

**In This Issue:**

- Top 10 Appointment Tips
- Green Smoothies
- Stress & Heart Disease
- June Men's Health Month
- Diane's Glowing Green Smoothie Recipe

### Top 10 Ways to Make the Most of Your Cardiology Appointment:

1. Need a referral? Take care of that 1 week before the appointment
  - Don't wait until the last minute. We cannot see you if your insurance requires a referral and we do not have one at the time of your appointment. We cannot obtain the referral for you; that is your responsibility
2. Make sure you have your insurance cards, referrals, personal ID and co-pay in your possession, ready to go before you leave the house!
3. If you have an early appointment, set your alarm so you have enough time to take your meds, eat breakfast and arrive on time. If you arrive late you may miss your appointment time and may be advised to reschedule.
4. If you have an appointment at the end of the day, give yourself enough travel time. If you arrive late you may miss your appointment time and may be advised to reschedule.
5. Bring your medication list or bottles with you to every appointment, even if we just saw you recently
  - If you bring a list, be sure it includes the medication name, dose, and frequency of each
6. Bring a list of questions or concerns you may have
  - It is so hard to remember everything during the appointment. Providers appreciate your organization and interest!
7. Bring any outside test results you think we need to have
  - If you had recent labs or tests ordered by an outside provider, bring a copy of them with you. We will not be able to obtain them for you during the office visit.
8. Bring a loved one with you
  - Did you know that most patients only "hear" about 60% of what is discussed during the office visit? This may be due to stress and anxiety about the information being discussed, or results being reviewed. If you have a loved one with

### 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

- you, they can provide support and companionship as well as another set of ears!
9. Know what to expect!  
 In the office be prepared to:
    - Review your demographics, past medical, social, and family history
    - Remove your shoes and socks in the exam room
    - Have an ECG done if necessary. If so, we will need access to the skin on your arms, legs, and your chest area. (If you are a male patient it may be necessary to shave any area where there is hair in order to obtain a good tracing.)
  10. Visit our website! We have loads of information, including
    - Patient education material
    - Patient portal

### Green Smoothie—Join the Revolution!

Spring is a great time to add some fruits and vegetables to your diet. Try this recipe and get your entire daily recommended dose in one glass! All you need is a good blender (VitaMix, Ninja or Nutribullet are good choices too), and the ingredients below.

You can vary the recipe and amounts of each depending on your likes and dislikes, and make a large batch to last a few days. It also stores very well in the freezer if you want to make a large amount at once. Just double or triple the recipe. It is a great way to make use of the leftover fruits and vegetables in your refrigerator rather than allowing them to go to waste.

A word of caution to our Coumadin/warfarin patients- adding this to your diet may affect your INR levels as the greens are very high in Vitamin K, which can lower your INR.

*Recipe on back —>*

## Stress and Heart Disease

Since 2007, the American Psychological Association has commissioned an annual nationwide survey to examine the state of stress across the United States <sup>1</sup>. In 2015 survey findings indicated that although overall stress is declining across the country, Americans continue to report stress levels at higher than what they believe to be healthy. Furthermore, certain groups of people report higher levels of stress than others, particularly women, younger Americans, and parents. One study evaluated the prevalence and characteristics of mental vs. physical stress on the heart and results indicated that mental stress played a greater role in patients with clinically stable coronary artery disease with women, unmarried men and individuals living alone to be at the highest risk <sup>2</sup>.

The exact role of stress on the risk of heart disease is unclear. According to the American Heart Association there is no direct link. However we do know that stress can affect behaviors that we know increase heart disease risk: high blood pressure, smoking, elevated cholesterol, physical inactivity and overeating. When experienced over an extended period of time, these behaviors can cause damage to the lining of the blood vessels, making them more susceptible to atherosclerosis, or plaque formation in the arteries of the heart and body. All of these factors can lead to damage to the artery walls of the heart, weaken the immune system, and lead to increased heart rate and blood pressure which can add further strain on the heart.

So what can be done to manage stress, especially if the stressors in your life are not easy to remove? Medicines are helpful for many ailments including anxiety disorders, but for dealing with the everyday stressors of life in America, their benefit is limited. Relaxation and stress management techniques are helpful lifestyle adaptations that can safely help relieve stress. Physical exercise also offers both physical and psychological benefits. Research found that these behavioral interventions offered additional benefit over the usual medical care in patients with known heart disease <sup>3</sup>.

