

Simple Steps Toward Lowering Chronic Disease Risk through Lifestyle (2024)

1) Exercise – a great place to start!

- a. Studies show that NOT exercising increases the risk of premature death more than cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and even smoking!
- b. “Just Do It”! Don’t be discouraged, even in small daily amounts exercise makes a significant difference. The recommendations for daily exercise can be discouraging and the American Heart Association recommends the following:
 - 150-minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week
- c. HOWEVER, even 5-minutes per day shows significant health benefits. Some ideas to get those 5-minutes:
 1. Dust off that exercise bike or treadmill (use a least 2% elevation) in your basement and use it for 5 minutes.
 2. Go for a morning, evening, or lunchtime walk (use a hill if possible).
 3. Walk up and down the stairs (great way to elevate the heart rate along with strengthening calves, knees, hips, and lower back).
 - The key is to elevate the heart rate over resting, in that case, I recommend adding a little tension on the bike, elevation on the treadmill, a hill in your walk, and walking the stairs (impossible for the heart rate not to be elevated).

2) Diet

- a. The Standard American Diet is SAD. Ultra-processed foods are rich in added sugars, sodium, fat, and chemicals. They make up 57% of total calories in the US, unfortunately, that number is on the rise! Two simple nutrition variables carry a huge health impact:
 - i. Drink 66-99 oz. of water per day!
 - 75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated. Dehydrated blood is difficult to pump placing stress on the heart. Research shows well hydrated blood lowers the risk of heart disease 41% in women and 54% in men. Water is the best choice, it is calorie free, sugar free, sodium free, and chemical free.
 - ii. Strive for Five: eat 5 servings of produce daily!
 - 90% of Americans do not get the RDA for fruits and vegetables. Is the formula that simple? Would our health improve by simply replacing 50% of ingested processed food with fresh (or frozen) fruits and vegetables?

3) Tobacco Cessation

- a. Yes, it is difficult but well worth the health benefits. It is never too late, circulation and lung function improve within weeks and cancer risk decreases significantly within a few years.
- b. Need help?
 - MVP offers a flexible online program: [The Butt Stops Here](#)
 - Discuss RX options with your Primary Care Physician at your Annual Physical.