

HealthWise

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> Women's health & heart disease

A HEART TO HEART WITH AMY WOOD, PA-C



Women are savvy shoppers and we know they drive the majority of health-care decisions made in the home. Why then are the majority

of women unaware of the facts on women and heart disease? Amy Wood, PA-C at the South Central Iowa Medical Clinic in Corydon, presented this topic to the Wayne County Hospital and Clinic System Auxiliary and it was eye-opening.

Every woman should know that heart disease is the leading cause of death among women. According to Martin Aronow, D.O., cardiologist at Wayne County Hospital from Iowa Heart Center Des Moines, "The facts show one in three women get heart disease; one in two get heart disease or stroke, and one in eight get breast cancer. In 2010 one in three women died from heart disease while one in 30 women died from breast cancer. Lack of awareness is a crucial factor."

Symptoms of heart disease in women are different than men, which can be misleading to women. Women are more likely to experience nausea/vomiting or flu-like symptoms, shortness of breath, anxiety, dizziness, unusual fatigue, sweating, a dull ache in the neck, jaw, shoulders, upper back or abdominal discomfort instead of the more severe crushing chest pain men experience.

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Walking your way to better knees

The upside of downtime: It's a real no-brainer

Tackling 3 tough parenting questions

Walking your way to better knees

When you're suffering from arthritis, the much-touted 10,000 steps a day can seem like an unattainable goal. While that number is ideal for maintaining good health, recent research has found that walking fewer steps daily can also yield benefits — namely in the form of improving knee arthritis and preventing disability.

Recently published in the journal *Arthritis Care & Research*, a study of almost 1,800 adults who either had knee arthritis or were at risk for it concluded that 6,000 steps daily — or about the equivalent of an hour's worth of walking — predicted who would go on to develop disabilities related to osteoarthritis, with those who took fewer than 6,000 daily steps (as measured on a pedometer) more likely to develop them.

Osteoarthritis is sometimes referred to as “wear-and-tear” arthritis and limits mobility for millions of Americans. Those who



suffer from it find they may have trouble completing the simplest of activities, such as walking, climbing stairs or getting up from a seated position. But, as researchers found out, every step counts, and walking can improve not only flexibility and muscle strength, but arthritis pain as well.

GET MOVING TO LESSEN PAIN

Being active may be the last thing you want to do if you suffer from knee or other joint pain. But experts say not moving only sets the stage for less joint stability and worsening pain. That's because movement such as walking builds muscle strength and boosts the production of synovial fluid, which keeps your joints lubricated and helps limit stiffness and pain. Being inactive also contributes to weight gain, which negatively impacts joints as well.

So, are you ready to get moving? If you're new to exercise and have knee arthritis, the study authors recommend trying 3,000 steps at first, then working your way up to at least 6,000. You should also consider talking with your health care provider, particularly if you have other health issues.

One of the best things about walking is that, unlike other activities, it requires little in the way of expensive equipment. Just lace up a pair of comfortable walking shoes, strap on a good pedometer and you're ready to go. (See “Walking the walk” for some tips on step-counting devices.)



Walking the walk > Tracking your steps with wearable fitness gadgets

Looking to keep things simple and don't want to break the bank? Pedometers are an economical way of keeping track of your walking goals. Just clip one onto your belt or tuck it in your pocket and you're off!

But if you're in the market for something that does a little more than counting your steps, activity monitors or trackers not only help keep track of those walking goals, but some also calculate how many calories you take in and how many you burn, measure your sleep quality and monitor your exercise progress. You can also purchase cellphone apps that perform similar functions.

The technology that's the best fit for you depends on several factors. Before you buy, consider how easy the device is to use, what added features you may be looking for, how accurate the device is (activity monitors tend to be more accurate than pedometers) and price.

The upside of downtime: It's a real no-brainer

On those days when you're running from one appointment to the next, do you ever feel an ache that suddenly saturates your forehead and pools in your temples, and then realize your day is a discombobulated blur? Perhaps you need a break today; a brain break, that is.

A study by the National Institute of Mental Health suggests people devoted to perpetual busyness don't necessarily live productive or particularly healthy lives. The good news is, you can change course by taking action and slowing down.

When you turn your brain to idle, it doesn't mean it's an indulgence, a vice or vacation — it means you're doing something good for yourself! If you're deprived of downtime, you may suffer from increased headaches or decreased levels of focus. Downtime is an opportunity for the brain to replenish attention, boost your productivity, solidify what you've learned recently or encourage innovation and creativity.

