

HEARTBEAT

A SPECIAL NEWSLETTER FOR MVP MEMBERS

ISSUE 1, 2016

HEART DISEASE: PREVENTION MYTHS

There are lots of things you can do to lower your risk for coronary artery disease. But some diets and dietary supplements do not lower risk. It's not clear if vitamins, minerals, and multivitamins can lower risk.

Talk with your doctor about the best ways to lower your risk of heart disease. By eating heart-healthy foods, most people can lower their risk and get all of the nutrients they need. Other proven ways to lower risk include being active, staying at a healthy weight, and not smoking.

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Heart Disease: Prevention Myths continued.

Eating Plans

Heart-healthy eating can help lower risk of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke.

Do not use these diets to lower risk:

- **Low-carbohydrate diets.** These diets could cause serious medical problems, especially if you have heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, or high blood pressure. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the American Heart Association do not recommend these diets.
- **High-protein diets.** These diets limit healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables. And they don't include essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber. The American Heart Association does not recommend high-protein diets.

Vitamins and Supplements

By eating heart-healthy foods, most people can lower their risk and get all of the vitamins and nutrients they need.

It is clear that taking some vitamins and

supplements do not lower risk of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke.

Do not take these supplements to lower risk:

- Beta-carotene
- Chromium
- Coenzyme Q10
- Fish oil or omega-3 fatty acids
- Garlic
- Policosanol
- Selenium
- Vitamin B or folic acid
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin E

It is not clear if taking other vitamins, multivitamins, or supplements can lower risk. There is not enough evidence to show that they work or don't work.

Hormone Therapy

Doctors used to think that hormone therapy for women could lower the risk of getting heart disease. But hormone therapy does not prevent heart disease. So experts no longer recommend this use of hormone therapy.



WALKING FOR A HEALTHY HEART

Walking is a form of aerobic exercise and is one of the easiest ways to increase your physical activity and improve your health. Physical activity increases your heart rate, strengthens your heart, and increases blood circulation through your body, bringing more oxygen and nutrients to your organs. Exercise also increases your lungs' ability to take in oxygen, lowers blood pressure, helps to reduce body fat, and improves blood sugar and cholesterol levels.

- Have a checkup before beginning an exercise program. If you have heart problems, your doctor may want to do tests to find out how much activity your heart can safely handle.
- Start out slowly at first, with a warm-up in the beginning, a faster pace in the middle, and a cooldown at the end.
- To stay motivated, walk with friends, coworkers, or pets. Set goals you can reach.

- Use a phone app or pedometer to count your steps. Wear it all day and try to take at least 2,000 more steps a day than you normally do, and gradually increase your steps over time.
- Set a goal. Try to walk at a moderate activity level for at least 2½ hours a week. One way to do this is to walk 30 minutes a day, at least 5 days a week.

How Can I Stay Motivated With a Walking Program?

One of the best ways to stay motivated to walk is to include other people. Ask friends and coworkers to join you. Join a walking group or club.

- Use a phone app or buy a pedometer. Use it every day, and count your steps. The first time you use it, count how many steps you normally take in a day. Set a goal for increasing it each day or week. Try to start with an increase of 2,000 steps a day and work toward 10,000. Get others to join you and set goals as a group.
- Walk before or after work or on your lunch break. Instead of taking a snack or coffee break, take a walk break.

- If the weather is bad, use a treadmill. Or take comfortable shoes to the mall, and walk several laps inside.
- Walk to work, school, the grocery store, or a restaurant.
- Walk around your neighborhood, around an entire park, or to do errands.
- Schedule walks on your business calendar. Turn a walk into a brainstorming session with a coworker.
- Wear comfortable shoes and socks that cushion your feet.
- Drink plenty of water. Take a bottle with you when you walk.
- Be safe, and know your surroundings. Walk in a well-lighted, safe place.
- Plan family outings around walks together.
- Take your dog on a walk.
- Set a goal to participate in an organized fitness walk.

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QUICK TIPS FOR BEING PREPARED TO TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

Patients who have good relationships with their doctors are more satisfied with their care and have better results. Here are some tips to help you and your doctor become better partners in improving your health care:

- Write down your questions before your visit. List the most important ones first to make sure they get asked and answered.
- Bring a “health history” list with you, and keep it up to date.

- Always bring any medications you are taking, including over-the-counter, or a list of those medications (include when and how often you take them) and what strength.
- You might want to bring someone along to help you ask questions and remember the answers.
- Find more information and printable forms at www.mvphealthcare.com.

Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

MVP Health Care offers a condition health management program for members living with heart disease. For more information or to see if you qualify, call **1-866-942-7966**. MVP’s program is based on the American Heart Association (AHA) and the American College of Cardiology’s Guidelines for Preventing a Heart Attack and Death in Patients with Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease.

Information in this newsletter does not constitute medical advice. If you have questions about your health, talk to your doctor.

Health benefit plans are issued or administered by MVP Health Plan, Inc.; MVP Health Insurance Company; MVP Health Insurance Company of New Hampshire, Inc.; MVP Select Care, Inc.; and MVP Health Services Corp., operating subsidiaries of MVP Health Care, Inc. Not all plans available in all states and counties.

Contact Us

For more information, call **1-866-942-7966**
Monday–Friday, 8:30 am–5:00 pm.

TTY: **1-800-662-1220**

WE VALUE YOUR OPINION

Please fill out a brief, anonymous survey at www.mvplistsens.com. We will use this information to create a better experience for all of our members. All responses are 100 percent confidential. The survey only takes a few minutes to complete.



MVP Health Care has online resources to help you take charge of your health, available 24 hours a day at www.mvphealthcare.com!

Make informed decisions about your health by using the Healthwise® Knowledgebase—our online Health Encyclopedia.

Want to know more about a medical procedure? Need more information to make an educated health decision? Curious about the medications you take every day? Visit www.mvphealthcare.com and select *Members*,

then *Live Healthy*, and then *Health Encyclopedia A to Z*—your one-stop resource for the latest health information. You will find guides to help you make simple decisions about whether to call a doctor and what self-care is best, as well as bigger decisions about medications, tests, and surgeries. You can research health questions that are important to you and your family on any of more than 6,000 health topics and find reliable, objective answers in our Health Encyclopedia.

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If you think you are ready to make a change in your health habits, or are looking for resources to explore healthy ideas that may be right for you, select any of our interactive health tools and calculators for quick, personalized results. Are you ready to quit smoking? Want to learn tips for managing stress? Curious about how many calories you burn during your workout? For answers to these questions and more, visit www.mvphealthcare.com and select *Members*, then *Live Healthy*, and then *Health Tools & Calculators*.



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