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(941) 748-4501
ext 6415 and ext 6417
(941) 741-2960

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(941) 748-4501 ext 6403

Member Advocacy
(941) 748-4501 ext 6407,
ext 6409, and ext 6411

Lifestyle Assistance and
Modification Program (LAMP)
(941)741-2995

Diabetes/Nutrition Program
(941) 748-4501 ext 6410

Communications Coordinator
(941)748-4501 ext 3967

Fitness/Exercise Programs
(941)748-4501 ext 3979

Pharmacy Advocate
(941) 748-4501 ext 6406

Prescription Solutions
(800) 797-9791

Precertification
(941) 741-2963

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February is American Heart Month



Heart-Healthy Nutrition

Following a heart-healthy diet can decrease your risk of developing heart disease and increase your chances of leading a longer, healthier life. A heart-healthy diet means that you make a habit of eating portion-controlled meals that include low-fat protein and dairy, fruits and vegetables, and fiber. It also means that you minimize potentially unhealthy additives such as fats or salt. Here are some tips for improving your heart health by making changes to your diet.



Limit unhealthy fats and cholesterol. Foods that are high in saturated and/or trans fats or cholesterol may increase your risk of developing high cholesterol and heart disease. Try cooking with olive oil instead of butter since liquid fats tend to be unsaturated but solid fats tend to be saturated.

Eat low-fat protein sources. Many meats and cheeses can be high in fat. Since your body needs protein to build and maintain muscle, seek out lean meats and reduced fat cheeses at the grocery store.



Eat whole grains. Whole grains have not had their bran and germ removed by milling. They tend to be better sources of fiber and other nutrients. Brown rice, buckwheat, and whole wheat are whole grains.

Eat fiber-rich fruits and vegetables. Fiber can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower cholesterol levels. Women should consume about 25 grams of fiber daily, and men should consume 30 grams of fiber daily. Apples, pears, bananas, broccoli, and spinach are high in fiber.



Decrease salt intake. Many foods that are processed or prepared such as canned soups or frozen meals contain large amounts of sodium, which is the main component of salt. Excess sodium can lead to high blood pressure and heart disease. Try reduced sodium versions of processed foods or preparing meals at home from fresh ingredients.

Hypertension – A Matter of the Heart

Hypertension or high blood pressure (HBP) is generally considered to be above 140/90. Normal blood pressure is usually 120/80. Risk factors for developing HBP include increased age, tobacco use, family history, being overweight, excessive salt intake, and stress. HBP can lead to stroke, heart or kidney disease, and eye problems. So, what can you do to reduce your risk of having complications from HBP? Here's where to start.

Lifestyle changes

Following a heart-healthy diet can help manage blood pressure. If you have an easier time following an eating plan when menus are spelled out for you, try the **Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension** or DASH diet. Also, try for at least 30 minutes of physical activity five times a week for a total of 150 minutes weekly. Both diet and exercise will help you maintain a healthy weight, which also contributes to blood pressure control. Quitting tobacco use and limiting alcohol use are also important.



Medication and monitoring

If your doctor has prescribed medications to lower your blood pressure, make sure to take them as directed. Skipping even a couple of doses of your blood pressure medicine may cause your blood pressure to surge to a higher level than before you started taking medication, which could be dangerous. Also, if your doctor has asked you to check your blood pressure at home or at the pharmacy between appointments, keep a record of your blood pressure readings so that your doctor will have a better idea of how well your blood pressure is controlled.

Facts About Stroke

Did you know that strokes are the most common cause of death in the US? But, there is good news: 80% of them can be prevented. Here are some important facts about strokes:

What is a stroke? A stroke happens when a clot blocks the flow of blood to the brain. A clot is like a clog stopping water from flowing through a pipe. A stroke can also happen when a blood vessel in the brain bursts. This allows blood to leak into areas of the brain.

What puts me at risk?

- African American descent
- Being over age 55
- Diabetes



- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol



- Lack of exercise
- Smoking

What should I do if I think I'm having a stroke?

Call 911 if you develop these symptoms suddenly:

- numbness or weakness in your face, arms, or legs
- trouble seeing, talking, or walking
- dizziness or confusion
- severe headache for no reason

How can I prevent a stroke from happening?

- ✓ Quit smoking - Smoking doubles your risk for stroke
- ✓ Get active - Exercise for 30 minutes five times a week (150 minutes a week)
- ✓ Limit alcohol - No more than 2 drinks per day for men, 1 drink per day for women
- ✓ Eat healthy - Get enough potassium (found in bananas, orange juice, and tomatoes). Eat less fat and salt.
- ✓ Take all your medications according to your doctor's directions. Keep all your doctor appointments so you can be sure the medicine is working.



For more information on strokes, visit the American Stroke Association at www.strokeassociation.org.

Types of Heart Disease

When you think of heart disease, what comes to mind? For many people, their first thought is the narrowing of the vessels leading to the heart that can eventually cause a heart attack. While this type of heart disease known as coronary artery disease is common, it is only one type in this broad category of conditions. Other examples of heart disease include abnormal heart rhythms, heart failure, congenital heart disease, and vascular disease. Here's a brief introductions to some of these other types of heart disorders.

Abnormal heart rhythms or arrhythmias are irregular heartbeats. They may be caused by injury from a heart attack, electrolyte imbalances, or coronary artery disease. Some arrhythmias are not major health problems, but other arrhythmias are quite serious and require medical treatment.



Heart failure means that a heart has a weaker than normal ability to pump blood. Decreased blood flow makes the kidneys respond by causing the body retain water, which can lead to swelling in the arms, legs, and organs. Heart failure affects nearly 5 million Americans and is the leading cause of hospitalization in people over 65.

Vascular disease refers to any condition affecting the circulatory system. One example is peripheral artery disease. Peripheral artery disease occurs when fats and cholesterol build up on blood vessel walls, which causes them to narrow and may lead to decreased blood and oxygen supply to the body.



Manatee County Government's Center for Health & Lifestyle Management * www.ManateeYourChoice.com

Manatee Health Disclaimer

The information in this newsletter is not a substitute for medical advice. It is for reference only and should not be used to determine treatment for your specific medical conditions-only a health care provider can do this. You should seek prompt medical care for any specific health issues and consult your physician regarding the use of over-the-counter products to treat any medical condition or consult your physician regarding the use of prescription or over-the-counter products to treat any medical condition or before starting any new diet, fitness, or supplement regimen.

Prescription Benefit Manager:
Prescription Solutions, Inc.
For: Manatee Health Network
Bradenton, Florida

Prepared by:
Pharmacy Healthcare Solutions, Inc.
P.O. Box 101632
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Editor: Melissa Sherer Krause, Pharm.D.
Contributors: Christopher K. Williams, Pharm.D.,
Sarah Lee and Rachel Berndt, Pharm.D. Candidates
Designer: Linda Richardson