

Focus on Health

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FOCUS ON HEALTH



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Keep your cholesterol in check

Millions of Americans are at risk for life-threatening cardiovascular events due to high cholesterol, a condition nearly everyone has heard of yet just a fraction fully understand. In fact, many don't realize they have high levels of harmful cholesterol until they experience a heart attack or stroke.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 71 million adults in the United States have high low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, also known as "bad" cholesterol. Of these, nearly 50 million Americans do not have LDL cholesterol levels under control and are at higher risk for cardiovascular events, such as heart attack and stroke.

Protecting yourself and your loved ones from the effects of high LDL cholesterol starts by arming yourself with key information.

"Your body needs cholesterol - a waxy, fat-like substance - to work properly," said Stephen Pinkosky, PhD, vice president, drug discovery and early development at Esperion. "However, having too much LDL cholesterol can lead to blockages in your arteries. Often impacted by both lifestyle choices and genetics, it's important to maintain an LDL cholesterol level recommended by your health care provider."

"It's often not until there may be a large blockage of the artery that you notice something is wrong, such as chest pain, pain in the arms or jaw, nausea, sweating, shortness of breath or weakness," Pinkosky said. "These symptoms can occur when blood supply to the heart or brain is being slowed or blocked."

These blockages, which may not have previously caused symptoms, can rupture

and cause major problems, including heart attack or stroke. According to the American Heart Association, the first sign of elevated LDL cholesterol may be a deadly cardiovascular event for some people.

According to the World Health Organization, elevated LDL cholesterol causes more deaths than all forms of cancer combined and accounts for around 1 in 3 deaths in the U.S. and Europe. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates heart disease deaths will increase 25% by 2030.

One of the best ways to take care of your health is to be proactive. Even if you're feeling fine, it's a good idea to get your LDL cholesterol levels checked and discuss the results with your health care provider to determine the best treatment option for you, if needed. Your care team will consider your LDL cholesterol level, along with any other factors that make a heart attack or need for a heart procedure more likely to occur, such as your age, sex, family history (genetics), presence of diabetes or high blood pressure and lifestyle (like whether or not you smoke and your diet).

For those with high LDL cholesterol, there are options to get your level under control. Studies show reducing LDL-C levels with certain cholesterol lowering medications may reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events.

Consult your health care provider if you are unsure of your LDL cholesterol level or want to discuss options to lower your level. To learn more about high LDL cholesterol risks and management, visit cardiosmart.org. (FAMILY FEATURES)

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Women and heart health: Ways to reduce your risk

Heart disease is the leading cause of death among women in the United States. Although it is largely preventable, each year more than 300,000 women, or 1 in every 5, die from heart disease, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

About 1 in 16 women ages 20 and older have coronary heart disease, the most common type of heart disease, and 75% of women 20-39 years old have one or more risk factors. These include diabetes, hypertension (also known as high blood pressure), high cholesterol, currently smoking or obesity. For African American and Hispanic/Latina women, the risk of heart disease is even greater.

Among women 20 years and older, more than half of African American women and one-third of Hispanic/Latina women have hypertension, which when left uncontrolled greatly impacts the risk for heart disease or stroke.

In an effort to educate women about heart disease at younger ages, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's (NHLBI) The Heart Truth(r) program launched an initiative called Yes, YOU!

The initiative is focused on empowering younger women to know the facts about



heart disease, understand their personal risk factors and equip themselves with resources to take action to protect their hearts. The key takeaway is it's never too early, or too late, to adopt heart-healthy behaviors. One of the first steps heart health experts recommend is learning

more about any family history of heart disease and about risk factors that you can change with healthy lifestyle choices.

"Awareness is the first step toward reducing risk," said Gina S. Wei, M.D., M.P.H., associate director of NHLBI's Division of Cardiovascular Sciences and NHLBI's senior

scientific advisor on women's health. "Women need to be empowered to know the facts so they can take action to protect their hearts."

Consider these recommended steps from the Yes, YOU! initiative for women looking to improve their heart health:

- * Eat a heart-healthy diet rich in vegetables, fruits and whole greens and low in saturated fat, sodium and sugar.

- * Increase physical activity by aiming for at least 150 minutes each week

- * Maintain a healthy weight

- * Control blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar

- * Get 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night

- * Talk to your health care provider about resources to help quit smoking

- * Manage stress by practicing self-care and having positive social support

In addition to a public service announcement, the initiative's webpage features fact sheets in English and Spanish, social media resources to promote heart health and video testimonials from women who share their heart health experiences. For more information about heart disease in women and tools to help create a heart-healthy lifestyle, visit go.nih.gov/YesYOU.

