

MEN'S HEALTH ISSUES

MEN, ARE YOU PROACTIVE?

Well **men** it's time to visit your doctor, or is it? We as men tend to ignore our health and are less likely to visit our doctor than women. Maybe that's why women live seven years longer than men on average.

It is very important for us **men** to be more proactive about our health. If you're not going to visit your doctor, let me give you some tips to maintain a healthier lifestyle.

First, try to eliminate or reduce **white foods**, which are simple carbohydrates or empty calories and add no or little nutritional value to your diet. Items such as white flour, white sugar, and processed foods have over 90% of the vitamins and minerals removed during processing. Excess intake of these food types increases blood sugar levels, which directly and indirectly contributes to diabetes, weight gain and excess belly fat. Excess belly fat also increases bad cholesterol (LDL) and contributes to the elevation in blood pressure (hypertension). Instead eat more fruits and vegetables, grains, lettuce, green leafy vegetables.

There are 4 basic food groups, which include: **simple carbohydrates** as mentioned above and **complex carbohydrates** @ fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes. In addition the other 2 food groups are **saturated fats**, which include dairy products, red meats, shellfish, cheeses, chocolates and tend to elevate cholesterol levels. Polyunsaturated fats like oils from plants, soybean, corn oil, and safflower tend to help lower cholesterol.

Stay away from Trans Fats like fried foods, and anything that is made with hydrogenated oils (margarine, peanut butter, shortening, pastries and cookies that you buy in the store). Trans fats increase the risk of heart disease. Instead eat foods with olive oil and omega 3 oils, complex carbohydrates and polyunsaturated fats.

Take a good source of vitamins and minerals as a daily supplement, but do not substitute them for a good diet. Make sure your multi-supplements have antioxidants in them. In addition take Omega 3 and 6, in particular Omega 3.

Maintain an optimal weight, exercise to include aerobic (cardiovascular) and anaerobic (weight training) at least 3 times per week. These two types of exercises increase cardiovascular, and respiratory strength in addition to muscle strength. Maintaining your optimal weight will reduce your risk of heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and other diseases.

Drink alcohol in moderation. Studies have shown that drinking in moderation protects not only against heart disease, but also lowers risk of death from all causes. Moderation is the key. While 1-2 drinks a day may be protective, excess is devastating to your health.

Protect the prostate men! After the age of 40, the prostate gland begins a growth spurt that can result in frequent nighttime urination. This is usually associated with benign prostate hyperplasia, which can be prevented or reversed by taking two herbs: saw palmetto and pygeum. These herbs help improve urinary flow without adverse side effects. Suggested doses of saw palmetto 160 to 320 milligrams per day and Pygeum 40-80 milligrams per day.

Reduce your risk of prostate cancer. Experts estimate that 90% of all cancers are preventable by making healthy lifestyle changes and choices. Avoid saturated fats and Trans fats, which may fuel prostate cells to grow. Eat protective foods that fall into the polyunsaturated and complex carbohydrate groups. Make sure your daily supplements have doses of antioxidants like selenium and vitamin E. Both have been shown to lower the risk of prostate cancer.

Maintain sexual function. Most erectile dysfunction cases involve physical causes by not getting enough blood to the area. Diet, exercise and supplementation are highly recommended to deal with erectile dysfunction. If you take drugs consult with your physician. Start incorporating diet, exercise and supplementation into your lifestyle and maybe you will be able to get off the medications. Ginkgo Biloba and Panax Ginseng both increase blood flow to the penis and improve erectile dysfunction.

I spoke about belly fat earlier, which is unhealthy, not to mention not very flattering. Carrying those extra pounds around the belly brought on by unhealthy lifestyles, poor food choices and lack of exercise poses serious health risks more so than having excess body fat in other areas of the body. Excess belly fat increases the risk of:

1. Heart disease
2. Stroke
3. Increase bad cholesterol levels LDL's and triglycerides
4. Some types of cancer
5. Diabetes, type2
6. Sleep apnea
7. Hypertension
8. Metabolic syndrome disorders

For men, the risk factors for heart disease and other diseases increase with waist sizes greater than 40 inches. Your genes can also affect your chances of being overweight or obese as well as where we carry extra fat on your bodies. For men it has to do more with lifestyle choices rather than your genes.

So guys tighten those genes up and incorporate these tips into your lifestyle and try to keep up with you female counterparts by living and practicing a healthier lifestyle.

Dr. Ross has been practicing as a chiropractic physician in Altamonte Springs for 28 years and has extensive experience in nutrition, exercise and fitness. He has written numerous books on these subjects which can be seen at www.drkross.com. Any questions

you can call him at 407-875-2000 or go on the website and “Ask the Doctor a Question” using our forum.