



Peak Performance

Occupational Health Contract Approved

The new Occupational Health contract with Pershing General Hospital, in Lovelock, Nevada, was approved. The contract is effective April 1, 2024, through March 31, 29. It is an interlocal contract meaning all agencies and municipalities may use the contract and obtain the State negotiated pricing.

Pershing General Hospital has been contracted with the State since 2020 performing Heart and Lung physicals. The primary user of the contract has been Department of Corrections' Lovelock Facility, but they are available for all State Agencies for Occupational Health Services. If you have questions regarding the contract please contact Marlene Foley, Health Program Specialist 1, at Risk Management, 775-657-1757 or email her at Mfoley@admin.nv.gov.



THAT'S A WRAP!

The Beach Ready Weight Loss Challenge wrapped up on April 12th. Congratulations to the participants of the Challenge! Combined they lost a total of about 5% body weight per participant and a combined total of 22.25 inches from around their waist. Super impressive job!

Also a special shout out to the two Challenge Winners who took home a \$70 cash prize each for losing the highest percentage of weight and the most inches around their waist by the end of the Challenge!

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Warning Signs of a Silent Heart Attack

Symptoms can be subtle, but that doesn't mean they're any less dangerous. Despite its depiction in the movies, a heart attack doesn't always produce pain or pressure so intense it causes a person to clutch their chest and collapse to the floor. Most people who have a heart attack experience a much less dramatic version. And some have no symptoms at all — or symptoms that are so subtle they're mistaken for something else entirely.

These so-called silent heart attacks account for about 20 percent of all heart attacks, according to 2022 statistics from the American Heart Association. Some experts estimate that percentage is even higher — closer to 50 %

What is a silent heart attack?

A heart attack happens when the arteries that carry blood to the heart become blocked, thereby depriving the heart muscle of oxygen and nutrients. If a person having a heart attack feels pain or pressure, it's because of this blockage, says Eduardo Marban, M.D., executive director of the Smidt Heart Institute at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.

The same thing happens during a silent heart attack — blocked arteries make it so that oxygen-rich blood can't reach the heart. The only difference is the problem goes unnoticed. "It's not necessarily that there were no symptoms; it may just be that the patient didn't recognize them as heart symptoms and wasn't concerned," Marban says.

For example, it's not uncommon for silent heart attacks to be written off as indigestion, a sprained or strained muscle, fatigue or "just feeling run-down," Marban says.

People who later realize they've had a silent heart attack may also recall experiencing shortness of breath at the time, or a general state of discomfort that led to a night of lost sleep, says Robert Lager, M.D., an interventional cardiologist at MedStar Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C. Nausea, sweating, dizziness and an overall feeling of unease are also signs of a silent heart attack.

If you experience any of these symptoms, "don't sit around and wonder" what could be wrong. "Time is muscle," Lager says, referring to the damage that decreased blood flow can inflict on the heart. "The longer one waits to get evaluated, the more likely that there will be irreversible damage."

That said, some people truly experience no symptoms — understated or otherwise — when they have a heart attack. Diabetics who have nerve issues that interfere with pain signals (called neuropathy), for example, are at higher risk for having a literal silent heart attack, Lager says. Women and older adults are also more likely to have an event without warning signs.

Is it a heart attack... or something else?

Silent heart attacks don't just fool patients; they can be misdiagnosed in health care settings too. Shortness of breath may be mistaken for a pulmonary problem, for instance. And pain in the shoulder or arm can be misdiagnosed as an orthopedic issue. "So, there are lots of different forms of symptoms that are referred pain from the heart that can be very confusing and sometimes can be misleading," Lager says.

One way to tell if the symptoms you're experiencing are due to a heart attack or another condition is to know that the warning signs of heart trouble are "not positional," Lager says. This means that the sprain-like pain in your neck and arm won't get better if you stretch it or shake it out. And shortness of breath or sweating won't subside if you take it easy and lie down.

That's a really good rule of thumb," Lager says. "If you're not sure if you're having a symptom, see if you can manipulate it in some way. Can you press on the chest? Can you change your position? Can you stand up or sit down? Does it make a difference, positionally? Because the heart has no gyroscope; it doesn't know where it is in space. And it doesn't matter if you put the heart upside down or right side up, it's going to give you the same signals if it's in trouble."

“Another thing to keep in mind: Any symptom that results from the loss of oxygen to the heart will generally get worse if you increase demand on the heart. “So if someone has chest discomfort at rest and gets up and walks around, you're increasing the heart's demand for oxygen, so the symptoms usually will get worse if it's a heart issue,” Lager says.