Here are five easy ways to practice the art of downtime and live your life more mindfully.

1 **Grab a blanket.** Napping during the day, even just 20 minutes, does wonders for your energy levels and memory. Whether you're on lunch break, home, or in your car safely parked, a few zzz's are worth catching whenever or wherever you can.

2 **Tame your brain.** Meditating daily or just two to three times per week can not only tame your brain but train your brain, too. Meditation is a self-directed practice for relaxing your body and calming the mind. The quiet time and contemplation can do wonders to escape a frenetic pace.

3 **Seek nature.** A visit to the park, local arboretum, trail or lake may leave you not only awe-inspired, but more importantly ahhhhh inspired. The sights, sounds and smells can positively impact both memory and disposition. Schedule the time to let nature nurture you.

4 **Get a move on.** Exercise and brainpower go hand in hand, the latest neuroscience research suggests. Daily exercise makes neurons, the nerve cells in your brain, more nimble. It enhances cognitive flexibility and helps you think more clearly.

5 **Unplug.** Recharging yourself is more important than charging your digital devices. Pledge to unplug and spend more time with people than screens. Schedule the time with your family and friends if you have to, and make it a digital-free zone for all. The more you do it, the less stressed and more focused you'll feel.



Brain Fact: Your brain is a glutton. Although it's about 2 percent of an adult's body weight, it consumes about 20 percent of the body's energy.



HealthExtra

{ WELLNESS NEWS FROM THE WORLD OVER }



NOTICE:
Smoke-free
Properties

> AVOCADO MELON BREAKFAST SMOOTHIE

Go green with this refreshing concoction of green fruits and veggies!

Number of servings: 2

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large, ripe avocado
- 1 cup honeydew melon chunks (about 1 slice)
- Juice from ½ lime (1½ teaspoons lime juice)
- 1 cup nonfat milk
- 1 cup nonfat plain yogurt
- ½ cup 100 percent apple juice or white grape juice
- 1 tablespoon honey

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut avocado in half, remove pit.
2. Scoop out flesh, place in blender.
3. Add remaining ingredients; blend well.
4. Serve cold. (Keeps well in refrigerator up to 24 hours.

If made ahead, stir gently before pouring into glasses.)

Per serving: 320 calories, 11 g total fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 170 mg sodium, 46 g carbohydrates, 5 g dietary fiber, 37 g total sugar, 4 g added sugars, 13 g protein, 80 percent vitamin C, 40 percent calcium, 4 percent iron. Percent daily values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Recipe courtesy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, recipefinder.nal.usda.gov.



> CLEARING THE AIR: WHAT IS THIRDHAND SMOKE?

If you've ever been around others who are smoking and later noticed the smell of smoke in your hair or on your clothes, you've experienced the effects of thirdhand smoke. That's the term used to describe the residue created when smoke

from tobacco products settles on indoor surfaces or clings to hair, skin, clothes, furniture, vehicles and more. Experts think that thirdhand smoke, which remains long after smoking stops and secondhand smoke has cleared, may react with common indoor pollutants to form a toxic mix that contains cancer-causing substances.

What's more, thirdhand smoke residue builds over time and is resistant to normal cleaning. Children and nonsmoking adults may be at risk for tobacco-related health problems when they inhale, ingest or touch substances containing thirdhand smoke.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

While researchers are still studying the health dangers of thirdhand smoke, you can protect yourself by creating a smoke-free environment in your home and vehicle, and avoiding tobacco smoke whenever possible.



3 TYPES OF SMOKE

- Firsthand smoke: The smoke a smoker inhales
- Secondhand smoke: The smoke given off by a lit tobacco product or exhaled by a smoker
- Thirdhand smoke: The residue created by secondhand smoke

> DON'T RUSH THROUGH MEALS

People laugh about how quickly dogs gulp down their dinner. But have you thought about how fast you eat? For many people, slowing down can serve up several benefits, from aiding digestion to increasing your enjoyment of a meal to helping you eat less. It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to register that your stomach is full, so eating at a leisurely pace can help you recognize these signals.

Try these ideas:

- Put your fork or spoon down between bites.
- Learn to use chopsticks.
- Chew your food thoroughly. It allows the saliva in your mouth to begin the digestive process.

