

long term care connection

Volume 4, Issue 1
Spring 2007

things to know

Everyday health

Health is an everyday thing. So here are some day-to-day ways to stay well:

- Stay at a healthy weight. This can help protect you from diabetes, heart disease and stroke.
- Try for 30 minutes of exercise on most days. Walking, swimming or jogging are good choices. Chores such as vacuuming and cutting the grass count too.
- Cut back on red meat, cheese and whole-milk items. Eat more fruits, vegetables and whole-grain items.
- Wear a seat belt in the car, a helmet when you ride a bike and sunscreen when outdoors.
- Cope with stress by relaxing with a hobby, talking with friends or taking a break.
- Don't smoke. See your doctor if you need help quitting.
- Visit your doctor regularly.

Sources: American Medical Association; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Take a walk to lift your mood

It's not unusual to feel anxious or depressed. But don't take it lying down. Getting some exercise can improve your mood.

Make the commitment

Exercise doesn't have to be intense to be helpful. Walking or gardening can be a good start.

The important thing is to keep it up. Try these tips to make exercise work for you:

- Check with your doctor first.
- Begin slowly. Even a 10-minute walk can help.
- Work out with a friend.
- Make exercise a regular part of your life. Schedule it just as you would an appointment.
- Choose activities you enjoy.



Body and mind

Expect to have more energy when you get active. Your self-esteem may also go up.

Physical activity may even help you learn and remember. And exercise helps control weight and reduces the risk for many diseases.

Try to be active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.

Source: American Psychological Association

Give yourself the best present ever—
peace of mind.

Get a mammogram and well-woman exam every year.

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PHOENIX AZ
PERMIT NO 173

Southwest Catholic Health Network
2800 N. Central, Suite 400
Phoenix, AZ 85004-1036

Living with heart failure

Heart failure may sound scary. But it doesn't mean that your heart will stop working.

With heart failure, health conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes can cause the heart to grow weak. When the heart weakens, it has trouble working the way it should.

Heart failure is a serious condition, but it can be treated. If you have heart failure, it's important to follow your treatment plan. Not only will treatment help you feel better, but it can help keep heart failure from getting worse.

Caring for your heart

To treat heart failure, your doctor may suggest that you:

Cut back on salt. Too much salt can cause extra fluid to build up in your body. This can be hard on your heart.

Try these tips to eat less salt:

- Take the salt shaker off the table. Season with herbs and spices instead.
- Check food labels when shopping. Try to choose foods with less salt and sodium.

Get more exercise. You may need more or less exercise



depending on how serious your heart failure is. Your doctor can suggest safe activities for you.

Take medication. You may need to take certain medications to manage heart failure. Be sure to take your medicine just as your doctor tells you.

You may also need to:

- Lose weight if you are overweight.
- Quit smoking if you smoke.
- Avoid alcohol.

Finally, make sure to keep all your doctor's appointments. Part of managing heart failure means seeing your doctor often.

Source: American Heart Association

Are your symptoms getting worse?

To manage heart failure well, you'll need to keep track of your symptoms.

If you have any of the following signs, let your doctor know:

Increased swelling. Heart failure can cause some swelling in legs, ankles and feet. Watch for an increase in swelling or swelling in a new area of the body.

Sudden change in weight. In general, this means a weight gain of more than 5 pounds

in one week. Keeping a daily weight record can help you keep track.

Other signs to watch for:

- Shortness of breath that doesn't get better
- Feeling light-headed
- Chest pain or a heavy feeling in your chest
- Feeling that your heart is fluttering or racing
- Coughing or wheezing when you lie down or during sleep
- A general feeling of weakness

Source: American Heart Association