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**"Why do I have to take my socks and shoes off?  
I am here to have my heart checked."**

*Article by Chris Rose, RVT*

This is a question that is frequently encountered by our staff. The fact of the matter is your healthcare provider is able to gain very useful information regarding your cardiovascular health based on an evaluation of your feet and legs. During your office visit, your health care provider will feel for pulses, check to see if there is any swelling present, look for skin changes, and assess varicose veins. An abnormal exam may signify a potential health issue depending on the findings ranging from a heart problem, a circulation problem, a kidney problem, a liver problem or an infection. If necessary, your healthcare provider will order additional testing to further evaluate any findings. If you feel you may have an issue with your legs or feet that may be related to a cardiovascular problem, please mention this to your healthcare provider at your next appointment.

**Do you know the warning signs of a stroke? Remember the word "F-A-S-T" to identify the symptoms of a person who may be having a stroke:**

*Article by Chris Rose, RVT*

**F** - Facial drooping. A section of the face, usually only one side that is drooping or hard to move.

**A** - Arm weakness. The inability to raise one's arm fully.

**S** - Speech difficulties. An inability or difficulty to understand or produce speech.

**T** - Time. If any of the symptoms above are showing, time is of the essence; call 911 or go straight to the hospital.

## Newsletter Team

**President:** Mahmoud Ghusson, MD  
**Editor in Chief:** Diane Marolda  
**Marketing Editor:** Ahmed Ghusson  
**IT Editor:** Sharif Hatab

**Contributors:**  
Michelle Benn, Elaina Cifelli, Ruck Davids, Jennifer Dillon, Stacie Hodgson, Chris Rose, Amy Thompkins

## Coronary Calcium Score

*Article by Jen Dillon*

What is a Coronary Calcium Score and why has my doctor requested it? A Coronary Calcium Score is a CT Scan that is used to indicate the presence of coronary artery disease (CAD). The CT Scan is a quick and painless test that takes multiple thin pictures of your heart which can be saved in a computer and printed out as a photograph. A radiologist will interpret the exam and assign a score which indicates the amount of plaque buildup in the coronary arteries. Your cardiologist may order this test based on your personal cardiac history or family history of heart health issues. Coronary Calcium Scoring is a good diagnostic tool for determining the presence and severity of CAD. This information will help your doctor plan your care and help lower your risk for heart disease, heart attack, and stroke. For more information about Coronary Calcium Score testing, please ask for a brochure from our office staff.

## Heart Healthy Recipe

### Parmesan Herbed Chicken Cutlets - Makes 4 Servings

#### INGREDIENTS

1/4 cups Parmesan Cheese  
2 Tblsp Italian-style bread crumbs  
4 - 4oz. Skinless, boneless chicken breasts  
1/2 tsp Garlic powder  
1/4 tsp Paprika

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In re-sealable plastic bag, combine cheese, crumbs, garlic, and paprika; shake well.
2. Rinse chicken breasts well and place them into the bag and shake to coat all sides. Arrange chicken on a nonstick baking sheet and bake until chicken is cooked through; 20-25 minutes.
3. Serve with fresh vegetables.



## Depression and Heart Disease

*Article by Stacie Hodgson, MBA, CNA*

Depression not only affects the brain and behavior, it is also known to affect the entire body. Depression is notoriously linked with other serious health problems, including heart disease. Heart disease refers to a number of illnesses that can impinge on the heart and its vessels. Just like any muscle, the heart requires a constant amount of nutrients and oxygen, which it receives from blood being pumped from the lungs and other various parts of the body. Patients with heart disease are more likely to suffer from depression than otherwise healthy patients. Chest pain and heart attacks are closely associated with depression. Researchers are uncertain as to why exactly this relationship exists. However, they do know that symptoms associated with depression overall will influence physical and mental health, escalating the risk of developing heart disease. For example, fatigue or thoughts of worthlessness may cause patients to disregard their medication regimen and evade treatment for heart disease. Treating depression may perhaps make it easier for patients to adhere to a long-term heart disease treatment plan, thereby, creating lifestyle changes to cope with heart disease. Examples include:



- Consuming heart healthy foods
- Exercising regularly
- Drinking less or no alcohol
- Smoking cessation

The public health impact of depression and heart disease, both separately and together, is enormous. Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, and heart disease by far is the leading cause of death in the United States. Early detection and treatment of depression are crucial in improving the quality of life. When left untreated, depression can worsen heart disease and increase the risk of a future heart attack. The support and involvement of family and friends is essential in helping someone who is depressed.

## Remote Monitoring of Your Cardiac Device Could Save You A Trip To The Hospital

*Article by Michelle Benn*

Do you have or need an ICD (implantable cardiovascular defibrillator) and have a diagnosis of heart failure? If so, remote monitoring is the way to go! If you are a heart failure patient or are at an increased risk for heart failure, your ICD may have the capability of assessing for early signs of heart failure, even before any symptoms develop. Sounds impossible, but it is true! Cardiac devices with heart failure monitoring capabilities collect data that our staff can access monthly. This information is reviewed in the context of each patient's current medical status, and through this mechanism, early heart failure decompensation can be detected. Once your monitor is set up, it will collect the data we need while you sleep and transmit the information to us. You don't even need to do anything! The remote monitors are small, portable, and easy to set up using a land line, cell phone, or Wi-Fi. The data sent from the remote monitor is reviewed daily by our Electrophysiology specialists, Dr. Caplan, Dr. Siddiqi, and Dr. Wjasow. If they suspect worsening heart failure, we will let you know, assess how you have been feeling, and bring you in to see your general cardiologist if needed. The remote monitors will either be given to you in the hospital the day you have your ICD implant or if you already have an ICD, the device company will mail it to you. All of the remote monitors come with directions to set them up, and if you have any questions you can call the customer service number and they will walk you through it. Early detection and treatment of worsening heart failure could help you to prevent a hospital visit. If you are not currently using this function on your remote monitor or if you don't have one at all, please ask Dr. Caplan, Dr. Siddiqi, or Dr. Wjasow for more information at your next visit or call our EPS department.

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