



State of Nevada

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Peak Performance

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In this issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| Breaking Bad Eating Habits | 1 |
| It's Never Too Late | 1 |
| 3 Heart Healthy Reasons for adults to stay Hydrated | 2 |
| Your Heart will thank you | 2 |
| HDL Cholesterol: The Good | |
| Cholesterol | 3 |
| Peak Performers | 4 |
| Spring Challenge Results | 4 |

Breaking Bad Eating Habits

Breaking bad eating habits and starting good ones is one of the healthiest steps you can take. But making healthy choices second nature can take time. After all, it's hard to change a lifetime of bad habits overnight. In fact, research published in the European Journal of Psychology shows it can take anywhere from a couple of weeks to many months for a new habit to feel automatic.

So how do you stay on track until your new healthy-eating plan takes hold?

First, start small, setting too many goals or too many unrealistic ones can sabotage you right from the start. Next, set yourself up for success. To break a 3 p.m. candy bar habit, have alternatives ready to grab, like cut-up veggies, low-fat yogurt, and berries. If you work outside the home, bring some healthy, tasty snacks to work with you each day to curb mid-morning and mid-afternoon hunger. Don't leave yourself at the mercy of a vending machine.

Think about why you're snacking. Are you really hungry? Or are you just bored or maybe a little stressed out? Skip the extra calories and take a brisk 5-minute walk instead. And find a friend or co-worker who wants to make healthy changes, too. The buddy system will keep you both on track.

And if you slip up, don't give up. According to the European Journal of Psychology study, little bumps in the road aren't likely to derail the process of creating new habits. So, forgive yourself and get back to your healthy ways as soon as you can. With a little perseverance, those bad habits will soon be gone for good.

It's Never Too Late

A **healthy** lifestyle, especially when started at a young age, goes a long way to preventing cardiovascular disease. Lifestyle changes and medications can nip **heart**-harming trends, like high blood pressure or high cholesterol, in the bud before they cause damage.

[Heart Health - Harvard Health](#)

3 Heart-Healthy Reasons for Adults to Stay Hydrated

Cardiovascular diseases, including stroke, heart attack and high blood pressure, are the deadliest diseases in the world. In the U.S., heart disease is the No. 1 killer of men and women, accounting for 375,000 deaths in 2011 alone. Heart disease claims a life in America every 40 seconds.

According to the American Heart Association, 80 percent of cases are attributed to preventable factors. Lifestyle changes – like quitting smoking, exercising regularly and eating healthy – can all decrease the risk for cardiovascular disease and they are important for prevention. But here’s one strategy that might surprise you:

Hydration. Seriously. Chronic dehydration is *not* good for your heart.

1. Dehydration Makes the Heart Work Harder

Dehydration causes a drop in blood volume and it causes blood – which is primarily water – to thicken. Consequently, as volume drops, so does our blood pressure, which is the reason we get lightheaded and dizzy when we’re dehydrated. To compensate, the body constricts blood vessels and increases the heart rate to maintain blood pressure.

Put simply, dehydration forces the *heart to pump thicker blood through constricted blood vessels*, and heart rate climbs as a result.

2. Proper Hydration May Lower Heart Attack Risk

A 2002 study explored the link between hydration and the risk for fatal coronary heart disease (CHD) in adults. The results were significant, with the study showing that drinking 5 or more glasses of water per day was associated with lower rates of CHD.

In fact, the study found that staying properly hydrated reduced *the risk of CHD by 46 percent in men and 59 percent in women.*

3. Dehydration Is a Likely Risk Factor for Stroke

Strokes are caused when blood can’t flow freely to the brain, and they are extremely dangerous. In the U.S., stroke is the leading cause of disability in adults and the No. 5 cause of death. A 2009 study showed that the majority of elderly stroke patients admitted to one hospital had high plasma osmolality, which is a sign of low blood volume and dehydration. Plus, another study, conducted by the American Heart Association, concluded that “dehydration appears to be common in hospitalized stroke patients and is associated with severe stroke and poor outcomes.”

DripDrop.com 2-5-15

Your heart will thank you

Five of the modifiable risk factors for cardiovascular disease – inactivity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, excess body fat, and diabetes – respond in varying degrees to strength training, says Elissa Huber-Anderson, a physical therapist at Massachusetts General Hospital. “Strength exercises increase muscle mass and burn body fat, thus reducing the risk for obesity. This type of workout also helps manage type 2 diabetes by decreasing abdominal fat and improving blood sugar control.” Strength training may also improve blood cholesterol levels and reduce resting blood pressure, which further lowers the risk for your heart.

HDL Cholesterol: The Good Cholesterol

Good cholesterol, bad cholesterol: what's the difference? Is there a "naughty and nice" list for cholesterol?

