

August 2016

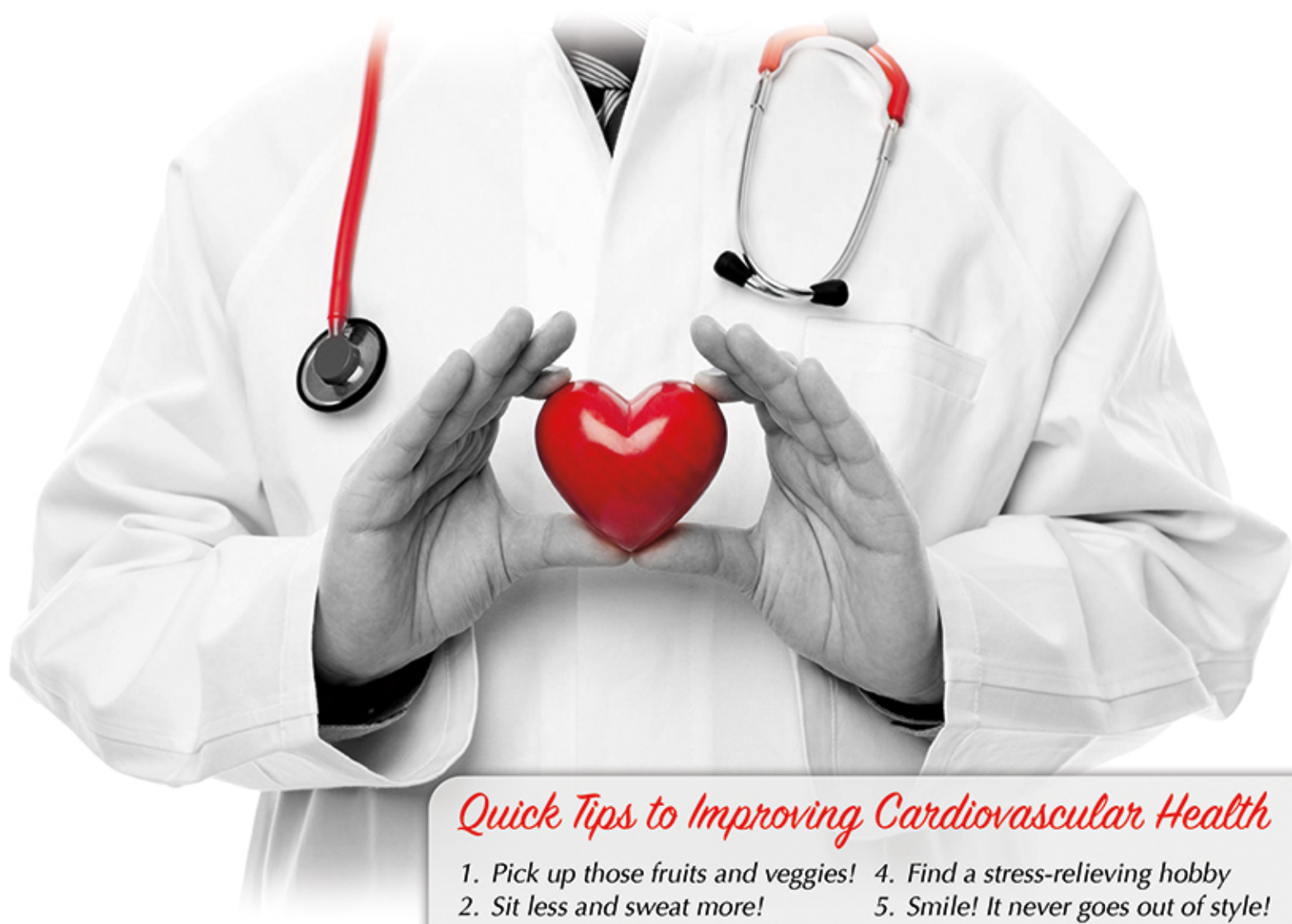
RIDGECREST REGIONAL HOSPITAL

healthy **LOOKOUT**

YOUR GUIDE FOR A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER LIFE

CAR·DI·OL·O·GY

Do you want to live a long, happy and **HEALTHY** life? Cardiovascular health is essential to living a long and healthy life. Unfortunately, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention heart diseases have been the leading cause of death in the United States for more than 30 years... Now it's time for us to take action and protect our cardiovascular health!



Quick Tips to Improving Cardiovascular Health

1. Pick up those fruits and veggies!
2. Sit less and sweat more!
3. Ditch the tobacco products!
4. Find a stress-relieving hobby
5. Smile! It never goes out of style!



CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE (CAD)

Coronary artery disease (CAD) or atherosclerosis is a serious condition that can lead to heart attacks and heart failure. Plaque can begin to build up in the arteries and can eventually harden and narrow the artery and the flow of blood. In its early stages, there are often no symptoms, but as the disease progresses some people may develop chest pain or pressure. Most people have experienced chest pain at a certain point in time, whether a sharp pain, pressure like or burning pain. It can be associated with food, activity, or exercise. For most people, this pain will be due to causes other than heart disease.

What chest pain should I pay close attention to?

Recognizing angina, or pain due to coronary artery disease, may be difficult but the following symptoms make this condition more likely:

1. Chest pain that is brought on by exertion
2. Associated shortness of breath
3. Dizziness or lightheadedness
4. Easily fatigued
5. Relieved by Aspirin and/or resting

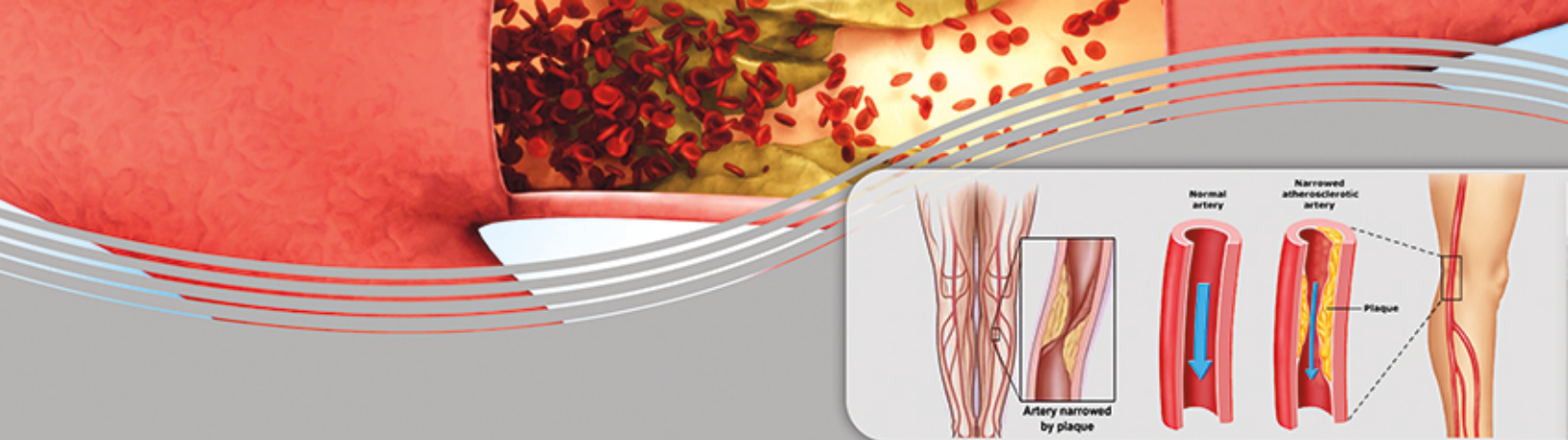
It is important to recognize that many people with chest pain due to coronary artery disease may not have the above symptoms; in fact many people will have no symptoms at all. It is important to seek medical attention if you have any of the above symptoms. If you do not have any chest pain, you should not dismiss the possibility of underlying heart disease and should perform a self-risk assessment with the help of your physician.

How is CAD diagnosed?

There are several tools available at this time to screen for Atherosclerosis, or Coronary Artery Disease. The most common are EKG and Stress Testing which can be performed in an outpatient setting. These tests can detect blockages in your heart before they cause a heart attack. Very importantly, a visit to your physician should include a check of your blood pressure and cholesterol. Exercising, eating healthy and achieving optimal levels of both cholesterol and blood pressure will greatly reduce your risk of CAD.

What factors increase my chance of CAD?

- Obesity
- Smoking
- Elevated cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Family History of Heart Disease (First Degree Relative)



PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE (PAD)

What is PAD?

Peripheral arterial disease is caused by blockages in the arteries that supply blood to the lower extremities of the body. It can begin in the aorta, the largest blood vessel in the body, and continue along the arteries that supply blood to each leg all the way to your toes. Because of the large area that this disease covers, symptoms can vary greatly from patient to patient. Most importantly, it is not until advanced disease or blockages are present that people experience the classic symptoms. Burning, cramping, and discomfort in the legs are most common while exercising, especially upstairs or at an incline. This condition is serious, especially in people with diabetes, because it can result in poor healing of minor cuts that can lead to serious consequences including infection and amputation of a limb.

