

LiveWell: Mid-Life

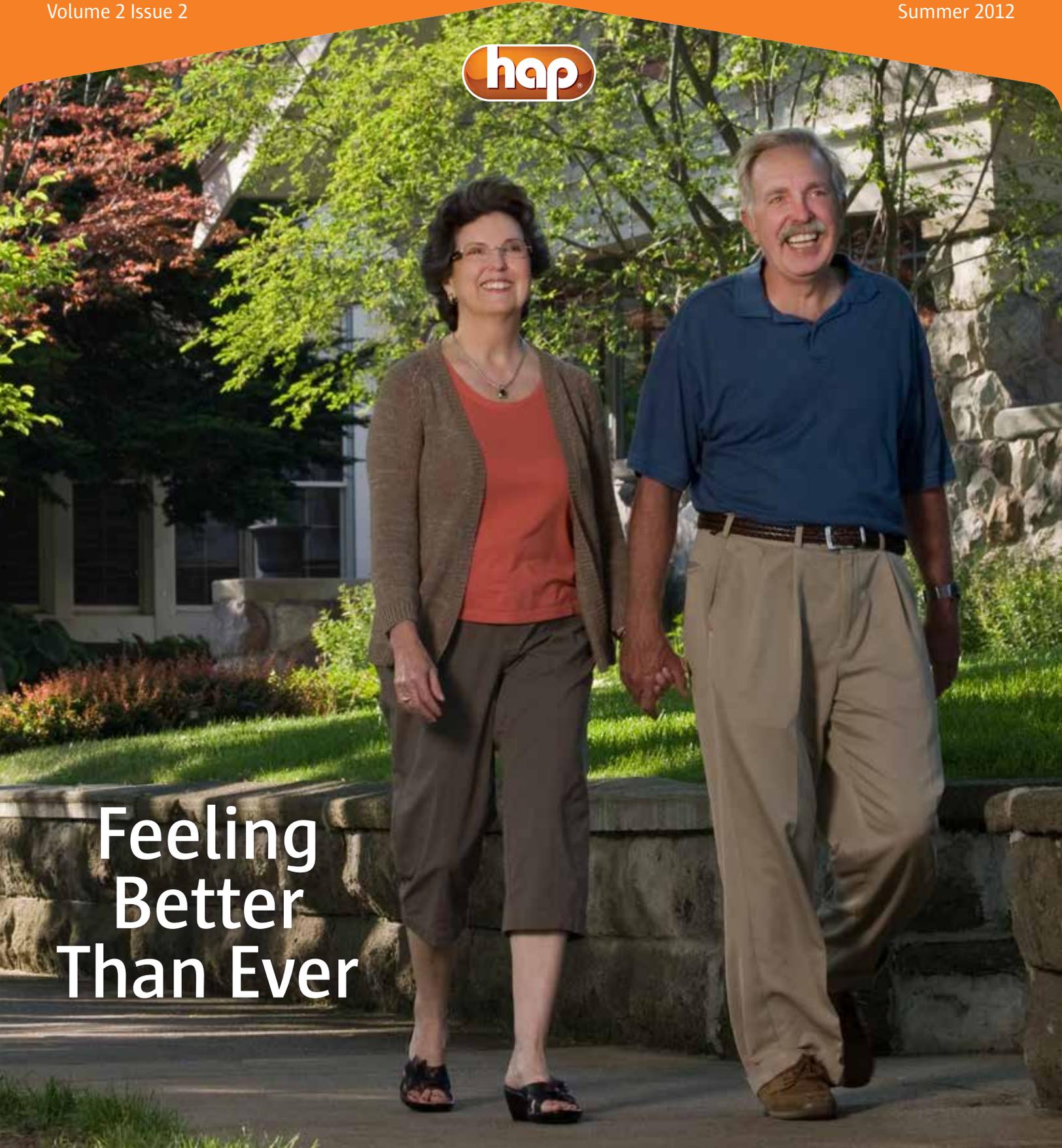
A Resource for Healthy Living

Volume 2 Issue 2

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Feeling
Better
Than Ever



LiveWell: Mid-Life

A Resource for Healthy Living



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HAP Cares About the Community

Health Alliance Plan cares about the health and well-being of Michigan residents. That's why we offer wellness programs throughout the community. Signature events include free community water aerobics, *Enhance Fitness* classes and *Ready, Set, Cook!* classes for kids.

