



Presented by Holmes Murphy & Associates

Keep Your Heart Healthy

This time of year, with Valentine's Day approaching, you might associate hearts with romance and red roses. But there are two kinds of hearts—in addition to hosting Valentine's Day, February also serves as Heart Health Month. Take some time this month to think about the blood-pumping kind of heart and what you can do to keep yours healthy.

Risk factors for heart disease include related health conditions, unhealthy behaviors and hereditary factors. Health conditions that can increase your chances of heart disease include high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes. Cigarette smoking and tobacco use, poor diet, physical inactivity and excessive alcohol consumption are some behaviors that can adversely affect your heart health. Also, for some people, family health history can predict your risk of heart disease.

While you can't change bad genes or eliminate

all risks, there are a few choices you can make to lessen your susceptibility to heart disease. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), you can engage in a few simple preventive measures to help ward off heart problems.

- Eat at least five servings of fruit and vegetables every day. Whole grains and low-fat dairy are also good for you.
- Reduce your consumption of foods high in fat, cholesterol and salt.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Even if you're busy, try to include at least 30 minutes of moderately intense exercise, such as biking or shoveling snow, into your daily routine.
- Monitor your blood pressure and

cholesterol levels, and, if you have diabetes, manage it as recommended by your doctor.

- Don't start smoking, or, if you already smoke, consider quitting.
- Recognize the signs of a heart attack, and call 911 immediately if you think that you or someone else is suffering a heart attack. The symptoms of a heart attack typically include the following:
 - Pain or discomfort in the jaw, neck or back
 - Feeling weak, lightheaded or faint
 - Chest pain or discomfort
 - Pain or discomfort in arms or shoulder
 - Shortness of breath

When you know the risks of heart disease and the symptoms of a heart attack, you can help protect your heart for you and your loved ones.

Cellphones emit radiofrequency electromagnetic fields that extend approximately 6 inches.

Danger: Cellphones Ahead

While it's impossible to ignore the messages that point out the dangers of texting and driving, many people remain blissfully unaware of the studies that point out the possible health hazards of cellphone radiation, which may cause DNA damage, cancer, reduced fertility and cognitive impairment.

How could a little phone be responsible for all this? Cellphones work by transmitting radio waves. When it is turned on, a cellphone emits a radiofrequency electromagnetic field that extends approximately 6 inches, and these radio waves can be absorbed by body tissues. Based on evidence from 13 countries, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer classified these radiofrequency electromagnetic fields as "possibly carcinogenic to humans." U.S. studies vary in their findings: The Federal Communications Commission argues that there is no firm evidence to prove adverse effects, while the American Cancer Society and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration urge further research before offering a definitive answer.

If you are concerned about the possible health risks associated with cellphone radiation, here are a few tips to consider: 1) use a wired headset or speakerphone and place the phone at least 6 inches from your body; 2) reduce the amount of time you spend talking on a cellphone; and 3) don't carry your phone in a pocket—instead, stash it in a purse, bag or backpack.

Provided by:

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One Step at a Time

Whether meandering from the couch to the refrigerator for a snack or cruising around the block as part of an exercise routine, almost everyone includes some walking into their day. Walking is a great form of exercise for achieving better health and burning calories. But do you know the recommended amount of walking to achieve optimum benefits?

Studies show that walking 10,000 steps, or about 5 miles, is an excellent daily goal for most people. But you don't have to do endless laps around the local high school track; steps throughout your day all add up to a healthier you. Try wearing a pedometer to help you monitor how close you are to reaching your goal—whether you start by aiming for 5,000, 10,000 or 20,000 steps a day. Here are some ways to incorporate more steps into your daily life:

- Climb the stairs instead of awkwardly staring down strangers in the elevator.
- Park a few spots farther from the door and stretch your legs with long strides before shuffling through a crowded store.
- If you sit at a desk all day, drink a lot of water. Your body will periodically remind you to get up for a stroll to the restroom.
- Window-shop downtown or at the mall instead of surfing online stores.
- Give in to those puppy eyes and take your dog for a walk.