Symptoms of Leg Blockages:

- Pain or cramping in the buttocks, thigh, or calves
- Worse when exercising
- Cool skin especially below the knee
- Loss of hair on the legs
- Thinning of the skin on the legs or ulcers

How is PAD diagnosed?

There are several tests available to detect peripheral arterial disease and monitor its progression. These include screening tests called the Ankle Brachial Index (ABI), arterial duplex or Doppler ultrasound, and CT scans with contrast. Your doctor may decide to send you for a procedure called an angiography which not only diagnoses your condition but can treat it with a stent or angioplasty. Some patients may have such advanced disease or in an area that is better suited for surgical repair.

How can you prevent or manage PAD?

- Stop smoking (this is one of the most important modifications)
- Exercise
- Reduce blood pressure
- Maintain optimal cholesterol



Dr. Ghassan Mohsen, M.D.
Board Certified Cardiologist

"Small changes you make for your health today will have a huge impact on your cardiovascular health and keep you doing the things you love and much more!"



HYPERTENSION & CHOLESTEROL

What is Hypertension? (High Blood Pressure)

Have you ever been told your blood pressure was high?

Well, in actuality, a diagnosis of hypertension requires several measurements over at least several days, both in the doctor's office and when at home. There are two parts to the blood pressure, systole and diastole. Systole refers to the blood pressure generated after your heart pumps and diastole to the blood pressure when the heart relaxes. Both numbers are important and play different roles in your circulatory health, but generally the top number (or systole) is used to determine the diagnosis of Hypertension.

Based on your number, you will fall into one of three categories:

- 1) Normal Blood Pressure: 120/80 mmHg or less
- 2) Pre-hypertensive: 120-139/ 80-89 mmHg
- 3) Hypertensive: >140/90 mmHg

Are you pre-hypertensive?

Your physician will likely recommend a combination of diet, exercise, smoking cessation and stress reduction. If your systolic blood pressure is >150 mmHg your physician will likely start you on one or more blood pressure medications in addition to recommending lifestyle modifications.

CHOLESTEROL BASICS!

How often should I have my cholesterol levels checked?

At least once every 4 years, and more frequently if you are on cholesterol medication or have had a heart attack or stroke.

What will a fasting lipoprotein profile show?

- **Total blood (or serum) cholesterol**

Your total cholesterol score is calculated using the equation: HDL + LDL + 20 percent of your triglyceride level.

- **HDL (good) cholesterol**

Higher levels of HDL are good! Low HDL cholesterol puts you at higher risk for heart disease. Genetic factors, type 2 diabetes, smoking, being overweight and being sedentary can result in lower HDL.

- **LDL (bad) cholesterol**

Low LDL cholesterol level is good for your heart health. LDL is the form of cholesterol that causes plaque buildup in your arteries. A diet high in saturated and trans fats raises LDL.

- **Triglycerides**

Triglyceride is the most common type of fat in the body. Normal triglyceride levels vary by age and sex. High triglyceride levels combined with low HDL or high LDL cholesterol is associated with atherosclerosis, the buildup of fatty deposits in artery walls that increase your risk of heart attack and stroke.





*"It's Better Late
Than Never"*



NUTRITION 101

**BY DR. MOHSEN: UNSATURATED VS. SATURATED FATS AND TRANS FATS
WHICH FATS SHOULD I STAY AWAY FROM AND WHICH SHOULD I EAT?**

With all the information out there on dieting and which fats you should avoid, it can be a challenge to pick a healthy diet. You need to understand that we need fats, protein and carbohydrates for essential nutrition. Finding the correct balance will help you achieve an optimal weight for your lifestyle and give you the energy you need to stay active and healthy.

Fats play a particularly important role in your overall health. Avoiding fats altogether and substituting with carbohydrates is not a good solution as this can lead to weight gain, elevated insulin and sugar levels, and contribute to the metabolic syndrome. Make sure you incorporate healthy fats and carbohydrates, like whole grains, into your diet along with **at least 30 minutes of daily exercise**. Don't be afraid to indulge once in a while with your diet, but not too much!

Healthy fats fall into the category "unsaturated fats". They do not contribute to atherosclerosis and are used by your body for healthy functions. They will lower your bad cholesterol (LDL) and increase your HDL cholesterol. Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats are the two unsaturated fats. They're mainly found in **fish such as salmon, trout and herring, avocados, olives, walnuts and liquid vegetable oils such as soybean, corn, safflower, canola, olive and sunflower**.

