

Health: Heart AND Soul

February 2011 Monthly Bulletin

When Every Second Counts



Save a life by knowing the signs

Did you know there are now treatments and medications that can increase the chances of stopping a heart attack or stroke while it's happening? [More...](#)

Worklife Balance



Relationships and the Roseto effect

For a number of years, the small town of Roseto, PA once defied the entire country's heart disease rates. For a fascinating story – read on – and find out how! [More...](#)

Health View



Time for a change of heart

Safety steps such as wearing a seatbelt are routine for most people. Yet many overlook important habits known to safeguard heart health. What could you be doing? [More...](#)

Practicing Presence



Mindfulness: Live in the moment at work and at home

Being mindful means staying present in each moment, experiencing it fully. It can decrease stress and allow you to enjoy life more. See what practicing presence can do for you. [More...](#)



Save a life by knowing the signs

Did you know there are now treatments and medications that can increase the chances of stopping a heart attack or stroke while it's happening? The key is getting proper treatment fast. To do this, learn the symptoms and the right steps to take. Most importantly, remember that every minute counts!

Warning signs of a heart attack

Heart attacks can be accompanied by severe or mild pain, no pain at all or a number of other symptoms that may seem completely unrelated to your heart. Here are some of the most common signs:

- Chest discomfort such as pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain that is constant *or* "comes and goes"
- Pain or discomfort in arms, back, neck or jaw
- Stomach upset
- Shortness of breath
- Cold sweat
- Nausea
- Lightheadedness
- Fatigue

Call 9-1-1 for help

Time is precious in any emergency. If faced with a possible health crisis, do *not* call a friend or relative, do *not* drive yourself to the hospital, and do *not* wait longer than a few minutes to call 9-1-1.

Worried about being wrong? Remember: emergency medical personnel are trained to help you. Calling 9-1-1 is rarely a mistake. It's better to find out that a suspected emergency is not so serious than to lose a life by waiting to be certain!

Calling 9-1-1 is also the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Ambulance staff can start treatment as soon as they reach you – even before you arrive at the hospital.

Take care of your "soul" too

Relationships feed your emotional, psychological and spiritual needs. Friendships give support, reduce stress and improve overall well-being. Do your heart and soul a favor and make time for healthy, supportive relationships.

Getting Help

Confidential support, information and For help with personal or workplace issues, contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP). These confidential services are available to employees and their eligible household members 24/7.



Relationships and the Roseto effect

"People are nourished by other people," according to researcher Dr. Stewart Wolf. He was talking about results of a study that ran from 1935-1984 in the small town of Roseto, Pennsylvania.¹

Roseto once defied the rest of the country's heart disease rates.

- In 1966, cardiac death rates across the U.S. were shown to increase with age.
- Not so in Roseto, where the death rate from heart disease dropped to near zero for men ages 55 to 64 in that same year.
- And for men over 65, the Roseto death rate from heart disease was half the national average.

Surprises for the experts

The experts were baffled. The men in Roseto smoked, drank wine freely and did hard physical labor in local quarries. Their diets included fried foods and lard.

The study ruled out genetic or other physical reasons for the men's heart disease rates. But noting the town's zero crime rate and lack of applications for public assistance, the researchers dug deeper.

A small town with big values

Further study showed Roseto was a close-knit community. Most people lived in multi-generation homes. They connected often as a community. And everyone shared the goal of making a better life for their children. People in Roseto were the picture of mutual respect and cooperation.

A lesson for good health

The bottom line? Rosetan style eating, drinking and smoking habits are not among today's recommendations for good heart health. Rather, Roseto's good heart disease statistics were linked to the **importance of relationships**. The Roseto study showed that social support has a powerful influence on well-being. Studies since then have confirmed that *making connections makes for good health!*

¹JAMA (Journal of American Medical Association). 1964 Jun 8;188:845-849.

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Time for a change of heart?

Do you look both ways before you cross the street? Buckle your seatbelt in the car? Use a potholder when handling hot cookware?

Safety steps like these are routine for most people. Yet many overlook important habits when it comes to safeguarding their heart health!

Small changes can make a big difference

Here are some basic tips for taking care of your heart:

- Eat a healthy diet. Replace processed, high-calorie, fatty foods with fresh veggies, fruits and other heart-healthy picks. You may be surprised to find you really feel better when you fuel your body with healthier choices.
- If you're a smoker, stop. Studies consistently show a strong link between cigarette smoking and heart disease.
- Get up and move! Put down the TV remote or take a break from the Internet for a bit and burn some calories. Exercise is critical for your heart and mind. And even 10-15 minutes a day is a plus.

- Learn to de-stress. Set aside time to relax, unwind with friends, read a book or do whatever helps you feel calm. Consider taking a class to learn meditation techniques, yoga or other forms of relaxation.
- See your doctor for regular check-ups. Don't be a stranger to your doctor. There are many ways he or she can help you learn about, detect and prevent heart disease.

If you've been overlooking your heart, it may be time to change your mind – and some of your habits – to safeguard your health!

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Mindfulness: Live in the moment at work and at home

Take a moment to really focus on reading this. No worry about the next step, no dwelling on what just happened. Just stay right here, right now. Fully focused, fully aware.

Mindfulness is the art of staying present in each moment and experiencing it fully. Think of it as the opposite of multitasking. So, if you are reading this and thinking about your next meeting, what's for dinner or anything else, you are multitasking – not being mindful.

Mindfulness is a way to decrease stress and enjoy life more as you stay focused on one thing at a time. It may help you to feel more in control and less frazzled and hassled.

- When eating alone, focus on the smell, taste and sight of the food. Eliminate all other distractions. You will find it takes less food to satisfy you.
- When in a workplace meeting, stay focused on the conversation. Don't plan ahead or daydream. You may find your effectiveness and satisfaction increasing as you focus on one task at a time.

Mindfulness can make a positive difference in your life. Try it and see!

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