Men’s Health: 

On average, men are dying at an earlier age than women in the United States with an approximate gap of 5 years. The goal of this newsletter is to educate men (and their significant others) on ways to improve health and decrease this gap. 

Leading causes of death in men in the United States include heart disease, cancer, unintentional injuries, diabetes, homicide, and pneumonia. 

Men are at an increased risk of death for these disease states for several reasons. Men tend to lead less healthy lifestyles and engage in more risky behavior. They also tend to work in more dangerous occupations and have less healthcare coverage. Finally, men are less likely to seek out preventative care or visit a health care professional than women. 

While social stigmas could contribute to these disparities, men need to lead healthier lifestyles regardless of public opinion. 

Although these trends point towards an earlier death for men than women, there are things you can do to decrease your risk of some early causes of death and improve your overall health. 

The June issue of this newsletter addresses steps you can take to decrease your risk for heart disease, prostate cancer, and unintentional injuries.
Heart disease happens when your arteries are narrowed or damaged, which can lead to a stroke or a heart attack. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in men in the United States and someone in the United States has a heart attack every 34 seconds. Some signs and symptoms of a heart problem that would require a doctor’s attention include: fatigue, dizziness, and chest pain. A doctor or pharmacist can even calculate your risk of having a cardiac event in the next ten years. The following are some things you can do to help improve your health and decrease your risk of heart disease.

**Lifestyle Changes:**
There are several things you can do at home to try to reduce your heart disease risk. One lifestyle change is to quit smoking. Another option is to improve your diet. Finally, you can increase the amount of exercise you do at home.

**Smoking:**
Smoking and other tobacco products damage your arteries, which can eventually lead to a heart attack. Even second-hand smoke can increase your risk. Your HealthWise Pharmacist can help you decide if a quitting aid would be helpful for you and to choose which product would fit best into your lifestyle. Some patients may benefit most from a gum, while others may prefer a patch to help them quit smoking. Additionally, your pharmacist can be a support system for you while you quit.

**Exercise:**
Exercising at least 30 minutes a day for most days of the week can improve your heart health. Mowing the lawn, walking your dog, and taking the stairs more often at work are all ways to incorporate exercise into your daily routine. You could also try going to Kinghorn or your local gym during lunch to get in a quick work out a few days a week.

**Diet:**
Ideally, to make the most of your lifestyle changes, you should increase the amount of fruits and vegetables that you eat, while decreasing the salt and fat that you eat. Changing your diet to include healthier options can be easier than you think. Start grilling out more often than eating out, swap chips for a low-salt pretzel snack or add an apple to your lunch instead of a dessert. You can also try picking out a new fruit or vegetable. For example, try out the recipe we’ve placed above. Change the fruits and vegetables within the salsa based on you and your family’s preferences.

**Appointments:**
Another way you can control you risk for heart disease is to set up an appointment with your primary care doctor or a HealthWise appointment with a pharmacist. They can calculate your 10 year risk for a cardiovascular event to help you understand where you’re at and what you else you can do to reduce your risk. These health care professionals can help you manage your cholesterol, blood pressure, and lifestyle changes as discussed here, as well as through medications.

*It’s not too late to reduce your risk for heart disease through lifestyle changes and working with a healthcare professional.*
Prostate Cancer Awareness

What You Need to Know

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Introduction:
Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in American men, with nearly 1 in 7 men diagnosed with the disease during his lifetime. Prostate cancer is most common in men aged 65 or older. The average age at the time of diagnosis is 66. Although prostate cancer is a serious condition, most men diagnosed with the disease do not die from it.

Statistics:
The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2015, there will be about 27,540 deaths from prostate cancer and expects nearly 220,800 new cases to be diagnosed.

RISK FACTORS

- Aging (65 years and older)
- African-American
- Family members with prostate cancer
- Obesity
- Smoking
- Poor diet

Signs and Symptoms:
Early Stages of the disease often do not present with any symptoms. As the disease progresses, common symptoms may include:
- Increased urination
- Difficulty urinating
- Blood in the urine
- Erectile dysfunction

Other non-serious conditions can also cause these symptoms. It is important to tell your doctor if you experience any of these signs in order to receive a proper diagnosis and treatment if needed.