The community support doesn't stop there. HAP employees get in the act by helping area nonprofits such as **Big Brothers Big Sisters**, the **Coalition on Temporary Shelter (COTS)** and **Common Ground Sanctuary**, just to name a few. Employees participate in walks, bowl-a-thons and fundraisers. In 2011, our employees donated more than 2,400 hours of their time to community causes. They also raised more than \$75,000 for organizations like the **American Heart Association** and **March of Dimes**.

Giving back is part of HAP's culture. It's another way we strive to create a healthy community.

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Bob and Lynn Benefiel,
HAP members

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We'd Love to See You at Our Next Wellness Event

If you didn't make it to HAP's *DIY Men's Health Workshop* on June 19 at the Burton Manor in Livonia, you missed a great experience. Nearly 200 attendees had a blast discovering tips and strategies to build a healthier lifestyle.

Here's a quick recap:

- Guys had the chance to talk with Detroit Red Wings radio announcer Ken Kal!
- Nurses offered free blood pressure screenings and body mass index calculations.
- Experts from Henry Ford Health System's Division of Sports Medicine analyzed golf swings and gave tips on how to maintain proper form and prevent injury.
- Dr. Joel Kahn from DMC and Dr. Muzzamil Ahmed from Oakwood led talks on issues like heart and prostate health.
- Chef Jeremy Abbey demonstrated the "thrill of the grill" by barbecuing healthy, flavorful flank steak and chicken recipes.
- Massage therapists offered relaxing chair massages.

HAP regularly offers wellness events throughout the year for members. Check your mailbox for an invitation to an upcoming event in your area.



Ken Kal signed Red Wings memorabilia and discussed the latest team news.

A Visit to the Library Is Just a Click Away

How many calories did I burn taking the stairs instead of the elevator? What questions should I ask my doctor about my back pain? What are the pros and cons of taking antibiotics?

With the click of a mouse, you can find answers to these and many more medical- and health-related questions by using HAP's online Health Library. With this comprehensive and reliable online resource, you can:

- Browse health topics from A to Z
- Use interactive tools to help make smart health care decisions
- Check for potential health issues by using an interactive symptom checker
- Find a local support group
- Learn more about medications
- Get details on specific medical tests
- Learn how to reduce costs and get the best care

To access the library, log in at hap.org, choose the *Health & Wellness* tab, select *Tools and Resources*, then select *Health Library*.



Feeling Better Than Ever

As a young man, Bob Benefiel took care of his health by eating well-balanced meals and exercising. He continued to get regular health exams as he aged. So, when Bob had a heart attack in his early 60s, it came as quite a surprise.

“I had always had low or normal blood pressure,” says Bob, a longtime HAP member and retired attorney from Plymouth Township. “My cholesterol levels were only slightly elevated. I never expected to have a heart attack.”

Bob began feeling episodes of weakness one day while he was riding a stationary bike at home.

“I didn’t feel tightness in my chest or pain radiating down my arm, just general weakness,” Bob says. “I awoke one night feeling very weak, like I couldn’t get enough oxygen with regular breathing. My wife took me straight to Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital.”

One of Bob’s arteries was completely blocked; a second artery was 40 percent blocked. Doctors performed angioplasty to restore normal blood flow and inserted stents – or tiny mesh wire tubes – to keep the most blocked artery open. During recovery, Bob completed a comprehensive cardiac rehab program, which helped him achieve a healthier lifestyle.

“I feel I can do just about anything.”

– Bob Benefiel



“The rehab included exercises on treadmills, stationary bikes and rowing machines,” Bob says. “It also involved dietary classes. I realized my heart problems had been building for years. I ate well when I was younger. But when I became an attorney and ran my own business, I ate a lot of fast food. Today, that would be the last thing I’d eat. Now, my tastes have changed; I enjoy fruits, vegetables and whole grains. My wife has been very supportive. She enjoys making healthy meals from scratch. We always split a meal when we eat out for portion control.”

Bob continues to exercise and walks about five to six miles daily. He also enjoys yard work, home improvement projects and sailing on Lake St. Clair.

