fish.
- Limit food high in saturated fats and cholesterol.
- Limit your sodium intake to 2,300 mg a day.
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. A non-pregnant woman should have no more than one drink a day.

Source: goredforwomen.org

Heart Attack Warning Signs

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense. But most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people affected are not sure what is wrong and wait too long before getting help. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

Chest discomfort - Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, or full pain.

Discomfort in other areas of the upper body - Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.

Shortness of breath - This can be with or without chest discomfort

Other signs - These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.

A women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

If you or someone you are with has chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs, call 911 and get to a hospital.

Source: goredforwomen.org

Blood Types

Type O: Can donate blood to anyone

Type A: Can donate to other Type As and ABs

Type B: Can donate to other Type Bs and ABbs

Type AB: Can only donate to other ABs, but can receive from all other types

Source: American Red Cross



First Aid for Electrical Shock Victims

1. Do not touch them.
2. Unplug the appliance or turn off the power.
3. If you can not turn off the power, use a piece of wood, like a broom handle, dry rope, or dry clothing to separate the victim from the power source.
4. Do not try to move a victim touching a high voltage wire. Call for emergency help.
5. Keep the victim lying down. Unconscious victims should be placed on their side to allow drainage of fluids. Do not move the victim if there is a suspicion of neck or spine injuries, unless absolutely necessary.
6. If the victim is not breathing, apply mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. If the victim has no pulse, begin (CPR). Then cover the victim with a blanket to maintain body heat, keep the victim's head low, and get medical attention.

Source: www.cdc.gov

Medical References

PubMed
www.pubmed.gov

Health News Reviews
www.healthnewsreview.org

The Nutrition Source – Harvard
School of Public Health
www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource.



Blood Donations

Every two seconds, because of accidents, heart surgery, organ transplants or illness, someone in America needs a blood transfusion. Trauma and accident victims can require up to 100 units, and a liver transplant can use 40 or more. Blood needed for scheduled procedures such as cancer treatments or surgeries can be anticipated, but transplant and trauma cases can occur at any moment and require an unknown number of units.

Each donated unit of blood is separated into components such as red blood cells, plasma, and platelets that can be transfused to different people with different needs. So each donation can be used to help save as many as three lives.

While all blood types are needed, the most common are O and A. Almost half (47 percent) of African-Americans and 53 percent of Hispanics have blood type O-positive. Thirty-seven percent of Caucasians have O-positive blood and 33 percent have A-positive.

People with type O blood are in greatest demand because they are the “universal donor,” which means that people of all blood types can receive O-blood safely. Type O is compatible with every blood type and used often for severe traumas. AB types on the other hand, are universal recipients. People with AB blood can receive blood from any donor group.

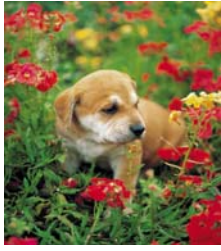
Less common blood types also are needed because there are fewer donors to give them.

Source: American Red Cross

What is Angina?

- Angina is chest pain or discomfort that occurs when your heart muscle does not get enough oxygen rich blood. Angina is the symptom of an underlying heart condition, usually coronary artery disease (CAD).
- CAD occurs when a fatty material called plaque builds up on the inner walls of the coronary arteries. Plaque causes the coronary arteries to become narrow and stiff. The flow of oxygen-rich blood to the heart muscle is reduced.
- Pain and discomfort are the main symptoms of angina. Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach), fatigue (tiredness), shortness of breath, sweating, light-headedness, or weakness may occur. Angina also may feel like pressure or a squeezing pain in the chest. The pain also may occur in your shoulders, arms, neck, jaw, or back.
- Types of angina:
 - **Stable angina** occurs when the heart is working harder than usual. Pain from stable angina goes away when you rest or take angina medicine. Angina medicine, such as nitroglycerin, helps widen and relax the arteries so that more blood can flow to the heart.
 - **Unstable angina** is a very dangerous condition and needs emergency treatment. Unstable angina can occur with or without physical exertion. Unstable angina is a sign that a heart attack may happen soon. It is not relieved by rest or medicine.
 - **Variant angina** is caused by a spasm (tightening) in a coronary artery. The narrowing of the artery slows or stops blood flow to the heart muscle. The pain may be severe. This type of angina is relieved by medicine.
- Nearly seven million people in the United States have angina. It occurs equally in men and women.

