**Monitoring Your Heart Health**

*Tips to help avoid a cardiac event*

As an adult, it is not uncommon for things like doctor’s appointments and physical examinations to fall by the wayside. As you age, other responsibilities take over and seem to have greater importance, like your family or your career. These things are undeniably important, so you want to make sure that you can carry out these responsibilities to the best of your ability. Poor health, particularly heart health, will impact your ability to do your job and be there for those who need you most. Routine physical examinations can determine if there are any issues with your cardiovascular health, potentially preventing a serious cardiac event, such as a heart attack. At the very least, an exam may give you piece of mind. *It is a win-win situation.*

In addition to scheduling routine check-ups, there are a few other ways to ensure that you are putting your best foot forward when it comes to your heart health. Dr. Donald Ferrari, a Cardiologist at Paoli Hospital in Pennsylvania, suggests paying attention to your body during physical activity and recognizing that exercising is not a sole solution.

Any type of physical activity, whether it be a trip to the gym, playing with your kids in the yard, or participating in an adult sporting league can bring on a cardiac event. The older you get, the more at risk you are for cardiac problems, so it is important to pay attention to your body while working out and increasing your heart rate. If you are experiencing shortness of breath, chest pain, or dizziness, stop what you are doing immediately.

Exercise is great for your body and helps to prevent many health issues, however it is not nearly as effective by itself as it is in combination with a good diet and smart choices. Cardiologists recommend a low cholesterol diet. Low cholesterol and low blood pressure are crucial to maintaining good cardiovascular health.

It is also important to recognize that your health is impacted by your family history and choices. Being aware of a potential predisposition to heart disease is critical in taking care of yourself. More importantly, you should be cautious of the choices you are making, particularly if you are a smoker. Smoking will increase the risk of heart disease.

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