*There are many resources available for ways to manage stress. Below are four ways to deal with stress offered by the American Heart Association. References: <sup>1</sup> <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2014/stress-report.pdf>; <sup>2</sup> *J Am Coll Cardiol.* 2013;61(7):714-722. doi:10.1016/j.jacc.2012.11.037; <sup>3</sup> *Arch Intern Med.* 1997;157(19):2213-2223. doi:10.1001/archinte.1997.00440400063008.*

## June is Men's Health Month!

In the April issue of *Men's Health Magazine*, author Moira Lawler compared and contrasted some outdated benchmarks and offers new recommendations for a healthy lifestyle. Below is a recap of some key points from her article:

### Hydration

**Old Measure: Drink 8 Glasses of Water a day**

**New Measure: Urinate 5 times a day**

The old measure of drinking 8 glasses a day is too broad. For example, a 120-pound male may not need as much water as a 200-pound male. Therefore, the best way to track if you're truly staying hydrated is to track how many times a day you visit the restroom. Urinating 4-5 times equates to approximately 36 ounces of water; this is a good benchmark to keep for hydration.

Tip: Weigh yourself before and after you workout. For each pound you lose drink 16-20 ounces of water slowly to aid in hydration.

### Heart Health

**Old Measure: Low intake of Saturated Fat**

**New Measure: 4 hours a day standing at work**

Although there is no clear evidence that links cardiovascular health and saturated fats, a sedentary lifestyle is a well know risk factor for cardiovascular disease. A recent Canadian study found that the more time you spend sitting around the greater your risk for a heart attack. This same study found inactivity to be responsible for twice as many deaths as obesity.

Tip: An Australian study found that over weight men who work desk jobs managed to cut their blood sugar by 11% by alternating every 30 minutes between sitting and standing throughout the workday, compared to those who sat exclusively.

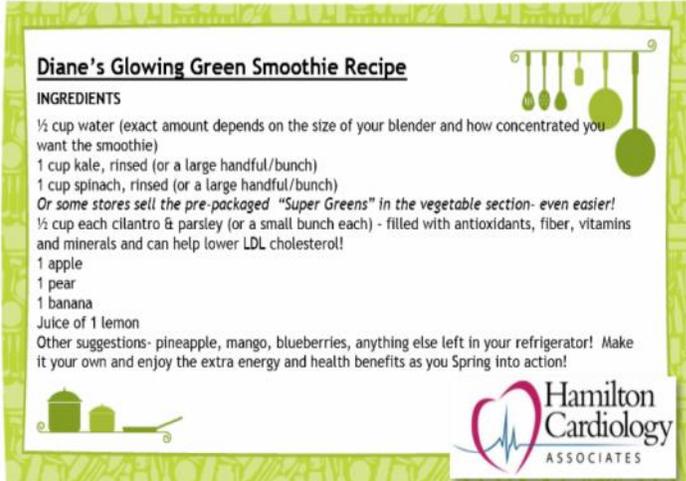
### Immune System

**Old Measure: 1 glass of OJ with breakfast**

**New Measure: 5 close friends**

After reviewing 11,000 cases, scientists refuted the popular notion that Vitamin C offers protection from illness. However, University of North Carolina researchers found that people with strong friendship circles tend to have less inflammation in their system, which can contribute to sickness and worsening of symptoms from illness.

Tip: A study of older adults found that those who visited family on average of 3 times a week were 77% less likely to feel depressed. Everyone benefits from social interaction so visit family and friends often and not just once every few months.



**Diane's Glowing Green Smoothie Recipe**

**INGREDIENTS**

- ½ cup water (exact amount depends on the size of your blender and how concentrated you want the smoothie)
- 1 cup kale, rinsed (or a large handful/bunch)
- 1 cup spinach, rinsed (or a large handful/bunch)
- Or some stores sell the pre-packaged "Super Greens" in the vegetable section- even easier!
- ½ cup each cilantro & parsley (or a small bunch each) - filled with antioxidants, fiber, vitamins and minerals and can help lower LDL cholesterol!
- 1 apple
- 1 pear
- 1 banana
- Juice of 1 lemon

Other suggestions- pineapple, mango, blueberries, anything else left in your refrigerator! Make it your own and enjoy the extra energy and health benefits as you Spring into action!

 Hamilton Cardiology ASSOCIATES