(FAMILY FEATURES)

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Fast facts about prostate cancer all men should know

Preventive health care encompasses a host of strategies designed to reduce individuals' risk for conditions and diseases that can adversely affect their quality of life. Routine exercise and a commitment to a nutritious diet are two such strategies, and each can go a long way toward protecting an individual's long-term health.

Education is another key component of preventive health care. By educating themselves about their own family histories and additional variables that may increase their risk of developing certain conditions, individuals can take steps to mitigate that risk.

The World Health Organization reports that roughly one in five people across the globe develop cancer in their lifetime.

Prostate cancer poses a unique threat to men. The WHO notes prostate cancer is the second most commonly occurring cancer in men, and recognition of that threat may compel men to learn more about the disease. Data does not tell the whole story of prostate cancer, but some fast facts about the disease can serve as a springboard to learning more about it and what, if anything, can be done to prevent it.



- The Prostate Cancer Foundation reports that one in eight men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in his lifetime.

- Rates of prostate cancer are higher among Black men. According to the PCF, one in six Black men will develop prostate

cancer in his lifetime. In addition, Black men are more than twice as likely to die from the disease.

- Estimates from the PCF indicate just under 300,000 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2024, and roughly 35,000 men will die from the disease.

- Men with first-degree relatives who have had prostate cancer may be twice as likely to develop the disease. First-degree relatives include a father, brother or a son. Men are urged to learn their family medical histories so they can identify their own individual risk for prostate cancer.

- The American Cancer Society reports that roughly six in 10 prostate cancers are found in men older than 65. However, the ACS also notes that the chances of being diagnosed with prostate cancer increase significantly after age 50. And while instances of prostate cancer in men younger than 40 are rare, men 39 and younger can still develop the disease.

- Five-year survival rates for prostate cancer are high when the disease is detected in the localized or regional stages. Localized indicates there is no sign the cancer has spread beyond the prostate, while regional means the cancer has spread to nearby structures or lymph nodes. The five-year survival rate for these stages is greater than 99 percent.

Prostate cancer poses a notable threat to men. Understanding that threat and what can be done to mitigate it is an integral component of preventive health care. (METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION)

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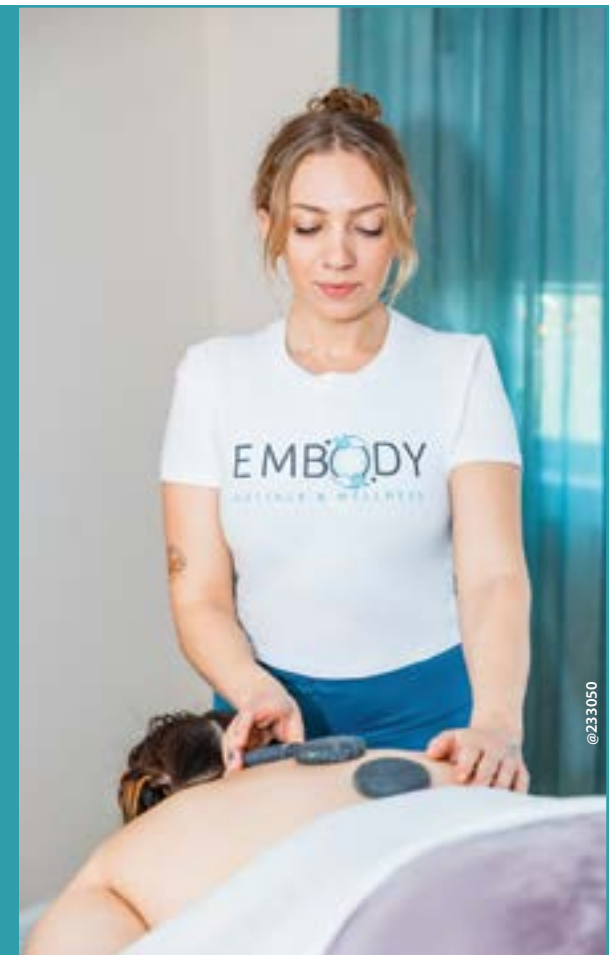
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Prostate cancer is the second most commonly occurring cancer in men.