HDL cholesterol is the well-behaved "good cholesterol." This friendly scavenger cruises the blood stream. As it does, it removes harmful bad cholesterol from where it doesn't belong. High HDL levels reduce the risk for heart disease – but low levels increase the risk.

What Makes HDL Cholesterol so Good?

HDL is short for high-density lipoprotein. Each bit of HDL cholesterol is a microscopic blob that consists of a rim of lipoprotein surrounding a cholesterol center. The HDL cholesterol particle is dense compared to other types of cholesterol particles, so it's called high-density.

Cholesterol isn't all bad. In fact, cholesterol is an essential fat. It provides stability in every cell of your body. To travel through the bloodstream, cholesterol has to be transported by helper molecules called lipoproteins. Each lipoprotein has its own preferences for cholesterol, and each acts differently with the cholesterol it carries.

Experts believe HDL cholesterol may act in a variety of helpful ways that tend to reduce the risk for heart disease:

- HDL cholesterol scavenges and removes LDL – or "bad" – cholesterol.
- HDL reduces, reuses, and recycles LDL cholesterol by transporting it to the liver where it can be reprocessed.

HDL cholesterol acts as a maintenance crew for the inner walls (endothelium) of blood vessels. Damage to the inner walls is the first step in the process of atherosclerosis, which causes heart attacks and strokes. HDL scrubs the wall clean and keeps it healthy.

What Are Good Levels for the HDL Cholesterol?

A cholesterol test or lipid panel tells the level of HDL cholesterol. What do the numbers mean?

- HDL Cholesterol levels greater than 60 milligrams are high. That's good.
- HDL Cholesterol levels less than 40 milligrams for men, 50 milligrams for women are low. That's not so good.

In general, people with high HDL are at a lower risk for heart disease. People with low HDL are at a higher risk.

What Can I Do if my HDL Cholesterol Level Is Low?

If your HDL is low, you can take several steps to boost your HDL level. Exercising, quitting smoking and keeping a healthy weight can help raise your HDL level. In certain cases, your doctor may recommend medication to improve your cholesterol level.

Because many factors contribute to heart disease, cholesterol isn't everything. People with normal HDL cholesterol can have heart disease. And people with low HDL levels can have healthy hearts. Overall, though, people who have low HDL cholesterol will have a greater risk of developing heart disease than people with high HDL levels.

Congratulations Peak Performers

Officers who Achieved 16 METS or Better

February 15 to April 15, 2017

| Last Name: | First Name: | Agency: | METS | Last Name: | First Name: | Agency: | METS |
|------------|-------------|----------------|------|------------|-------------|----------|------|
| Angres | Julian | Forestry | 16.9 | Comba | Michael | NHP | 19.2 |
| Forcht | Cameron | Forestry | 17.0 | Davidson | Michael | NHP | 20.0 |
| Hughes | Jason | Forestry | 16.1 | Edgell | Michael | NHP | 16.9 |
| Lucey | Michael | Forestry | 16.9 | Marin | Cruz | NHP | 21.0 |
| Mena | Chad | Forestry | 17.4 | Peoples | Johnny | NHP | 17.0 |
| Merlino | Dominic | Forestry | 16.9 | Sneed | Robert | NHP | 17.0 |
| Reynolds | Aaron | Forestry | 16.9 | Stuehling | Kelly | NHP | 17.0 |
| Wadsworth | Glen | Forestry | 21.0 | Young | Marshall | NHP | 19.2 |
| Cessford | John | Investigations | 17.0 | Vela | Laurie | P&P | 16.1 |
| Prestipino | Gregory | Investigations | 17.4 | Lusetti | Randy | Wildlife | 16.9 |

Spring Challenge Results

Congratulations to the winners of the 2017 Step Challenge. All three winners were from a different agency.

- 1st Place went to Terra Kolpak from DPS, Parole and Probation, Las Vegas.
- 2nd Place went to Chase Waldon from the Nevada Highway Patrol, Research and Planning, Carson City.
- 3rd Place went to Melissa Travis from the Department of Corrections, Ely State Prison.

A big thank you to Laura Streeper, our Health and Wellness Coordinator for organizing our Challenges.

A second Challenge will be announced later this year. We would like to see more participation and will try to come up with something that everyone can compete in for a chance to win prizes.

We will continue to keep you informed on topics ranging from the Heart-Lung Program, to diet, exercise and nutritional advice. We are always looking for contributors to relate personal accomplishments and success stories. We encourage you to drop Risk Management a note at 201 S. Roop St, Ste. 201, Carson City, NV 89701, or call Marlene Foley at (775) 687-3194 or e-mail her at mfoley@admin.nv.gov. You can also contact the State Health and Wellness Coordinator, Laura Streeper, at (775) 323-1656 extension 23, or email Laura.Streeper@WillisTowersWatson.com for a free individualized consultation in regard to addressing your risk factor(s) or request information on wellness and a heart-healthy lifestyle.