

Heart to Heart

An e-bulletin created especially for healthcare providers

In the News . . .

Walking just as good for heart health

A brisk walk can lower one's risk for hypertension and high cholesterol just as much as running, according to new findings from the American Heart Association. The new study showed that when based on distance, moderate-intensity walking and vigorous-intensity running comparatively improved cardiovascular health.



Less NA, More K for HDSP

New studies published in the *British Medical Journal* are going beyond the simple recommendations for food manufacturers to lower sodium content in foods, proposing that manufacturers should increase potassium in foods. The recommendations are based on the thought that while sodium increases risk for hypertension, potassium has the opposite effect and may further lower risk for heart disease and stroke. [Read more here.](#)

Too little sleep may lead to too much eating

A recent study found that participants who received five hours of nightly sleep gained an average of two pounds over the course of five days as compared to participants who were allowed nine hours of sleep each night. Researchers propose that while it does take more calories to maintain wakefulness, those who were lacking sleeping overcompensated in their diets, leading to risk for weight gain.



Strides in the fight against childhood obesity

According to reports from the Partnership for a Healthier America, efforts by more than 1,700 US cities to combat the childhood obesity epidemic are starting to show a slight turning of the tide as more children are becoming physically active and have access to healthier food options. While the news of progress is encouraging, advocates are certain to highlight that more is still needed to make a nation-wide, lifelong impact.

New Resources from Million Hearts® . . .

Million Hearts® has released a Spanish-language toolkit developed to assist providing needed information about cardiovascular health and healthy lifestyles and wellness to members of the Hispanic/Latino population. Access the [Spanish-language toolkit](#) and view other resources to help you improve the health of your Spanish-speaking patients.



Stroke News . . .



Younger stroke victims more likely to suffer early death

According to researchers in the Netherlands, persons who have a stroke between the ages of 18-55 have an increased risk of premature death with an almost four times greater 20-year mortality risk compared to the general population. The study also found that vascular-origin cardiac events were the leading causes of those deaths, signifying to researchers that the underlying cause of earlier strokes continue the increased risk for vascular disease throughout their lives.



Diabetes associated stroke risk especially high under age 65

In a new study examining stroke risk in individuals with diabetes confirmed that diabetics have a significantly greater risk of stroke than those without diabetes. The risk is especially significant in those under age 65, as researchers found a nearly 12-fold increased risk of stroke compared to 2-3-fold in those aged 65 and older.



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May is National Stroke Awareness Month!

Join us in helping to spread the word about stroke! Recognized as the National Stroke Awareness Month, May is the perfect time to talk with your patients and peers, family and friends about stroke, encouraging them to **Act FAST!**

Stroke is an Emergency!

Stroke is the fourth leading cause of death in Iowa and is a leading cause of long-term disability in the United States. While it's true that the general risk for stroke does increase with age, stroke can occur to anyone, at any time, at any age. Stroke can even occur before birth, in utero. Which means that while general risk of stroke does increase with age, **everyone needs to be aware of stroke** and how they can reduce their risk. The signs of stroke are sudden and happen without warning, knowing them can help you save your own or someone else's life.

Use FAST to remember the warning signs of a stroke

Face – Ask the person to smile.

Does one side of their face droop?

Arms – Have the person hold their arms out.

Does one arm drop lower?

Speech – Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase.

Is their speech slurred or strange?

Time – If you observe ANY of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately!



Stroke is a "brain attack" and TIME is critical. Recognizing stroke warning signs and calling 9-1-1 saves lives!



The Good News

While, about half of Americans have at least one risk factor for stroke, *up to 80% of strokes are preventable*. High blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol, and smoking are key risk factors for stroke. Control of existing conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes and a healthy heart are the best ways to reduce risk for stroke. Click here for the **My Life Check® Assessment** to learn your personal risk score and help to reduce your risk of stroke.

Download the free "Spot a Stroke FAST" app from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association for helpful resources on the go, including help recognizing a stroke as it happens and calling 9-1-1.



Check out the HDSP [Stroke Signs & Symptoms](#) toolkit for a full listing of provider and patient resources.

What's about Heart Attacks...



Risk of STEMI death higher for inpatient

New research published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* has made a shocking revelation – patients who suffer an ST elevated myocardial infarction (STEMI) while in the hospital for another condition are 10 times more likely to die than someone who suffers a STEMI outside the hospital. Even when adjusted for the increased age and illness of the inpatient groups, the risk of death from STEMI while inpatient is still significant. Researchers acknowledge the lack of typical chest pain symptoms for non-cardiac inpatients and increased associated time for detection as possible influences. [Read more here.](#)



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The latest on the **ABCS** . . .