Source: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/



What to Do if Your Pet is Poisoned

Do not wait. Time is critical for successfully treating accidental poisoning. Call your veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (1-888-426-4435). Be prepared to state your pet's breed, age, weight, and any symptoms. Keep the product or plant sample with you to assist in identification so the appropriate treatment recommendations can be made.

Source: www.avma.org

First Aid Myths

Putting butter on a burn

This home remedy likely originated in the kitchen, but slathering a cold stick of butter on a burn is not a good idea because the oil-based product can trap heat. Butter tends to cause the burn to go deeper into the skin.

The National Safety Council advises that any burn that damages the skin should be looked at by a medical professional. However, first-degree burns, although they are painful and may cause some swelling, do not result in broken skin and can be treated at the scene. When administering first aid for first-degree burns:

- Stop the burning by removing the heat source.
- Cool the burned area with cold water. Immerse a small burned area in a sink or bucket, or cover a large area with a wet cloth for at least 10 minutes. Do not use ice on a burn – it can cause additional skin damage.
- Remove clothing, jewelry, or any other constricting item before the burn swells.
- Protect the burn from friction or pressure. Aloe vera gel can be used on the skin for comfort.

Source: *National Safety Council*

Organ and Tissue Donation

Each organ and tissue donor saves or improves the lives of as many as 50 people. Giving the “Gift of Life” may lighten the grief of the donor’s own family. Many donor families say that knowing other lives have been saved helps them cope with their tragic loss.

Getting started:

1. Register with your state donor registry.
www.organdonor.gov/donor/registry.shtm
2. Designate your decision on your driver’s licenses. Do this when you obtain or renew your license.
3. Sign a donor card now. Carry the donor card with you until you can designate your donation decision on your driver’s license or join a donor registry.
ask.hrsa.gov/detail.cfm?id=HRS00259
4. Talk to your family now about your donation decision. Help your family understand your wish to be an organ and tissue donor before a crisis occurs.

Source: www.organdonor.gov/donor/index.htm

Tips to Protect Children from Pesticides

- Always store pesticides and other household chemicals, including chlorine bleach, out of children’s reach – preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Read the label first. Pesticides, household cleaning products, and pet care products can be dangerous or ineffective if too much or too little is used.
- If your use of a pesticide or other household chemical is interrupted, properly re-close the container and remove it from children’s reach.

Source: www.epa.gov

Talking vs. Being Heard

Here are some techniques that can be used to improve communications with your kids. It does not necessarily mean they will mind you or agree with what you are saying, which is okay, but at least they will hear what you are saying.

- **Get down to your child’s level.** – When you really want your kids to hear you when you talk, physically get down to their level. If you can not squat, pick them up and put them on your lap. Look them right in the eyes, speak calmly, and slowly, and say what you have to say. Do not be vague or babble and do not try to impress your children with your fabulous expanded vocabulary.
- **Use simple words.** – Talk to your kids using words that they understand. Getting your point across is easier when your kids know what you are talking about. If you do not think they understand, ask them to explain what you have said. This is a great test to see how well you are getting your message across.
- **Get to the point.** – If you do not say what you need to say within a short time, you have lost the attention of most children. On the other hand, when you are too brief, they will ask for more information, if they need it. Your kids understand you a lot better when you are specific and when you get to the point.
- **Do not yell.** – Yelling is the worst way to communicate. When you yell, your message does not get across. Your job is to communicate your ideas to your children in a calm manner. Yelling shows your kids that you have lost control of yourself.