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Prepare yourself for cooler weather

Although cold weather isn't directly to blame when you get sick, it creates an environment that makes it easier for germs and illnesses to thrive. In fact, understanding how cooler temperatures affect your chances of getting sick may be your best approach for preventive care.

Despite the old adage that "you'll catch your death of cold," the cold itself doesn't cause illness. More accurately, the cold is more hospitable to viruses, making it easier for them to spread. While you can't control Mother Nature, you can take steps to protect your health when temperatures drop.

Protect Your Immune System

A weakened immune system makes it harder for your body to ward off intrusive germs. If you're otherwise healthy, protecting your immune system can be as simple as stepping up typical healthy habits, like eating plenty of nutrient-rich produce, getting enough sleep and exercising. Managing stress and limiting alcohol consumption are also helpful in managing your body's immune response.

If your immune system is compromised by an underlying condition, talk with your doctor about what you can do to add an extra layer of protection during the cooler months, including any vaccines that may help boost immunity.

Spend Time Outdoors

People naturally spend more time indoors when temperatures drop, but there are some benefits to getting outdoors. Sunlight is a natural source of vitamin D, which plays a pivotal role in immunity. Sunlight also triggers the body to produce serotonin, which boosts your mood, and multiple studies show a strong correlation between mental and physical health.

Fresh air and exercise are also good for your overall health, and exposure to daylight can help keep your circadian rhythms regulated, which in turn promotes



better sleep. What's more, acute exposure to cold can trigger your body to produce infection-fighting cells, so you're less prone to illness.

Practice Good Hygiene

The everyday act of washing your hands can play a big role in preventing illness, especially after you spend time in public places. While out and about, you likely come in contact with many surfaces others may have touched, including door handles, shopping carts, touch screens and menus. Make a habit of wiping down surfaces you touch frequently, such as your keyboard and phone, with disinfectant wipes.

Stay Hydrated

Keeping your body well-hydrated throughout the day can help ensure all your body's systems are functioning as they should. If you're dehydrated, your body can't use the nutrients you consume properly, which affects your immunity. In addition, drinking plenty of water helps flush toxins out of the body before they can cause an infection. (FAMILY FEATURES)

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RSV vaccines: What older adults need to know

Even though cooler days may seem far off, now is the best time to plan ahead for a healthy winter. One common respiratory illness, respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms, but it can be severe and even deadly for older people, causing pneumonia and worsening conditions such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

The CDC estimates that RSV sends as many as 160,000 older Americans to the hospital annually and as many as 10,000 older adults die each year from an RSV infection.

"As we grow older, our immune systems do not work as well and we are more likely to have chronic conditions, which means we are at increased risk of getting very sick from common viruses as we age," said Alison Barkoff, who leads the Administration for Community Living within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Getting vaccinated is the best protection against fall respiratory viruses like RSV. It can help keep symptoms mild and help keep people out of the hospital."

Here's what older Americans need to know about RSV and vaccines this fall, according to the Risk Less. Do More. Public Education Campaign.



PREVENTION IS KEY

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that everyone 75 years and older get an RSV vaccine. Also, people between ages 60 and 74 should get vaccinated if they have conditions such as heart or lung disease, diabetes, obesity or

a weakened immune system. The vaccine cuts the risk of hospitalization from RSV by at least half.

People living in nursing homes, assisted living or other long-term care facilities are at even higher risk. There are many people living together in these facilities who

have medical conditions that make them more likely to get very sick. While vaccines may not always stop infection, they can prevent severe illness. So, vaccination is very important for residents of long-term care facilities.

RSV VACCINES ARE AVAILABLE

Three RSV vaccines have been approved for older adults by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. You only need a single dose that you can get at any time of the year, but getting the vaccine in the fall offers the best protection for the late fall and winter, when RSV usually peaks. Getting the vaccine early gives your immune system enough time to build up protection.

The RSV vaccines have gone through extensive testing. Last year, more than 20 million older adults were vaccinated safely. Mild side effects, such as pain, redness or swelling at the injection site sometimes happen, but they usually go away on their own in a few days. Serious allergic reactions from RSV vaccines are rare.

PREVENTION IS THE BEST OPTION

Respiratory virus vaccines, including RSV vaccines, can help protect older adults from serious illness. Talk to your doctor and visit [cdc.gov/RSV](https://www.cdc.gov/RSV) to learn more.

(FAMILY FEATURES)

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