



HEART AND HEALTH, PLLC
DAVID KAVESTEEN, MD FACC
BOARD CERTIFIED IN CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES AND
NUCLEAR CARDIOLOGY

Heart And Health

Impatience and laziness in our society often lead to quests for quick-working weight loss antics through the use of dietary supplements, laxatives, cleanses and diets that consist of little to no nutritional value. Not only do these measures usually result in yo-yo dieting, where one gains weight back as quickly as it was lost, but the overall care to our bodies and minds diminishes. As each of our bodies is unique, any weight loss program should be catered to that person's life style and metabolism. The healthiest way to lose weight is to do it gradually, consistently and realistically. Thus, the best way to keep weight off is by being mindful about the foods that we fuel our bodies with coupled with increased physical activity. Nutritional consultation can reveal the optimal daily caloric intake for a person and a nutritionist can plan out smaller meals to be eaten frequently throughout the day with this information. Those who change their eating habits, and sedentary lifestyles, that strive to lose about 1-2 pounds per week are more successful at keeping weight off. Weight loss does not have to be a solitary endeavor. There are many forms of motivation including: weight loss journals to keep track of progress, support from family and friends and exercise buddies. Not only does increased physical activity burn fat for weight loss, but it is also the key preventative measure against cardiovascular disease, pains associated with arthritis and osteoporosis and diabetes. In addition to improving physical health, maintenance of weight loss can also lead to increased mental health as well. Exercise will boost your energy throughout the day, and keeping weight off will increase self esteem. Making minor changes to include light physical activity and eating right can do a long way in developing a positive and healthy lifestyle. There are few risk factors which could increase of developing heart diseases. they are " Hypertension, Diabetes, High Cholesterol, Smoking, Obesity and Family History of heart disease/ Genetic Make Up"

What is Hypertension?

Hypertension is most commonly known as high blood pressure. Though it is one of the major causes of cardiovascular disease, it is often called "the silent killer" because it rarely gives rise to physical symptoms. Blood pressure is the measure of the force that blood exerts on the arterial walls. The

measurement is given as two numbers. The systolic pressure is the top number which measures the pressure in the arteries when they are filled with blood when the heart beats. The diastolic pressure is the bottom number which measures the pressure in the arteries between heart beats when the heart is at rest. A healthy adult has a blood pressure of about 120/80. A patient is considered to have high blood pressure if it is consistently measured to be 140/90 or higher. High blood pressure causes the heart to work harder in order to pump blood to the rest of the body. Thus, it is the leading cause of stroke and the major cause of heart attack. Though the precise cause of high blood pressure is unknown, there are many factors that contribute to its development including: smoking, lack of physical activity, stress, consuming more than 1-2 alcoholic beverages daily, obesity, family history of heart disease/high blood pressure, overconsumption of salts and fats, diabetes and kidney disease. There are many drugs that work to treat and lower high blood pressure. However, the best defense against hypertension is to prevent it early on. Although hypertension is not limited to overweight people, it is imperative to be physically active and exercise on a regular basis. It is also important to manage stress levels and for diabetics to carefully monitor their blood sugar. Lastly, reducing the amount of salt and fats consumed as well as alcohol and tobacco intake can be crucial in the prevention of high blood pressure.

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a disorder of metabolism, the way our bodies use digested food for energy. Diabetes develops when the pancreas does not make enough insulin, or the cells in the muscles, liver, and fat do not use insulin properly, or both. As a result, the amount of glucose in the blood increases while the cells are starved of energy.

Often, individuals with diabetes experience changes in the blood vessels that could possibly lead to cardiovascular disease. If you have diabetes, the linings of the blood vessels can become thicker, which makes it even more difficult for blood to flow through the vessels. If your blood flow is impaired, heart problems or stroke can occur. Your blood vessels can also suffer damage elsewhere in the body due to diabetes, which can lead to eye problems, kidney problems, and poor circulation to the legs and feet.

Individuals who have diabetes, their blood sugar is often much higher than it should be. There are also some lifestyle habits that may also raise the risk of heart disease. Here are some tips that will allow you to lower your risk: Keep your blood sugar level under control. If you control your blood sugar level it will allow you to lower your risk of heart disease. Lose weight and keep it off. By losing weight it will help a lot of your health issues. If you have a lot of extra weight it is important to lose the weight. It will help decrease your risk for heart disease. You don't have to lose an extreme amount of weight. Even losing ten pounds can help. Increase your physical activity. Exercise is extremely important for people who have diabetes. You can work with your doctor to create exercises that will work best for you and be safe.

Often, heart and vascular disease go hand-in-hand with diabetes. Individuals with diabetes are at a much higher risk for heart attacks, strokes, and high blood pressure. It is unfortunate that a majority of the cardiovascular problems can go undetected and can also start early in life. Overtime, high blood glucose levels damage nerves and blood vessel, leading to complications such as heart disease and stroke, which is the leading cause of death among people with diabetes.

What is High cholesterol (Dyslipidemia)?