“Eating healthy and following an exercise routine have helped me tremendously,” Bob says. “I lost 25 pounds since my heart attack. Now, I feel better than ever. I still need to take heart medication, but my cardiologist says there’s only a 10 percent chance of another blockage. I feel I can do just about anything.”

To learn more about heart disease risk factors for men, visit hap.org and click on the *My Health and Wellness* tab, followed by *Health Information* and then *Men*.

Moving Onward

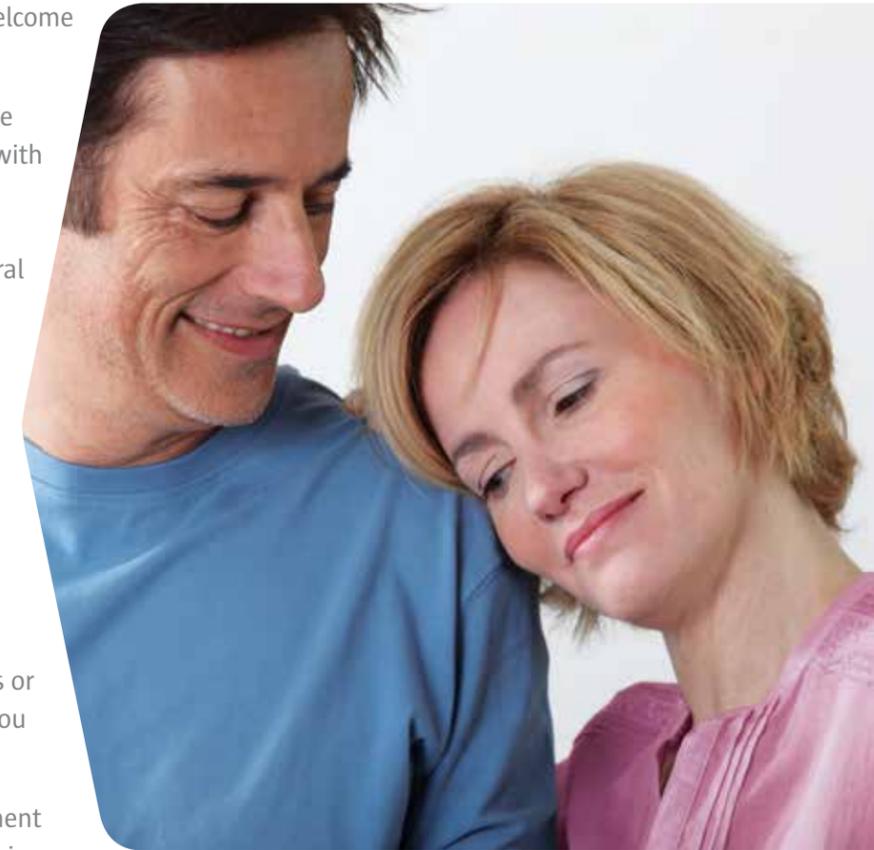
Life is full of change and surprises – and not always welcome ones.

Overcoming big life changes like divorce, job loss or the death of a loved one is never easy. Most people react with strong emotions and a sense of uncertainty. But there are ways to work through these feelings and become resilient, says Health Alliance Plan director of behavioral health Mary Clare Solky, M.A., L.L.P., L.P.C.

“Loss is inevitable in life, but our society doesn’t do a good job of preparing people to go through it,” Mary Clare says. “It is possible to gain strength by overcoming a loss.”

Advice for overcoming difficult life events:

- **Allow yourself to grieve:** Grieving is healthy after experiencing a loss. But see your doctor if your grief lasts for more than a couple of weeks or affects your ability to perform daily activities. You may be experiencing a form of depression.
- **Accept the loss:** Make a personal acknowledgment that the loss happened, even if it didn’t seem fair or was completely unexpected.
- **Set a new personal goal:** Identify what you can do to make your life better. It might be returning to school, joining a self-help group or starting an exercise program. Even small goals can help you feel a sense of accomplishment.
- **Track your progress:** Record your steps toward reaching your goal in a journal. Record keeping can keep you honest and help you move forward.
- **Celebrate your success:** Review your progress and recognize that you conquered your loss. Perhaps you’ve sharpened your interview skills and are ready to apply for a new job. Whatever the accomplishment, acknowledge that you’ve made it through a tough period and have moved onward.