Every step counts, so keep walking! Although a vigorous walk of at least 30 minutes has additional benefits, reaching 10,000 steps every day is a great start toward better health.

Protect Your Health



When you're sick, you have to deal with visits to the doctor's office or the hospital, bottles of medications and days in bed recovering. Wouldn't it be easier to just stay healthy in the first place? If you're not a fan of medication schedules and wasting days weakly lying in bed, you should consider the powerful role that prevention care can play in keeping you healthy.

The most important part of preventing disease and illness is healthy habits, including a balanced diet, sufficient sleep and enough exercise. Going to the doctor for recommended checkups and screenings is also a key factor in identifying and treating potential health problems before they develop or worsen. Recommendations vary depending on your age and gender, and sources such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offer guidelines for various preventive screenings and tests.

Due to recent health care reform, you may be able to receive many preventive services at no cost. Non-grandfathered health plans are required to cover a variety of preventive services. Check out what is covered by your insurance and take advantage of preventive care that can keep you and your family healthy.

Live Well, Work Well



Lemon Chicken

After a brisk walk in the winter air, satisfy your appetite with this deliciously healthy baked chicken. With the delightful tang of lemon, this dish is sure to impress your whole family.

1½ pounds chicken breast, skinned and fat removed
½ cup fresh lemon juice
2 tbsp. white wine vinegar
½ cup fresh sliced lemon peel
3 tsp. chopped fresh oregano or 1 tsp. dried oregano, crushed
1 medium onion, sliced
½ tsp. paprika
salt and black pepper to taste

Place chicken in 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Mix lemon juice, vinegar, lemon peel, oregano and onions. Pour over chicken, cover and marinate in refrigerator several hours or overnight, turning occasionally. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and paprika.

Cover and bake at 325 F for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake 30 minutes more or until done.

Yield: 4 servings. Each serving provides 154 calories, 5 g total fat, 2 g saturated fat, 63 mg cholesterol and 202 mg sodium.

Source: U.S. Health and Human Services



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance specialists at Holmes Murphy & Associates

CHOLESTEROL AND YOUR HEART HEALTH

If you know the number of your total cholesterol, that's good. But is it good enough?

What's in a Number

In the past, doctors thought that total cholesterol was a good indicator of one's risk for heart disease, heart attack, diabetes and stroke. The lower your low-density lipoprotein (LDL) numbers and the higher your high-density lipoprotein (HDL) numbers, the better, right? While measuring HDL, LDL and total cholesterol is helpful, experts now know that to truly assess your risk for heart attack, heart disease and stroke, it's not as simple as just knowing these numbers.

The Lipoprotein Link

Research indicates that no matter how much cholesterol you inherit or take in when you eat, the blockage of arteries that leads to heart disease is caused by the number and size of the lipoprotein particles that carry cholesterol throughout your body. These lipoprotein particles can build up in your arteries. Think of it this way: These lipoproteins are the cars that carry passengers (cholesterol) along the highway—it's not the number of "passengers" in a car that causes a traffic jam (blocked artery), it's the number of cars!

Your Particle Number

The number and particle size of lipoproteins in your blood are the measurements that can really help your doctor determine your risk for heart attack, heart disease and stroke. A screening test called an NMR LipoProfile® is available, which provides a more detailed look at how your particles measure up. The number of LDL particles circulating in your blood is the most important factor in measuring your heart health. It is important to know how many there are and how big they are. Generally, the lower your number of total LDL particles, and the larger the size of these particles, the lower your risk is for heart disease, heart attack and stroke.

Getting Tested

Currently, most patients and many doctors are not even aware that a simple blood test exists that can analyze your cholesterol numbers in such detail. Those who do, however, realize that it is a valuable tool necessary for early prediction, prevention and treatment of heart attack, heart disease and stroke. If you have a family history or other risk factors for heart attack, heart disease and stroke, or have already been diagnosed with high cholesterol (even if you are already being treated for it), ask your doctor about having an NMR LipoProfile test. It is currently covered by many private insurance carriers, although different rates and coverage do apply. If your insurance doesn't cover it, consider having it done anyway. The test is relatively inexpensive, and the results you get are important for your health.