Aspirin Use

Patients self-prescribing aspirin for prevention

According to a recent patient survey, 40% of primary care patients actively take aspirin to protect against cardiovascular disease, including a majority using aspirin for the prevention of a first time event. More interesting, more than a quarter of those primary-prevention users reported that they made the decision to begin aspirin therapy rather than by prompting from their physician.

Aspirin may help prevent skin cancer

Study finding published by the American Cancer Society has indicated that the anti-inflammatory effects of aspirin may play a beneficial role for women in the prevention of melanoma. The study reports that women who took daily low-dose aspirin had a reduced risk of developing melanoma with risk lowering the longer they take it. The results are provoking more research to determine the primary prevention potential.

Blood Pressure Control and Management

Egg whites may help lower BP

“There may another reason to call it the incredible edible egg”, according to researchers. A new study has linked the protein found in egg whites to a reduction in blood pressure. The research suggests that the protein peptide in question may lower blood pressure significantly, comparable to medication.

Self-reported hypertension on the rise

Figures reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) highlight an increase in the prevalence of self-reported high blood pressure among Americans surveyed. According to the data nearly 30% of lowans reported themselves as having hypertension. The survey also shows an increase in the number of people reporting that they take anti-hypertensives. Sixty-six percent of lowans report taking blood pressure medication, above the national median of 62%.

Cholesterol Control and Management

Grocery store pharmacies to provide free statins

A grocery store chain on the East coast, Wegmans, released plans to provide prescriptions of atorvastatin, the generic form of Lipitor, for free until the end of the year. The chain is the most recent add to a list of pharmacies that have begun providing generic versions of certain medications, including antibiotics and diabetes medications, at no cost. The promotion aims to bring in new customers to the pharmacies.

Smoking Cessation

Benefits of cessation outweigh risks for weight gain

Research from the National Institute of Medicine has confirmed any potential cardiovascular risk from possible weight gained following smoking cessation is heavily outweighed by the cardiovascular benefits of not smoking. Smokers who quite can lower their risk for cardiovascular disease by fifty percent, according to the study. This reduction did not change when accounting for post-cessation weight gain.



Teen girls at higher risk from secondhand smoke

Teenage girls who have grown up in homes exposed to secondhand smoke have been shown to have lower levels of good cholesterol. Secondhand smoke exposure did not show the same effect in teenage boys, leading speculation that secondhand smoke make be more harmful to girls.

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Sodium Reduction . . .



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has unveiled a new toolkit targeted at sodium reduction, the **Sodium Reduction Toolkit: A Global Opportunity to Reduce Population-Level Sodium Intake**. The toolkit was designed to provide an overview of sodium reduction, information for the planning and implementation of sodium reduction programs, and available tools to help in the process.



The toolkit is set up as set of modules. The presentations can be viewed in a video format or printed out with each slides and the corresponding video narrative. There are eight modules, each about 30 minutes long and covering a different topic, such as **“Global Impact of Sodium on Health”** and **“The Food Supply”**. Modules can be taken independently for greatest flexibility. Each module includes a list of the top 10 suggested resources for each topic. **Check out the more of the modules here.**

Women’s Health Week is May 12-18th!

Women’s health is about more than just the health of an individual woman. Women’s health is indicative of our health as families, communities, and as a nation. **National Women’s Health Week** is an annual observation week, bringing together communities, health systems, businesses, government, families, and individual in promoting women’s health and empowering women to take charge of their health.



Celebrate the women in your life by encouraging them to take these five steps towards better health:

- Visit their healthcare provider for regular checkups and screenings
- Get active
- Eat healthy
- Pay attention to mental health, including managing stress and getting enough sleep
- Avoid unhealthy behaviors like smoking and texting while driving



High Blood Pressure Education Month!!

May is the perfect time to educate your patients, family, friends, your peers, and even remind yourself about the risks of high blood pressure and the hazards of uncontrolled blood pressure. Hypertension contributes to nearly 1,000 deaths per day . Nearly 67 million or 1 in 3 persons in the US has high blood pressure, with more than half with uncontrolled high blood pressure. Make hypertension control a priority and speak out about high blood pressure!

Check out the new CDC **High Blood Pressure Infograph!**

◀ **MAKE CONTROL YOUR GOAL, EVERY DAY** ▶

See the education resources from **Million Hearts®!**

Nutrition Facts
Read nutrition labels and lower your sodium intake
▶ Most of the sodium we eat comes from processed and restaurant foods
▶ About 90% of Americans eat too much sodium

 Quit smoking—or don’t start
1-800-QUIT-NOW or **Smokefree.gov**

 Check your blood pressure regularly—at home, at a doctor’s office, or at a pharmacy

Eat a healthy diet with
▶ More fruits, vegetables, potassium, and whole grains
▶ Less sodium, saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol

Get active and maintain a healthy weight
Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate physical activity every week

Adults should limit alcohol to no more than:
 1 drink per day for women
 2 drinks per day for men

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