

NBSIA Member Services Safety Bulletin

February 2014

HEART HEALTH AWARENESS



February is the American Heart Month. Heart disease is the **number one cause of death** for both men and women in the US, with one in four deaths caused by heart disease. Heart disease includes heart attack, angina, heart failure and arrhythmias. The good news is that heart disease is both preventable and controllable. Below are some tips to help you take care of your heart, as it takes care of you.

- **Eat A Healthy Diet**

A healthy diet can help you avoid heart disease and its complications. Be sure to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables—adults should have at least five servings each day. Eating foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol and high in fiber can help prevent high cholesterol. Limiting salt or sodium in your diet also can lower your blood pressure. For more information visit ChooseMyPlate.gov.

- **Maintain A Healthy Weight**

Being overweight or obese can increase your risk for heart disease. To determine whether your weight is in a healthy range, doctors often calculate a number called the body mass index (BMI). If you know your weight and height, you can calculate your BMI at www.cdc.gov/healthy-weight/assessing/bmi.

- **Exercise Regularly**

Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower cholesterol and blood pressure. The Surgeon General recommends that adults should engage in moderate-intensity exercise for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.

- **Monitor Your Blood Pressure**

High blood pressure often has no symptoms, so be sure to have it checked on a regular basis.

You can check your blood pressure at home, at a pharmacy, or at a doctor's office.

- **Don't Smoke**

Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease. If you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, quit as soon as possible. Your doctor can suggest ways to help you quit.

- **Limit Alcohol Consumption**

Avoid drinking too much alcohol, which can increase your blood pressure. Men should stick to no more than two drinks per day, and women to no more than one.

- **Have Your Cholesterol Checked**

Your health care provider should test your cholesterol levels at least once every 5 years. Talk with your doctor about this simple blood test.

- **Manage Diabetes**

If you have diabetes, monitor your blood sugar levels closely, and talk with your doctor about treatment options.

EAP Newsletter

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a great resource to help you stay heart healthy. Contact MHN to take heart today!

<https://members.mhn.com> (access code: wise).

Source

<http://www.cdc.gov/features/heartmonth/>

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