



## What I Should Know About Heart Health!



### What is heart health?

- » The heart pumps blood out to the body through tubes called arteries. Blood is needed to get oxygen and nutrients to organs, fight infections, filter out waste products, and help keep the body at a steady temperature. Adults have between 9-12 pints of blood!
- » When the blood is pumped too hard, it is called **high blood pressure**.
- » When the arteries become clogged, it is called **high cholesterol**.
- » High blood pressure and high cholesterol can lead to problems like kidney disease, stroke, and heart attack.

### Who gets high blood pressure and high cholesterol?

- » Many things can cause both of these conditions, such as being overweight, having diabetes, not exercising, smoking and drinking alcohol. Having family members with these conditions can also mean you might get them too.
- » A high salt diet can cause high blood pressure, while a high fat diet can cause both high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
- » Having high cholesterol can lead to high blood pressure.
- » 1 in 5 women and 1 in 4 men in the U.S. have high blood pressure.
- » 1 in 8 Americans have high cholesterol.

### How do I know if I have high blood pressure and/or high cholesterol?

- » Blood pressure can be measured with a cuff that goes around the arm and is inflated like a balloon. Normal blood pressure is below 120/80, and from 121-130/80 is elevated blood pressure. 131-140/81-90 is stage 1 high blood pressure, and over 140/90 is stage 2 high blood pressure.
- » High cholesterol is measured in a blood test.
- » If you have any of the conditions listed above that could lead to high blood pressure, you should see your doctor as blood pressure is usually checked at every visit.
- » If you have any of the conditions listed above that could lead to high cholesterol, you should talk to your doctor about getting a blood test.

#### Remember

With the right diet and exercise, you can help prevent high blood pressure and high cholesterol and have a healthy heart!



# Education for Lifelong Health



## What are some problems with high pressure and/or high cholesterol?

- » You may feel nothing, but some people may have headaches, tiredness, and eye problems.
- » If the arteries become too clogged, high pressure and high cholesterol can lead to heart attacks strokes. These are very serious and can even cause death.
- » Some other complications are recurrent chest pain, kidney problems, and vision loss.

## How do I prevent and treat high blood pressure and/or high cholesterol?

- » Eating a low salt and low fat diet, as well as being active and getting enough exercise can help prevent and also control high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
- » There are many medications that treat high blood pressure and high cholesterol. There are many side effects of each one that your doctor will consider when choosing which one (or ones). Make sure to pay attention to how your doctor says to take them, because there might be a time of day or food you need to eat when you take them.

## Remember STOPS CHAOS:

**S Stress:** stress increases blood pressure, and being stress all the time can keep the blood pressure too high.



**T Temperance:** don't drink too much alcohol, as constantly drinking large amounts can increase blood pressure and cholesterol.



**O Oral hygiene:** clean teeth means a clean heart- not taking good care of your teeth can lead to heart disease.



**P Potassium:** the heart needs potassium to work well!



**S Sodium:** sodium or salt increases blood pressure, so a high sodium diet can keep the blood pressure too high.



**C Cholesterol:** make sure to not eat too much fatty food such as fried foods, as this is where a lot of cholesterol comes from.



**H Hypertension:** this is the medical word for high blood pressure- make sure to keep checking yours!



**A Activity:** getting in your steps and exercising helps keep the heart healthy and your blood pressure regulated.



**O Obesity:** being overweight makes the heart work harder making the blood pressure go up, and is also associated with high cholesterol.



**S Smoking:** smoking cigarettes leads to all sorts of serious issues, which include high blood pressure and high cholesterol.



**Always remember to ask your doctor if you have any questions!**

Farrell, A., & Perkins, E. A. (2020). *What I should know about heart health*, Education for Lifelong Health Series, Florida Center for Inclusive Communities.

Development of this material was supported by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (#90-DD-0668).

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