Finally, Mary Clare suggests that it’s important to stay connected and take care of yourself while working through a loss.

“A trusted friend or family member can be an incredible source of support,” she says. “Remember to exercise, eat well-balanced meals and get proper sleep. Those things are big stress relievers. Choose to live life to the fullest, no matter what the current circumstances. You can get to the other side of the loss and feel better again.”

For more helpful strategies, check out the American Psychological Association website at www.apa.org. Members concerned about feelings of stress or grief can call HAP’s Coordinated Behavioral Health Management department toll-free at (800) 444-5755 for more information.



Aging Answers: What to Expect

Maybe it takes a little longer for your morning stiffness to go away. Or perhaps you forget where you placed your car keys more often. Are these normal experiences for people in their 50s and 60s? Or are they signs of more serious health concerns?

Mark Kurzawa, M.D., a family practitioner certified in family and geriatric medicine at St. John Hospital and Medical Center in Detroit, says people at this stage of life can expect some changes related to aging. Here are some common concerns:

- **Joint pain:** “Arthritis can be a result of normal wear and tear on the joints. But if you suddenly experience joint pain or if it significantly affects your normal movement, it’s best to see your doctor.”
- **Memory loss:** “Occasionally forgetting someone’s name or where you put the car keys is normal. But if your family members or friends notice it’s happening more often, it could signal a bigger problem. That’s one reason why it’s important to have a close relationship with a family doctor, and at least an annual physical exam. If you’re concerned about memory loss, your doctor can get a sense of its severity.”
- **Weight gain:** “Weight gain is not a change that comes with aging. What changes is a person’s level of physical activity. Weight gain should be

addressed because it’s a risk factor for diabetes, heart attack, cancer and other diseases.”

- **Hearing loss:** “Patients rarely notice their own hearing loss – it’s usually brought up by a family member. Have your hearing checked so you can learn about treatment options. There have been significant technological advances in hearing aids over the past 20 years.”
- **Osteoporosis:** “Women experience the largest loss of bone mass right after menopause. It’s a normal part of the aging process and doesn’t usually show symptoms at that age. It can be addressed by taking calcium supplements and regular strength training.”

You can’t turn back the clock, but Dr. Kurzawa says it’s possible to slow down the effects of the aging process.

“You’ll experience some changes in your physical capacity as you age,” he says. “Stay active and eat a healthy, balanced diet to reduce aging’s impact on your body. Be sure to get regular health exams and screenings and don’t hesitate to discuss your concerns with your doctor.”

For more healthy aging tips log in at hap.org and choose the *My Health & Wellness* tab, select *Member Programs* and then select *HAP LiveWell:Mid-Life*. Here you’ll find preventive screening recommendations, webinars and important resources.



Go Fish

Here’s some news for people who love eating

fish: Besides being tasty, it’s also good for your heart.

Fish is a great source of protein and is low in saturated fat. Fatty fish – like salmon, mackerel, lake trout or albacore tuna – also contain omega-3 fatty acids. Eating foods with these acids is very beneficial and can decrease risk of arrhythmias (abnormal heartbeats), cut elevated blood fat levels and lower your overall risk of heart disease.

The American Heart Association recommends eating 3.5 ounces cooked or ¾ cup flaked fish twice per week. Cook by baking, broiling or grilling, not frying.

People with coronary artery disease or high triglyceride levels who don’t get enough omega-3 through diet alone may want to ask their doctor about taking fish oil supplements.

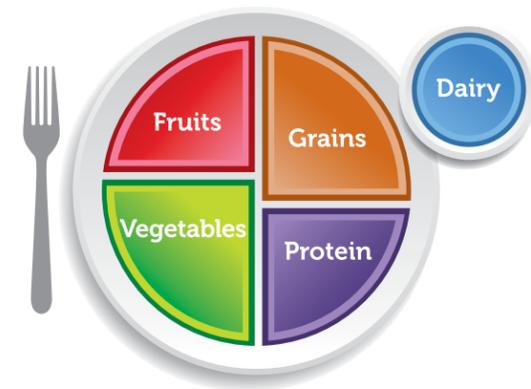
To learn more about how to make fish part of your healthy diet, visit www.heart.org.