> A HEALTHY HEART THROUGH EXERCISE

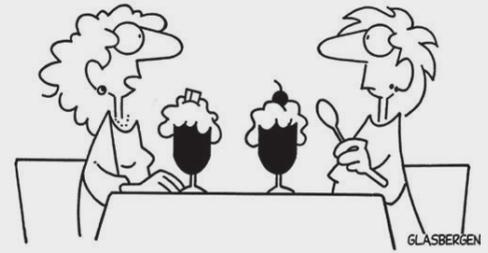
Exercise helps strengthen your heart and has other benefits as well. But if it's been a while since you've been active, here are a few tips for long-term success:

Set reasonable expectations. You may be excited to get in shape and improve your health, but a 5-mile jog is likely not a good way to get started. Start gradually, with perhaps a short walk around the neighborhood or in the mall (after you have consulted your doctor), and then slowly increase the distance or intensity.

Make it fun. If you find walking to be boring, then try an activity you enjoy, like swimming or dancing. You are much more likely to stick to an exercise plan when you enjoy what you are doing.

Track your success. Changes in health can be incremental. Keep a log of your activities so you can look back to see how far you've come. Noticeable progress can help motivate you to continue on a healthy path.

Consult your physician before you begin an exercise program to be sure it is safe. Remember, an active life can be good for your heart!



"If you put a crouton on your sundae instead of a cherry, it counts as a salad."

According to the American Heart Association, cardiovascular disease, which includes heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke, kills nearly 500,000 women in the U.S. each year. This exceeds the next seven causes of death combined. More women die from cardiovascular disease than of all cancers, respiratory conditions, Alzheimer's disease and accidents combined. Women dying from breast cancer total 40,000 annually.

Preventive measures for women are important and include lowering cholesterol, taking aspirin, making necessary lifestyle changes to diet and exercise, and reducing stress. In addition, knowing your family medical history plays an important part and if you smoke, you need to quit. "Medicine is constantly changing and how we treat heart disease has evolved in recent years. We look at cholesterol and other markers to determine treatment protocols. The important thing is that women pay attention to changes in how they feel and that they see their provider when they notice symptoms that are out of the ordinary," commented Amy Wood, PA-C.

> IS YOUR DEVICE DISRUPTING YOUR SLEEP?

It's your alarm clock and your bedtime book, but research shows sleep and technology aren't compatible bedfellows. Smartphones and tablets can interfere with sleep in several ways:

They distract you. From games and social media to news and books, today's devices make boredom a thing of the past. But before you know it, it's midnight and you still feel awake and alert.

They inhibit sleep. Artificial light in the evening can stimulate the brain, suppressing hormones that regulate sleep. What's more, using electronics right before bed also can make you more alert, shifting circadian rhythms and making it harder to fall asleep.

They wake you up. If you sleep with your phone next to you,

calls, text and email alerts may wake you from slumber.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

To improve sleep, resist the urge to work in bed and stop using electronics at least a half hour to an hour before you go to sleep. Turn your phone on silent or "do not disturb" and flip your phone over so the backlight won't interrupt your sleep.



> Schedule an appointment

To schedule an appointment with Amy Wood, PA-C at South Central Iowa Medical Clinic in Corydon, call **641-872-2063**.

Resources: American Heart Association, Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control, Mayo Clinic websites.

Carb confusion?

What you need to know about carbohydrates

Everyone knows someone (maybe it's you!) who's trying to limit carbs in their diet. But, not all carbohydrates are created equal. While limiting certain types of carbohydrates can be beneficial to your health, others are needed for the body to function well. Here are the basics of what carbohydrates are, and how they can be incorporated into a healthy diet.

WHAT IS A CARB?

A carbohydrate is a type of macronutrient found in many foods and drinks. They are used by the body to provide energy, protect against disease and control weight. Some carbohydrates occur naturally in plant-based foods. Others are added by manufacturers when processing foods. There are three main types of carbohydrates in food — fiber, sugars and starches.

FIBER



Fiber can only be found naturally in plant-based foods. It is not digestible and passes through the intestines without being absorbed by the body. Fiber is important for digestive health, keeping you regular, and it contributes to a feeling of fullness after eating. Most people don't get nearly enough fiber in their diet. It's recommended that you eat 25 to 30 grams of fiber daily.

✓ **Stick to:** Good sources of fiber include fruits and vegetables, beans and foods made from whole grains. ⚠ **Use caution:** Although there is no evidence that fiber supplements are harmful, they can cause abdominal bloating and gas and may decrease the absorption of certain medications. Supplements can be useful to contribute to your recommended daily fiber intake, but you should talk to your doctor before beginning use.

