The good news

Heart disease can often be prevented when people make healthy choices and manage their health conditions, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes. Therefore, the fight against heart disease cannot be limited to just treatment, but must include prevention.

What can you do?

You can use this month to help raise awareness for heart disease and how it can be prevented by making healthy choices. Communities, healthcare professionals, and families can all work together to help encourage people to live heart healthy lives.

Younger adults are also at risk

In many communities across the United States, heart disease death rates have been increasing in adults aged 35 to 64. Not only are younger adults dying of heart disease, their rates of risk factors such as physical inactivity, high blood pressure, and tobacco use are increasing.

Celebrate National Wear Red Day to raise awareness about women and heart disease. Encourage everyone in your community to wear red on February 1, 2019.

You can make healthy changes to lower your risk of developing heart disease.

To lower your risk:
- Watch your weight.
- Quit smoking and stay away from secondhand smoke.
- Control your cholesterol and blood pressure.
- If you drink alcohol, drink only in moderation.
- Get active and eat healthy.
Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) occurs when plaque builds up inside the coronary arteries, which are responsible for delivering oxygen-rich blood to the heart. If the plaque build-up is severe enough to reduce or cut off blood flow to the heart, it can result in a heart attack. Over time, the plaque may build up and harden, resulting in narrow arteries that make the heart work harder. This is called atherosclerosis, and can weaken the heart muscles, leading to an irregular heart beat and heart failure.9

Major risk factors:
- Unhealthy blood cholesterol levels
- High blood pressure
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Overweight or obesity
- Lack of physical activity
- Unhealthy diet
- Family history
- Older age – the risk for CHD starts increasing at age 45 for men, and age 55 for women

Other conditions that may increase your risk:
- Sleep apnea
- Alcohol
- Preeclampsia
- Stress – an emotionally upsetting event is the most commonly reported “trigger” for a heart attack

Your chances of developing heart disease increases with the number of risk factors you have

Controlling your high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, and quitting smoking can greatly reduce your risk9

Warning Signs
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue/Activity intolerance
- Palpitations
- Fainting/Dizziness
- Quick weight gain/Swelling in legs

Image Source: https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/coronary-heart-disease
Eat Healthy 6, 7, 8

Reduce sodium
On average, Americans eat more than 3,400 mg of sodium per day – much more than what is recommended. The American Heart Association recommends no more than 2,300mg of sodium a day, and ideally no more than 1,500mg per day for most adults. Too much sodium holds excess fluid in the body, which increases blood pressure and adds an extra burden on your heart.

Eat lots of fruits and vegetables
Vegetables and fruits are good sources of vitamins and minerals that can help prevent cardiovascular disease.

Say NO to saturated and trans fats
Saturated and trans fats raise low-density lipoprotein (LDL) levels (“bad” cholesterol), and lower high-density lipoprotein (HDL) levels (“good” cholesterol). This can lead to plaque buildup in your arteries and increase your risk for heart attack or stroke.

Fats to choose: olive oil, canola oil, vegetable and nut oils, avocados

Fats to limit: butter, lard, gravy, bacon fat, coconut oil, cocoa butter, cream sauces

Select whole grains
Whole grains are good sources of fiber and other nutrients that play a role in regulating blood pressure and cholesterol.

Get Active 4, 5

Physical activity can make you feel reinvigorated. Furthermore, it helps prevent heart disease and increases your chances of living longer.

How much do I need?
At least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity each week (do at least 10 minutes at a time), plus muscle-strengthening activities at least 2 days a week.

Choose activities you enjoy
Physical activity is anything that gets your body moving, but a combination of both aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities will allow you to reap all the health benefits.

What are some examples of moderate aerobic activities?
Fast walking or jogging, dancing, biking, general gardening (raking, trimming shrubs), water aerobics, softball, tennis

What are some examples of muscle-strengthening activities?
Lifting weights, crunches/sit-ups, push-ups, heavy gardening (digging or shoveling)

How to get started?
Start at a comfortable level. Try walking for 10 minutes a day, a few days each week, then add more activity over time.
The State Wellness Center and Pharmacy is a healthcare facility conveniently located in downtown Montgomery offering a variety of services to state and local government employees and their covered dependents, ages 12 and older. Our mission is to provide a convenient, economical source of urgent care and preventative care services when you are unable to see your primary healthcare provider. Our team of medical professionals is dedicated to providing the highest quality of care and excellent service while also encouraging a continued relationship with your own personal physician.

State Wellness Center Services
- Treat minor illnesses
- Provide health education & monitoring
- Check health progress between appointments
- Share information with your physician
- Monitor efficacy & safety of every medication
- Evaluate out-of-pocket medication expense
- Smoking cessation & weight loss services
- Diabetes education program
- Anticoagulation monitoring services
- Immunizations & injectable medications administration
- Develop a personalized medication plan
- Monitor control of chronic illnesses
- Medication check-ups
- Medication therapy management
- Sports physicals (ages 12 and up)

CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT TODAY!
(334) 263-8470

State Wellness Center and Pharmacy  Issue 02  February 2019

References