Picture the Perfect Plate

The next time you prepare a meal, picture your place setting. Will you have space for the five food groups?

To help better promote healthy eating, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) replaced the food pyramid with the MyPlate icon. The new shape uses visual cues to help consumers make good food choices.

The USDA recommends making half your plate fruits and vegetables, and the other half whole grains and lean protein. Low-fat dairy sits alongside the plate in a drinking glass icon. Here are guidelines for men and women age 51 and over who get 30 minutes or less of moderate physical activity per day:



| FOOD GROUP | DAILY RECOMMENDATION | EXAMPLES |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Fruits | Men: 2 cups Women: 1½ cups | 8 large strawberries or 32 seedless grapes = 1 cup |
| Vegetables | Men: 2½ cups Women: 2 cups | 1 large baked sweet potato, 12 baby carrots, or 2 cups raw leafy greens = 1 cup |
| Grains | Men & Women: 3-ounce equivalent | 1 regular slice whole-grain bread or 1 packet instant oatmeal = 1-ounce equivalent |
| Protein Foods | Men: 5½-ounce equivalent Women: 5-ounce equivalent | 1 egg, ¼ cup cooked beans or 1 tablespoon peanut butter = 1-ounce equivalent |
| Dairy | Men & Women: 3 cups men and women | 1 cup milk, yogurt or soymilk; 1½ ounces natural cheese; or 2 ounces processed cheese = 1 cup |

For the healthiest choices, pick low-sodium and low-fat options.

To learn more about personalizing healthy meals for your plate, visit www.choosemyplate.gov.

Take This to Heart: A Brighter Outlook for Cardiac Patients



Michael Hudson, M.D.

If you're at risk for cardiovascular disease, take heart. Medical advances are lowering the risk of heart attack and improving outcomes for cardiac patients.

"Cancer has recently passed heart disease as the leading cause of death in the United States for patients under 85 years of age," says cardiologist Michael Hudson, M.D., co-director of the Henry

Ford Hospital Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit. "This is due to cholesterol-lowering drugs, decreased smoking rates and better hospital treatments. Doctors are treating heart attack patients more aggressively, and those who receive prompt care have a much better survival rate."

There's also good news for people who recently had a heart attack. A cardiac rehab program can help you change your lifestyle and make a full recovery.

What's a Heart Attack?

Coronary artery blockage is the main cause of a heart attack. The culprit is coronary artery disease (CAD), a buildup of plaque and cholesterol that can occur over months or years.

"When plaque in an artery breaks open or ruptures, a blood clot can form and block blood flow to the heart," Dr. Hudson says.

Typical heart attack symptoms include chest pain or pressure, fatigue, shortness of breath or fainting.

"Don't take chances if you think you're having symptoms," Dr. Hudson says. "Go to a hospital or urgent care center immediately. A false alarm may be inconvenient, but heart attack patients who get prompt care have the best outcomes."

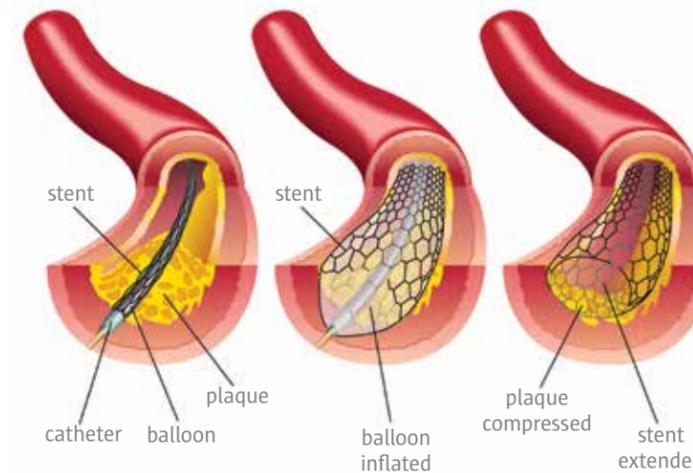
You may have CAD risk factors due to family history, smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, diabetes, obesity, lack of physical activity and stress.

"Tests designed to detect CAD, like stress tests, nuclear scans and CT scans, unfortunately aren't effective in preventing heart attacks," Dr. Hudson says. "It's better to talk with your doctor about lifestyle changes or medications to reduce or lower your risk."