Source: health.discovery.com

Bone Health References

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) Information Clearinghouse
National Institutes of Health
www.niams.nih.gov

NIH Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases – National Resource Center
www.niams.nih.gov/Health_Info/bone/default.asp

Milk Matters Campaign
www.nichd.nih.gov/milk

National Bone Health Campaign
www.cdc.gov/powerfulbones/

National Osteoporosis Foundation
www.nof.org



Fitness Mistakes Beginners Make

Rushing your reps – Doing weight-lifting repetitions too fast raises your blood pressure and increases the risk for joint injury.

The safest way to use strength machines or dumbbells is in the lifting phase. Exhale for two counts and hold briefly at the top of the contraction, then return as you exhale for four counts. Always exhale during the hardest part of the work.

Source: www.webmd.com

Organic Glossary

Certified Organic -

This label means that agricultural products have been grown and processed according to the USDA's national organic standards. Certifying agents review applications from farmers and processors for certification eligibility and qualified inspectors conduct annual on-site inspections of their operations. Inspectors talk with operators and observe their production and processing practices to determine if they are in compliance with organic standards that virtually prohibit synthetic pesticide use in crop production and require outdoor access for animals in livestock production.

Source: health.discovery.com

Osteoporosis Overview

- Osteoporosis is a major health threat for 44 million Americans, 68 percent of whom are women.
- One out of every two women and one out of four men over 50 will have an osteoporosis-related fracture in their lifetime.
- More than 2 million American men suffer from osteoporosis, and millions more are at risk. Each year, 80,000 men have a hip fracture and one-third of these men die within a year.
- Osteoporosis can strike at any age.
- Osteoporosis is responsible for more than 1.5 million fractures annually, including 300,000 hip fractures, approximately 700,000 vertebra fractures, 250,000 wrist fractures, and more than 300,000 fractures at other sites.

Sources: www.niams.nih.gov/bone & www.niams.nih.gov/Health_Osteoporosis/men.asp

Eating Disorders

Eating disorders frequently appear during adolescence or young adulthood, but some reports indicate that they can develop during childhood or later in adulthood. Women and girls are much more likely than males to develop an eating disorder. Eating disorders are real, treatable medical illnesses with complex underlying psychological and biological causes.

Eating disorders fall into three categories:

Anorexia Nervosa – It is characterized by emaciation, a relentless pursuit of thinness, unwillingness to maintain a normal or healthy weight, a distortion of body image, an intense fear of gaining weight, a lack of menstruation among girls and women, and extremely disturbed eating behavior. Some people with anorexia lose weight by dieting and exercising excessively; others control weight by self-induced vomiting, or misusing laxatives, diuretics, or enemas.

Bulimia Nervosa – It is characterized by recurrent and frequent episodes of eating unusually large amounts of food (e.g., binge-eating) and feeling a lack of control over the eating. The binge-eating is followed by a type of behavior that compensates for the binge, such as purging (e.g., vomiting, excessive use of laxatives, or diuretics), fasting, and/or excessive exercise.

People with bulimia often fear gaining weight, want desperately to lose weight, and are unhappy with their body size and shape. The bingeing and purging cycle usually repeats several times a week.

Binge-Eating Disorder – It is characterized by recurrent binge-eating episodes, during which a person feels a loss of control over his or her eating. Unlike bulimia, binge-eating episodes are not followed by purging, fasting, or excessive exercise. As a result, these people often are overweight or obese. They also experience guilt, shame, and/or distress about the binge-eating, which can lead to more binge-eating.

Sources: www.nimh.nih.gov & www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Five Questions to Ask Your Pharmacist

- What time of day should I take my medication?
- Are there any side effects?
- How should it be stored?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- Are there certain foods I should avoid while taking this medication?

Source: Medco