Dyslipidemia is a condition of abnormally elevated lipids (fat) in your blood. These elevated lipids in your blood primarily refer to high cholesterol and high triglyceride levels. At normal levels, these lipids perform important functions in your body, but when present in excess, they can pose serious health problems.

The causes of Dyslipidemia usually come from lifestyle habits, or treatable medical conditions. Obesity, lack of exercise, smoking, and eating foods high in fat and cholesterol can all contribute to high lipids in the blood. Also, conditions such as hypertension, diabetes or hypothyroidism, if untreated, can contribute to Dyslipidemia.

Basically, elevated lipids in your blood can speed up a process called atherosclerosis, or hardening of your arteries. Normally, your arteries are smooth and unobstructed; but in a person with excess fat in their blood, this fat may form a sticky substance called “plaque”. This plaque may stick to the inner walls of your arteries and eventually harden. Overtime, with untreated excess lipid levels along with aging, this plaque may increase and cause obstruction in the arteries. As arteries narrow, less blood can flow through. Reduced blood flow increases your risk of heart disease, stroke, and vascular disease. It may also cause severe chest pain (angina), due to the lack of blood supply to the heart.

Hyperlipidemia is diagnosed by a blood test which shows the amount of lipids and triglycerides present in your blood. An LDL (bad cholesterol) level of over 160 mg/dl, and a triglyceride level of over 150 mg/dl is considered high. People with diabetes should have levels even lower than this. There is also good cholesterol in your blood, called HDL, which should be kept over 40 mg/dl. Anything under this may also contribute to heart disease.

Just as in hypertension, hyperlipidemia may present with no symptoms, until blockage of arteries becomes severe. Fortunately, you may be able to reduce high lipid levels and, therefore, prevent or slow the progression of atherosclerosis. Lifestyle changes like exercising and eating a healthy diet can lower your lipid levels, and are often a first line treatment. There are also medications to treat this condition, when diet and exercise fail.

Smoking Cessation

Every 72 seconds, someone dies from smoking. An estimated 25.9 million men, 22.8 million women and 4.1 million teenagers ages 12 through 17 are smokers in the United States. Tobacco smoking is the most common cause of preventable disease and death. Approximately 75% of coronary heart disease cases are due to cigarette smoking. Eliminating smoking can greatly reduce the occurrence and risks of coronary heart disease and other cardiovascular disease. Quitting smoking will decrease an individual's risk of developing chronic lung disease, stroke, as well as cancer of the lungs, larynx, esophagus, mouth and bladder. Tobacco smoke contains more than 40 chemicals that, besides being a carcinogenic to

humans and animals, are air pollutants. Smoking is also a very expensive habit. On average smokers generally spend nearly \$30.24 per week, or about \$1,600 per year. Individuals who quit smoking enjoy many health benefits. These benefits include decrease in frequency of respiratory problems, increase in age of life expectancy, reducing risk of cancer, heart attack and other cardiovascular disease. There are many resources available to help eliminate this toxic habit.

Obesity

Obesity is a growing epidemic in the United States that affects not only adults, but also the youth. In an attempt to promote healthy eating habits and reduce the population of overweight adolescents, schools have been offering nutritious lunches as well as emphasizing the importance of physical activity. The terms obesity and overweight have different implications. Obesity is defined as having an excess of total body fat. On the other hand, being overweight means weighing too much which could result from muscle, bone, fat and/or body water. Both terms essentially mean the person is above his or her normal body weight range. Body mass index or BMI, which assesses height and weight, is used to determine whether or not a person is overweight. A person is considered overweight if his or her BMI is between 25 and 29.9 while an individual with a BMI over 30 is considered obese. Overweight and obesity result from an energy imbalance which involves eating more calories than your body utilizes. Thus, the excess calories are converted to fat. Lack of physical activity also contributes to excess body fat. Exercise increases your body's metabolism which helps your body burn more calories and reduce body fat. There are many factors that play a role in obesity such as age, gender, genetics, environmental factors, psychological factors, illness and certain medications.

Being obese increases your risk for conditions such as coronary heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, some cancers, stroke and other serious health problems. Weight loss of as little as 5% of one's body weight can lower the risks of these diseases. Increasing physical activity and decreasing calorie intake through a nutritiously balanced diet can greatly reduce one's risk of becoming overweight or obese as well as strengthen one's overall health.

The government is even taking steps to promote better eating habits by increasing the tax on unhealthy food products, such as soda, which is filled with excess sugar and empty calories. Prevention is the key to a healthy mind and body. Minor changes such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator or drinking water instead of soft drinks can significantly and positively improve one's wellbeing. Obesity is a growing problem that can be controlled if people make the necessary changes in their diet and incorporate more physical activities in their daily routine.

At Heart and Health we pride ourselves to have the commitment to screen, prevent, and treat our patients. Any person with significant risk factors and heart palpitations, increase heart rate, dizziness, should be screened and evaluated in order to prevent these unnecessary complication. Please visit our web site for more information www.HeartandHealth.com and www.KavesteenMD.com