

CAREZone



SEPT/OCT 2024

National Cholesterol Education Month

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance found in your blood, essential for building cells, hormones, and vitamins. There are two types of cholesterol:

HDL (High-Density Lipoprotein): Known as a “good” cholesterol, it helps remove other forms of cholesterol from your bloodstream.

LDL (Low-Density Lipoprotein): Known as “bad” cholesterol, high levels can lead to the buildup of cholesterol in your arteries.

Risks and Causes of High Cholesterol:

High LDL cholesterol can lead to atherosclerosis, where plaques form in your arteries, restricting blood flow and increasing the risk of heart attack and stroke. Individuals with high cholesterol are twice as likely to develop heart disease.

Unhealthy lifestyle choices, poor diet, lack of exercise, smoking, and excessive alcohol consumption, are primary contributors to high cholesterol. Genetics, age, and certain medical conditions like diabetes and obesity can also play a role.

Simple Steps to Lower Cholesterol:

Get Moving: Aim for at least 30 minutes of activity most days – walking, biking, gardening, even dancing.

Eat Smart: Focus on fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Limit foods in saturated fats.

Manage Weight: If you're overweight, losing even a few pounds can help lower your cholesterol.

For some, lifestyle changes alone may not be enough. If your cholesterol remains high, your healthcare provider might recommend medication to help manage your levels.

Known Breast Cancer Risk Factors

Everyone wants to know what they can do to lower their breast cancer risk. Although doctors don't know what causes breast cancer, they do know there are factors linked to a higher-than-average risk of developing the disease...being a woman, your age, and your genetics, for example — can't be changed. Other factors — lack of exercise, smoking cigarettes, and eating certain foods — can be altered by making lifestyle choices.

Some of the known risk factors for breast cancer are listed below.

Age: Your risk of breast cancer goes up as you get older. About two out of three invasive breast cancers are found in women 55 or older.

Family History: Women with close relatives who have been diagnosed with breast cancer have a higher risk of developing the disease.

Genetics: About 5% to 10% of breast cancers are thought to be hereditary.

Race/Ethnicity: White women are slightly more likely to develop breast cancer than Black, Hispanic, and Asian women. However, Black women are more likely to develop more aggressive, advanced-stage breast cancer at a young age.

Being Overweight: Overweight and obese women have a higher risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer.

Drinking Alcohol: Research shows that drinking alcoholic beverages of any kind increases a woman's risk of hormone receptor-positive breast cancer.

Dense Breasts: Women with dense breasts have a higher risk of developing breast cancer.

Lack of Exercise: Research shows a link between exercising regularly at a moderate or intense level for four to seven hours per week and a lower risk of breast cancer.

Smoking: Smoking is linked to a higher risk of breast cancer in younger, premenopausal women.

This is not a complete list of factors, and there are new factors emerging daily. Go to www.Breastcancer.org to find a more complete list of known and emerging breast cancer risks. Empower yourself and make sure your breast cancer risk is as low as possible.

Previous issues of our newsletters can be viewed under

“Resources” > Newsletters at: www.MC-Rx.com



MAINTAINING YOUR BRAIN HEALTH

7 Ways to Help Maintain Your Brain Health

Studies show that health behaviors, which can prevent some kinds of cancer, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease may also reduce your risk for cognitive decline. Although age, genetics, and family history can't be changed, addressing risk factors may prevent or delay up to 40% of dementia cases.

1. **Quit smoking.** Quitting smoking now may help maintain brain health and can reduce your risk of heart disease, cancer, lung disease, and other smoke-related illnesses. Free quit line: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).
2. **Maintain a healthy blood pressure level.** Tens of millions of American adults have high blood pressure, and many do not have it under control. Learn the facts.
3. **Be physically active.** CDC studies show physical activity can improve thinking, reduce risk of depression and anxiety, and help you sleep better.
4. **Maintain a healthy weight.** Healthy weight isn't about short-term dietary changes. Instead, it's about a lifestyle that includes healthy eating and regular physical activity.
5. **Get enough sleep.** A third of American adults report that they usually get less sleep than the recommended amount. How much sleep do you need? It depends on your age.
6. **Stay engaged.** There are many ways for older adults to get involved in their community...it's good for your health!
7. **Manage blood sugar.** Learn how to manage your blood sugar, especially if you have diabetes.

-- CDC: *Maintaining Your Brain Health*

Building Up Your Knowledge (Part 4) – Alzheimer's (5-Part Series)

Testing for Amyloid Proteins and Amyloid Brain Plaque

To check for the buildup of amyloid proteins, healthcare providers use one or more of the following tests. The results of these tests can help you and your healthcare provider determine your path forward.

A specialist, such as a neurologist, will determine which tests are right for you and discuss any possible side effects.

Tests your healthcare provider may use:

1. **Amyloid positron emission tomography (PET) scan.** An amyloid PET scan gives your healthcare provider pictures of the brain so they can see the amount of plaque buildup.
2. **Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) test.** A CSF test allows your healthcare provider to take a sample of the fluid that surrounds the brain and spinal cord to check the level of amyloid proteins.
3. **Blood-based biomarker (BBBM) test.** A BBBM test gives your healthcare provider a way to measure the level of amyloid proteins in the bloodstream. This can mean that there are also amyloid proteins in the brain.

BBMs are currently being studied as a newer alternative test to look for amyloid proteins.

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