

Wise Notes for Consumers

Submitted: 1-13-17

Women and Heart Disease

A little over half of women know the leading cause of death for women is heart disease. Almost 500,000 women die from cardiovascular diseases, while 270,000 women die from all forms of cancer combined.

Because so many studies are reported in the news—some with conflicting findings—about half of women report being confused about how to reduce their risks for heart disease.

The American Heart Association suggests aiming for Life's Simple 7 Which is seven easy ways to help control your risk for heart disease. And by the way, these aren't just for women; men would do well to follow these guidelines as well.

1. Do not smoke, and, if you do, quit. Keep trying even if you have tried many times. Ask your doctor about tobacco cessation medications. Visit the American Heart Association's Quit Smoking website for tools and resources.
2. Aim for a healthy weight. If you are overweight, even losing as few as five or ten pounds can produce a dramatic blood pressure reduction.
3. Become more physically active. Aim for 30 minutes on all or almost all days each week. Walking is a great way to be active, whether walking indoors on a treadmill or outside.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national orientation. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

4. Eat smart. Choose a diet low in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol, and moderate in total fats.

Healthy foods are the fuel our bodies use to make new cell and create the energy we need to thrive and fight diseases. If you are frequently skipping out on veggies, fruit, low-fat dairy, fiber-rich whole grains and lean meats including fish, your body is missing the basic building blocks of a healthy life.

5., 6., &7. Know your blood pressure, total HDL and LDL cholesterol, and blood glucose. Ask your doctor to do these tests and to inform you as to whether or not the numbers are within the recommended limits. Ask what you need to do if your numbers are outside the recommended range.

Walking is such an important way to reduce cardiovascular risks for both women and men. Every year, Texas AgriLife Extension in Wise County offers an eight-week program called *Walk Across Texas* to help people get started and establish the habit of physical activity. This program will be starting March 6, 2017. Watch this news article for specific details.

To find out more about Walk Across Texas, go to <http://walkacrosstexas.tamu.edu> or call the Extension office at 940/627-3341.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national orientation. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.