SUGARS



Sugar is often referred to as a simple carbohydrate. These carbohydrates are quickly processed by your body. There are two primary kinds of sugar: naturally occurring sugars such as those in fruit or milk, and added sugars which are not naturally occurring in food.

✓ **Stick to:** Naturally occurring sugars, such as those in fruit, are accompanied by other healthy nutrients including vitamins and minerals. Eaten in moderation, they are an excellent addition to your diet. ✗ **Avoid:** Look out for foods with added sugars, which are added to foods during preparation or processing. They are empty calories with no nutritional value.

STARCHES



Starches are also known as complex carbohydrates. They are made of many sugar units bonded together. Starches are found in foods including grains, like oats, rice and wheat; starchy vegetables, like peas and potatoes; and dried beans and lentils.

✓ **Stick to:** In order to get the most out of starchy grains, it's important to eat whole grains. Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel and include important vitamins and minerals. ✗ **Avoid:** Steer clear of refined flours, which are grains that have lost many of their important nutrients.



Tackling 3 tough parenting questions



There are certain conversations you dread, and talking to your children about divorce, death or addiction are certainly among them. But these are things that happen, and being forthright will help your child deal with these situations better in the long run.

Want to know more about how to broach these difficult subjects? Read on.

> HOW CAN I HELP MY KIDS COPE WITH DIVORCE?

How a child copes depends on his or her age, maturity level and personality, although you can address these basic points to help ease the pain and confusion:

- Validate any feelings they have about the divorce as normal.
- Reiterate that the divorce is not their fault and your love for your children will not change.
- Be a good listener. Be on the lookout for signs that your child is having a tough time coping and seek appropriate help.
- Prepare for questions like who they will live with, if they will still attend the same school and how holidays and special occasions will be handled.

> HOW CAN I TALK TO A YOUNG CHILD ABOUT DEATH?

When talking to a young child, keep your answers brief and as simple as possible so that he understands. In doing so, avoid phrases such as “went away” or “went to sleep;” otherwise, your child may feel like the same could easily happen to them if separated from you or when they go to bed.

Be honest in your explanation and don't tell him that you'll explain it one day because right now he's “too young.” All children have some understanding of death, although you may find yourself having to explain that grandma can't come back. You may also need to temper your explanations

with reassurance; for example, “Grandma died because she was very sick. But when you get sick, it's not serious and you get better.” Whatever you do, keep the lines of communication open to help your child sort through his emotions and grieve in his own way.

> HOW DO I TACKLE A DISCUSSION ABOUT ADDICTION?

Does the addicted person live in your home? Safety is the top priority, so try to remove children from the situation and teach them how to get help if trouble arises — whether it's calling the police or running to the neighbor's house.

When it comes to talking, discuss with your children that addiction is a disease, that the addicted person acts the way he or she does because of it and that there's nothing the children can do that will stop the behavior. Also, try to have

hopeful discussions, explaining that while addiction is powerful, it can be overcome or managed with the right treatment, and that hopefully the addicted person will get help (or if the person is receiving treatment, he or she will slowly get better).

> Look for signs of depression or anxiety in your child and seek help immediately if he or she seems withdrawn or talks of hurting himself or herself.

HealthWise is a community educational service provided by

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Caring for Generations



Caring for Life



Why therapy?

Rehabilitation therapies cover several areas and can include helping a child overcome disabilities so they can participate in school and other social situations; assist a person recover from injuries to regain function; or aid an older adult to stay as independent as possible. Wayne County Hospital and Clinic System provides exceptional care for anyone needing these services. Your provider will refer you to therapy when you need help to restore and retrain specific functions that may be impaired or temporarily lost due to injury or illness. Trained specialists provide instruction on exercise,



For Information on Cardiac Rehabilitation call **641-872-5348**. For more information on Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy call the Rehabilitation Services Department at **641-872-5278**.

education about health and lifestyle modification. Physical and occupational therapy treatments may include manual therapy, hot and cold treatments, electrical stimulation, ultrasound deep heating and hydrotherapy. The Wayne County Hospital Rehabilitation Services Department also provides treatment for pediatric, geriatric, orthopedic, sports and neurological cases. For individuals recovering from heart incidents, our Cardiac Rehabilitation Department offers the ideal program to help you increase your endurance, build back heart muscle strength and improve your mobility.