The risks factors for silent heart attacks are the same as those for a heart attack with symptoms. The most common include:

Age (for men, 45 and older; for women, 55 and older)

Diabetes

Excess weight

High blood pressure

High cholesterol

Lack of exercise

Prior heart attack

Tobacco use

A family history of heart disease

The dangers of having a heart attack and not knowing

Many people who have had a silent heart attack find out about it after the fact — sometimes months or years later — usually during a routine electrocardiogram, or EKG. Symptoms that arise afterward can also bring patients in to see a health care provider. Lager says people who have suffered a silent heart attack may notice a faster heart rate or increased exercise intolerance, for example.

Usually when someone finds out they’ve had a silent heart attack, the damage has already been done. But identifying a past heart attack can help you and your doctor mitigate risks for future cardiac events. After all, a silent heart attack is associated with an increased risk of heart failure, [a 2018 study](#) in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* found. It just needs to be on the name of the journal. It also increases the likelihood of sudden death, stroke and having another heart attack.

Dangerous heart arrhythmias are another concern your doctor may monitor if you had an undetected heart attack in the past. These can develop when parts of the heart muscle are scarred from the loss of blood. And another worry: Because “our blood gets thicker under stress,” Lager says, blood clots are also more likely to crop up after you've had a heart attack.

"Once the diagnosis is made, either of a recognized heart attack or a silent heart attack, everything is put into a higher risk category in terms of the complications that can ensue,” Marban says. “So, it's not something that we should just consider curiosity and do nothing about. ... Detecting a heart attack and acknowledging it is the first step towards putting the patient back on the kind of effective therapy that we know is helpful.”

American Heart Assoc.

Congratulations PEAK PERFORMERS 1st Quarter 2024

PAUL GRAF	FORESTRY	16.7
DYLLON CLUFF	FORESTRY	16.1
COLTER EARL	DPS INVESTIGATIONS	16.1
CRUZ MARIN	DPS HIGHWAY PATROL	16.9
CONNOR FRIEL	WILDLIFE	17.1
DOUGLAS MCCLARTY	PAROLE & PROBATION	16.4
JEREMY GEOFFROY	PAROLE & PROBATION	16.7
MAYFIELD DUNCAN	CORRECTIONS LCC	16.1

Keeping a Healthy Body Weight

Maintaining your ideal body weight is tough, no matter where you are in your weight loss journey. Extra pounds can mean a higher risk for many serious health problems, including heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes. If you're overweight, losing even a few pounds can improve your health, so every step in the right direction counts!

When your weight is in a healthy range:

- Your body more efficiently circulates blood.
- Your fluid levels are more easily managed.
- You are less likely to develop diabetes, heart disease, certain cancers, gallstones, osteoarthritis, breathing problems and sleep apnea.
- You may feel better about yourself and have more energy to make other positive health changes.

Losing weight isn't easy, but there's no doubt it's worth it. It sounds simple enough: To lose weight, you need to burn more calories than you eat. And to stay at a healthy weight, you need to balance healthy eating and physical activity. Most fad diets and quick weight loss schemes don't work, because they don't help you learn how to maintain a healthy weight over the long haul.

There's no "secret" to success, but there are a few basic [steps to losing weight you can take](#).

Keeping the weight off

OK, you've lost some weight. Now you can relax, right? Not so fast! Maintaining weight loss can take just as much effort as losing it. Here are some tips:

- Know your triggers, roadblocks and favorite excuses. We all have them!
- Don't kid yourself. This is a long-term effort. The first year or two after significant weight loss may be the hardest. If you can stick it out, you're more likely to make it in the long run.
- Learn from others who've succeeded and follow their example.
- Make sure you have a social support network of friends, family and health professionals who will support your new healthy habits.
- Find healthy ways to motivate yourself to stick with it.
- At the end of the day, it's up to you. Hold yourself accountable for the decisions you make. And remember, you can't do it by dieting alone. For people trying to keep weight off, exercise is even more essential. The American Heart Association recommends 150 to 300 minutes of physical activity a week to keep those extra pounds from creeping back.

American Heart Assoc.

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) 687-1757 or email her at mfoley@admin.nv.gov. You can also contact the State Health and Wellness Coordinator, Laura Streep-er, at (775) 291-7881 or email Laura.Streep-er@WTWco.com for a consultation in regard to addressing your risk factor(s) or request information on wellness and a heart-healthy lifestyle.