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Wellness Matters

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Your Wellness Journey

Make Heart Health A Priority

Heart disease is a common term for coronary artery disease. It is the number one cause of death in both men and women over the age of 60 in the United States.

Causes

Heart disease is caused by atherosclerosis—a buildup of plaque in the inner walls of the arteries—which narrows, slows, or blocks the flow of blood to the heart.

Risk Factors

Controllable risk factors for heart disease include the following:

- High blood pressure
- High LDL cholesterol
- Type 2 diabetes
- Smoking
- Being overweight or obese
- Lack of physical activity
- Illegal drug use, such as cocaine

Warning Signs

The symptoms you experience depend on the type and severity of your heart condition. Common signs and symptoms of heart

disease include the following:

- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Heart palpitations
- Weakness or fatigue

Treatment

The goals of treatment for heart disease are to relieve symptoms, control or reduce risk factors, stop



or slow further damage to the arteries, and prevent and treat cardiac events. Treatment includes several options:

- Self-care and prevention
- Medications
- Procedures to bypass or open blocked or narrowed arteries
- Cardiac rehabilitation

Self-care and Prevention You can follow a healthy lifestyle to prevent heart disease:

- Get regular medical checkups.
- Don't smoke.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Take medications as prescribed.
- If you are at a higher risk for heart disease, ask your doctor about low-dose aspirin therapy.
- Watch for signs of diabetes and see your doctor if you have any symptoms.
- Follow a diet low in saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol.
- Limit sodium intake to 1,500 to 2,400 milligrams per day.
- Exercise regularly.
- Manage stress by practicing relaxation techniques.
- Drink alcohol in moderation. Check with your doctor to find out if and how much you should drink.

Because it's such an important muscle, you need to take care of your heart.

Winter Safety: Driving

Losing control of a car is undoubtedly one of the most frightening experiences behind the wheel.

Unfortunately, it is a potential side effect when the temperatures turn frigid and the roads get slick with ice or snow.

One of the most dangerous winter driving hazards is skidding, which, at high speeds, could result in a nasty crash. To prevent an unnecessary skid, slip, or accident, consider the following accident prevention techniques.

- Slow down ahead of turns and curves, as this will allow you to prepare for potential icy spots.
- When at a curve, apply power slightly to the gas and steer steadily. Do not change directions abruptly and refrain from braking suddenly.
- Be prepared for lane changes. Check your rearview mirror and blind spot, and then signal your direction to alert other motorists.
- When changing lanes, move over in a long, gradual line with minimal steering changes.
- Look out for ice patches, piles of wet leaves, and shady areas. These areas are skidding hazards.
- Anticipate stops by slowing down gradually, well ahead of intersections. These areas are generally slicker than other parts of the road because of the excess starting and stopping traffic.
- Drive at reduced speeds. Slow your speed and increase your following distance behind the vehicle in front of you. This will allow for a larger buffer in case you start to lose control.
- Avoid overpowering in deep snow.
- Use a light foot on the accelerator (rather than slamming on the gas to move forward).

If your car starts to skid, do not panic. Steer in the direction that the vehicle is sliding until you feel the wheels regain traction. Then, slowly straighten your wheels and keep rolling. If you need to brake before your tires regain traction, apply the brake carefully so that you do not lock your wheels.



Healthy & Nutritious

Food Density and Your Diet

You sit down to dinner and devour a large meal. But a couple of hours later, you are hungry again. Why do you feel full longer after eating some foods than others?

The Role of Density

Protein, fiber, and water help signal that your body is full faster than other nutrients, so it is important to include them as a regular part of your diet. Consuming these nutrients will help you avoid overeating and they are healthy for the body.

Recognizing Fullness

Use these tips to recognize when you are full:

- Slow down. It takes around 20 minutes for food to be digested and for the brain to receive signals that you are getting full.
- Avoid buffets and large portions. Studies show that the more that is on your plate, the more you will eat whether you are hungry or not.
- Limit your fat intake. Fat is very satisfying but is not good at signaling the body when you are full. Therefore, chances are likely not only will you be consuming high-calorie foods, but you will eat more of them as well.