Treatment Options

Not all heart attacks are treated the same. Patients are generally prescribed a combination of blood thinners and blood pressure medications along with blood tests and an electrocardiogram (ECG), and may undergo a stress test or a coronary angiogram.

"Blood tests, ECGs and imaging tests give us a good sense of the damage done to the heart," Dr. Hudson says. "In severe cases, a patient may require an immediate angiogram or angioplasty, or receive a clot-busting drug to help restore blood flow."



To reopen an artery, doctors can perform coronary angioplasty and stenting. Doctors insert a long, thin tube called a catheter through an artery in the patient's groin or wrist. The catheter is fitted with a small balloon and travels to the blocked artery. The balloon inflates to remove the blockage and restore blood flow. Doctors may also insert a stent – a small metal coil – to help keep the artery open.

"Immediate angioplasty and stenting is the most effective treatment for patients experiencing a major heart attack," Dr. Hudson says.

Coronary bypass surgery is another option. Doctors can restore blood flow by sewing veins or arteries at a site beyond the blocked artery.

Rapid Recovery

Following a heart attack, most patients take four to six different prescription medications to help the heart recover and reduce the chance of a future attack. Many doctors also prescribe a cardiac rehabilitation program. A team of doctors, nurses, dietitians, exercise therapists and physical therapists design diet and exercise programs to help patients adopt a healthier lifestyle and reduce their risk of future heart problems.

"Most cardiac rehab programs last between one and three months," Dr. Hudson says. "Patients often return to work and are just as active – or even more active – than they were before the heart attack."

Even though heart attacks aren't as deadly as they once were, it still pays to be heart smart. Talk to your personal care physician (PCP) about your risk for heart disease. You can also find an interactive *Heart Attack Risk Calculator* in the online HAP Health Library. Log in at hap.org, choose the *Health & Wellness* tab, select *Tools and Resources*, and then choose *Health Library*. The Heart Attack Risk Calculator is under the *Interactive Tools* tab.

Heed Heart Attack Warning Signs

Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes. Symptoms may include:

- Chest pain or pressure, or a strange feeling in the chest
- Sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea or vomiting
- Pain, pressure or a strange feeling in the back, neck, jaw or upper belly, or in one or both shoulders or arms
- Lightheadedness or sudden weakness
- A fast or irregular heartbeat

Call 911 or other emergency services immediately if you think you're having a heart attack. Don't try to tough out these symptoms. Every second counts! Medication and procedures like angioplasty can get blood flowing back to your heart and save your life.

Don't take chances if you think you're having symptoms go to a hospital or urgent care center immediately.

Try These Exercises for Upper-Body Strength

Upper-body workouts aren't necessarily about achieving a bodybuilder's physique. They're about performing daily tasks, says fitness coach Melissa Boguslawski, M.P.H., A.F.A.A., of Sola Life & Fitness in Rochester Hills.

"A strong upper body helps us maintain strength and stability while doing common tasks, like reaching for an object on a high shelf, pulling the start cord on a lawn mower or carrying groceries," she says. "Strength training also helps us avoid injury."

To get started, do some light stretching, and then try these exercises targeting the arms, chest and shoulders. For each exercise, perform two sets of 10 to 15 repetitions. Increase to three sets as you progress.

Dumbbell Raise

Melissa recommends starting with light dumbbells (one to two pounds for women, two to five pounds for men). Increase the weight as you progress.

1. Stand with a dumbbell in each hand, palms facing inward, knees slightly bent.
2. Slowly raise both arms straight out to your sides or in front of you until they reach shoulder height. Maintain a slight bend at your elbow.
3. Return to start position and repeat.

Dips

1. Sit on the edge of a stable chair or bench with a flat, solid surface. Keep your knees bent at a 90-degree angle. Grasp the front of the seat on either side of your hips, fingers facing forward.
2. Walk your feet out and inch yourself off the seat until you're supported by your arms.
3. Bend your arms, keeping your elbows straight behind you as you slowly lower your body.
4. Return to start position and repeat.



