

Health Maintenance Reminders

Click on  *My Healthy Living*

at www.towncenterfamilymedicine.com
to visit MyHealthyLiving.net, our website to help you
eat well, stay active, stop smoking, and limit alcohol use.

PREVENTION

• **Exercise**

Aerobic exercise (walking, bike riding, swimming, running, aerobics) has been proven to reduce stress, help with sleep, maintain stamina, provide more energy as well as reduce risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke, hypertension, cancer (specifically breast cancer) and greatly reduce overall mortality. Experts recommend at least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise on at least 4 days per week. In addition 2 to 3 sessions per week of weight-bearing exercise (strength or resistance exercises) can reduce risk of osteoporosis (brittle bones) and improve strength and fitness.

Smoking Cessation

If you use tobacco, either smoking or dipping/chewing, quitting would significantly reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, hypertension, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, asthma and cancer (especially lung, throat, bladder and cervical). Smoking while pregnant can cause complications such as low birth weight infants. Children in smoking households have more ear and lung infections and are more likely to smoke themselves. We can offer information, advice, techniques and medication if you are interested in quitting.

Healthy Diet

Scientific studies have repeatedly shown the importance of a healthy diet in providing protection from heart disease, stroke, hypertension and many cancers. Reduction in red meats and fatty foods can help control cholesterol. 5 to 9 servings per day of fruits and vegetables has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and certain cancers including colon, breast and prostate. Diets high in natural fiber have been associated with lower rates of heart disease and colon cancer. A healthy diet is essential in any successful weight loss program.

Alcohol

If you drink, alcohol should be used in moderation. Some studies have suggested that drinking one drink three to seven days per week may reduce risk of heart disease. Many studies have shown that drinking more than two drinks per day on a regular basis can increase risk of cancer and liver disease. Drinking alcohol while pregnant can cause fetal alcohol syndrome in infants, which results in physical and intelligence problems.

Multiple Vitamins

We recommend taking a daily multiple vitamin. Less expensive generic brands are equally effective to name brands. Women in child bearing years should take supplements with folic acid to reduce the risk of neural tube (spine) birth defects in their babies. Folic acid may also reduce the risk of heart disease.

Calcium

Calcium is essential to develop and maintain strong bones. This can be taken in foods or as pill supplements. Vitamin D is needed to absorb calcium. This can be obtained in vitamin supplements or by a few minutes of sun exposure every day (20 minutes to 20% of your skin). The following foods each contain about 300 mg of calcium:

- 2 oz. cheese
- 8 oz. milk or yogurt
- 1 cup cooked broccoli, spinach, collards or kale

The following amounts of calcium are recommended:

- 1000 mg. per day for men and pre-menopausal women
- 1200 mg. per day for pregnant and nursing women
- 1500 mg. per day for post-menopausal women or those with osteoporosis

Eye Exam

Examination of the eyes by a professional should be done every one to two years.

Dental Exam

Preventive dental exam should be done at least once a year.

CANCER SCREENING TESTS

Breast Cancer: Mammograms are recommended every one to two years after age 40. Breast self exam (BSE) should be performed monthly just after periods or on the first day of the month if not having periods. Periodic breast exams by a health professional are recommended.

Cervical Cancer : Pap smears should be done on a regular basis in women who still have a uterus and are over age 21 or sexually active. Pelvic exams are recommended on a regular basis to screen for other pelvic cancers.

Testicular Cancer : Men between the ages of 15 to 45 should examine their testes monthly for firm lumps to provide early detection of testicular cancer.

Colon Cancer : Everyone over the age of 50 should have periodic screening tests for colon cancer. Examples of these tests are the hemoccult test, which tests the stool for microscopic blood, barium enemas and colonoscopy. Current recommendations are to have a direct visual inspection of the colon (colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy) on a periodic basis. Ask your doctor what tests are best for you.

Skin Cancer : Risk of skin cancer can be reduced by regular use of sun screen (at least SPF 15) when outdoors, using hats or clothing to minimize sun exposure to the skin, avoiding tanning booths and avoiding sun exposure during peak sun times (11 AM to 3 PM). This will also prevent premature aging and wrinkling of the skin. Monitor moles for any changes and have them checked regularly.

Prostate Cancer : Ask your doctor about the possible risks and benefits of screening for prostate cancer. This is usually started at age fifty.

SAFETY

Seat Belts should be used by everyone in a car. Children under 12 are safest in the back seat. Age appropriate car seats should be installed and used consistently. Car seats are required for all children under age six.

Smoke Detectors should be on all floors of the house, have battery back up if connected to the electrical system and should have the batteries replaced every 6 months (when you change the clocks in Spring and Fall).

Helmets and other protective gear should be used for biking, tricycling, skateboarding and roller blading. Helmets and full protective clothing should always be worn on motorcycles.

Guns should be stored in a secure locked location, separate from the ammunition. They are best stored unloaded with safety locks on.