Prevention:
The exact cause of prostate cancer has not been identified, so it is unclear whether the disease can be effectively prevented. However, living a healthy lifestyle and taking control of preventable risk factors such as smoking, weight, and diet can help to lower your risk of developing prostate cancer in the future.

Screening:
Starting at age 50, men should talk to their doctor about the advantages and disadvantages of prostate cancer testing. If you are African-American or have a family member that was diagnosed with prostate cancer before age 65, discussions about testing should start at age 45. There are two common initial tests that your doctor may perform: Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Blood Test and/or Digital Rectal Exam (DRE).

PSA Blood Test:
PSA is a protein made by cells in the prostate gland. These cells are where most prostate cancers begin. A normal PSA level is 4 nanograms per milliliter (4ng/mL). PSA levels higher than 4 may be indicative of cancer development. Men with a PSA level between 4 and 10 have a 25% chance of having prostate cancer; numbers above 10 are associated with a 50% chance of having the disease. It is important to note that PSA levels can be elevated due to a number of factors other than cancer. As men age, PSA levels may naturally increase due to normal enlargement of the prostate. Your doctor will be able to determine the specific cause and develop a treatment plan if needed.

DRE:
During a digital rectal exam, the doctor will insert a gloved, lubricated finger into the rectum to feel the prostate gland and identify any abnormalities. This exam may be uncomfortable, but should not cause any pain and only lasts a short amount of time. The DRE is less accurate than the PSA blood test at identifying the presence of cancer, but may be useful for finding cancers in men with normal PSA levels. For this reason, these tests may be used in combination with one another at the time of your doctor's visit.
Men’s Health: Unintentional Injuries

Unintentional Injuries

Unintentional injuries are simply accidents. Specifically looking at men, they are the number 3 cause of death in the United States and number 4 overall. Unintentional accidents account for 1 out of every 4 people treated in the emergency department.

Death rates peak for young adults around 18–22 years of age, attain a secondary peak for adults in their 40s, and then rise continually with age among adults 70 years of age and over. These peaks correlate with unsafe driving, risky behavior at work, and falls among our three groups, respectively. Unintentional injury death rates are higher for males than for females; the disparity is greatest among people 19–36 years of age, with rates for males averaging three times those for females.

Unintentional injuries include those from falls, fires, drownings, poisonings, motor vehicle crashes, sports, recreational activities, and heat related illness.

Unintentional Injury Prevention

Beat the Summer Heat

Whether you’re working or playing outside in the summer, anybody not accustomed to the heat is at risk for a heat-related illness. Take these important steps to protect yourself:

- Wear loose, light-colored and lightweight clothing; including a wide-brimmed hat
- Take frequent water breaks. A common recommendation is to drink eight 8-ounce glasses of water every day. On warmer days and days spent longer in the sun more water may be needed
- Apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 every 2 hours

Even when proper measures are taken, heat stroke can still occur. Heat stroke results from prolonged exposure to high temperatures in combo with dehydration. When a person experience a heat stroke the person will have extremely hot skin, muscle cramps, nausea, disorientation, and possible loss of consciousness or coma. Ridding the body of excess heat is crucial for survival.

Do Not Attempt

If suspected heat stroke:

- Call 9-1-1 immediately
- Rapidly cool the body for at least 20 minutes by spraying cold water, sponging the person, or covering the body with ice packs
- Do NOT give the person water if they are disorientated or unconscious – this may cause the person to choke

Summer Outdoor Safety

Remembering to be safe when doing projects around the house is very important. Here are some important safety reminders:

- Keep the grill in the open, away from the house, tree branches, or anything that could catch fire
- Use long-handled tools to keep the chef safe on the grill
- Make sure ladders are stable before climbing – use a spotter if one is available
- When using tools for projects: wear proper eye gear, use proper hand placement, and always cut away from you

4th of July Safety

- Do NOT drink and drive
- Wear eye protection when lighting fireworks
- Never attempt to relight a “dud” firework
References


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