Wall Push-Up

1. Stand facing a wall with your arms in front of you, feet hip distance apart.
2. Lean forward slightly and place your hands on the wall, shoulder distance apart.
3. Bend your elbows until your nose nearly touches the wall without straining your neck. Keep a straight line from your shoulders to your heels and tighten your abdominal muscles.
4. Return to start position and repeat.

"Do these exercises consistently, and you'll feel stronger after two to four weeks," Melissa says. Remember: Consult your doctor before starting any exercise program.

HAP Advantage* offers members a 15 percent discount on enrollment fees at Sola Life & Fitness. Be sure to mention that you are a HAP member to receive the discount.

*The HAP Advantage program is a value-added program, and the services and products made available under this program are not covered benefits under the Health Alliance Plan (HAP) Subscriber Contract, Alliance Group Insurance Policy, Riders or Member Handbook or otherwise payable by HAP. HAP, its affiliates, agents and assigns make no representations or warranties regarding the quality, price or effectiveness of the services or products, or the credentialing of the providers, made available by HAP Advantage.

Do You Need Long-Term Care Insurance?

According to one study, 60 percent of people reaching age 65 will need long-term care at some point. But does this mean you need to buy long-term care insurance? Maybe.

What is Long-Term Care?

Long-term care is not medical care but support for the basic personal tasks of everyday life. Long-term care insurance may be for you if you have a chronic illness or disability, or need help with activities like bathing or getting dressed. A good policy will pay for care in your home, an adult day care setting, assisted living facility or nursing home.

Before buying a policy, consider this: According to a government survey, about 47 percent of people who enter a long-term care facility return home in less than a year. That means you might never have a claim that

pays more than the cost of the policy. On the other hand, in 2008, 21 million people had a condition that caused them to need help with their health and personal care. Half of them were 65 and older.

The average annual cost for a private room in a nursing home is close to \$80,000 per year and Medicare doesn't pay this, as it is considered "custodial care."

Where Can I Learn More?

Explore your options to decide if long-term care insurance is right for you. A good place to start that includes definitions, planning resources and cost calculators is the National Clearinghouse for Long-Term Care Information at www.longtermcare.gov. Long-term care and health insurance are regulated by the state. For more information, visit the Office of Financial and Insurance Regulation at www.michigan.gov.

Life Insurance After 55 – Is It Necessary?

Perhaps your children are grown and financially secure or you've paid off your mortgage. Do you still need life insurance?

The answer depends on your personal situation.

Life insurance is a good idea if you have a spouse, aging parents or others who depend on you financially. A life insurance payout can help your beneficiaries pay off your outstanding debts, as well as burial and other expenses. You can also use life insurance to make a legacy gift to an organization.

If you need life insurance, there are two options: term life or whole life. Term life policies cover a set number of years and pay a benefit if you die during the policy term. A whole life policy covers your entire life span and pays a benefit when you die or a built-up cash value if you liquidate it before your death.

You can buy term life insurance in your 50s and 60s, but premiums are usually more expensive than for younger buyers.

See a financial adviser to learn if life insurance is a good fit for you. For more information about life insurance and to estimate how much coverage you might need, visit www.lifehappens.org.



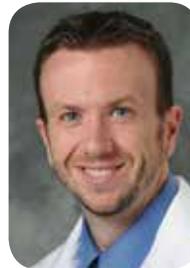


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Don't Skimp on Sunglasses

Long summer days mean lots of sunshine – and the need for sun protection. Long-term exposure to ultraviolet rays can lead not only to skin cancer but also to cataracts and other vision problems.

To protect your eyes, be sure to wear sunglasses. Optometrist Brian Schmidt, of Henry Ford OptimEyes™, offers these tips for finding the right pair:



Brian Schmidt,
O.D.

- Look for lenses that block 99 to 100 percent of UVA and UVB rays.
- Make sure the lens tint is uniform and not too light.
- Polarized lenses are best for reducing glare.
- Wraparound lenses provide the best eye and skin protection.
- To be sure you're getting a quality pair, it's recommended to buy from an eye care professional instead of the cosmetic pair from the drugstore or mall kiosk.



HAP members receive a 20 percent discount on nonprescription sunglasses purchased at any Henry Ford OptimEyes™ office or Super Vision Center. For more information, call toll-free (800) EYE-CARE.

GOT FEEDBACK?

Story ideas? Suggestions?

We would love to hear from you.

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