Dangerous fats are the saturated and trans fats. Trans fats are created in an industrial process and are particularly harmful and should be avoided. Both will raise your LDL cholesterol and cause plaque to form that builds up in the arteries and contributes to heart disease. The majority of saturated fat comes from animal products such as beef, lamb, pork, poultry with skin, butter, cream, cheese and other dairy products. Doughnuts, cookies, crackers, muffins, pies and cakes are examples of foods that are high in trans fats. Limit fried fast food because commercial shortening and deep-frying fats continue to be made by hydrogenation and contain saturated fat and trans fat.

The American Heart Association recommends that adults reduce their intake of trans fats and limit their consumption of saturated fat to 5 to 6% of total calories. **Eat a dietary pattern that emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, poultry, fish and nuts**. Also limit red meat and sugary foods and beverages.



EAT *clean*
DRINK *water*
STAY *active*
BE *healthy*



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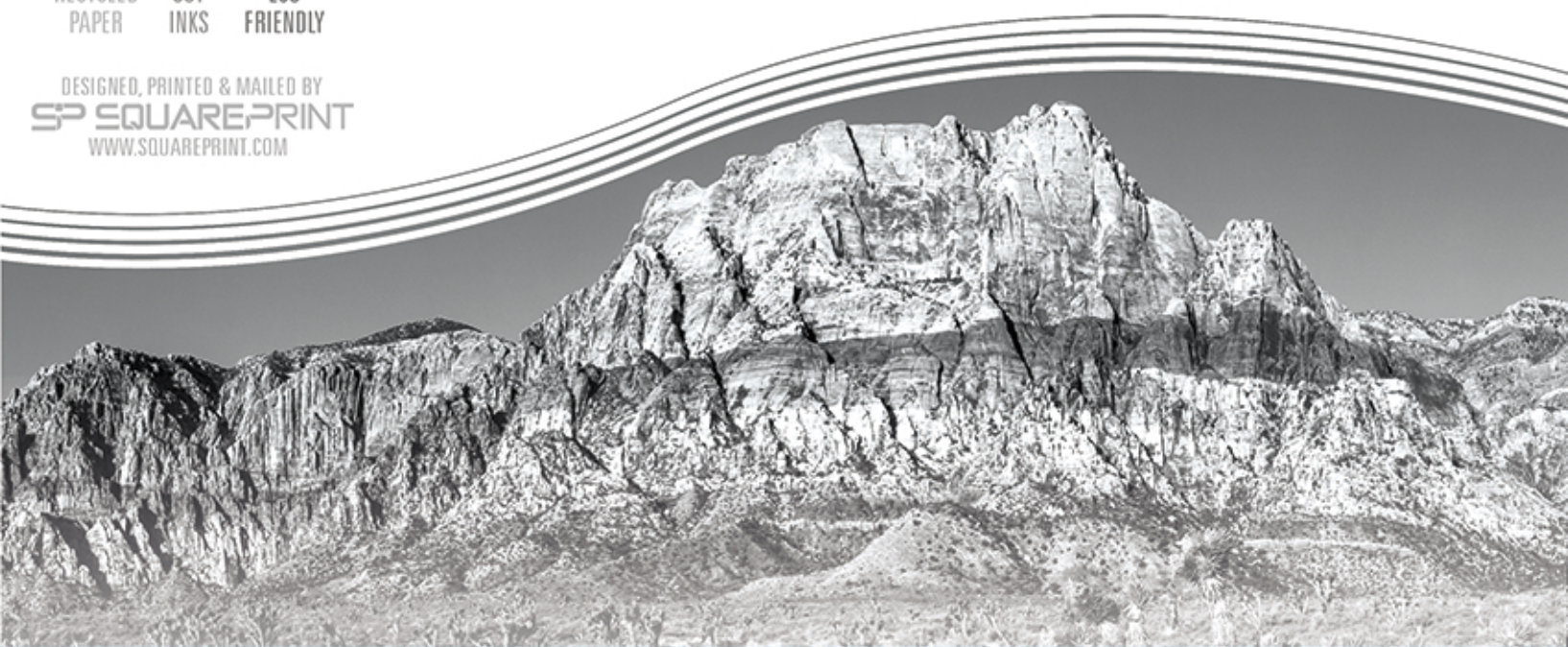
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For More information on the Healthy LOOKout, visit www.healthylookout.com
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