



The Beacon

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Med-Cert Medical Management Resources

“Guiding your way to better health management”

WHAT IS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE?

IT'S MORE THAN JUST FORGETTING THINGS.

About 4 million people in the U.S. have Alzheimer's. It is an illness that makes it hard for people to remember, think, and use language. It can make them act strange or seem moody. After a while, people with Alzheimer's have a hard time with things like using the phone, cooking or handling money. Sadly, many people think the early symptoms of Alzheimer's are signs of normal aging. So Alzheimer's is often not diagnosed and treated early.

WHO GETS ALZHEIMER'S?

The disease is more common in older adults. And it affects all races. About 1 in 10 people over the age of 65 have Alzheimer's. As many as 5 in 10 people over the age of 85 have Alzheimer's.

THERE IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO.

Through research, we are learning more about how the brain is affected in Alzheimer's. We do not yet know how to prevent or cure it. But we do know how to treat its symptoms. Aricept® can help treat the symptoms of mild to moderate Alzheimer's.

IT'S BEST TO START TREATMENT EARLY.

People with Alzheimer's often do better if they start treatment early. Aricept can slow down the symptoms of Alzheimer's. People who start treatment with Aricept early may keep higher memory and thinking skills longer. Also, treatment may help people keep doing their daily

tasks longer. Taking Aricept may help people stay in the community longer.

THE SYMPTOMS OF ALZHEIMER'S.

The first symptoms of Alzheimer's may be hard to tell from the normal signs of aging. Forgetting names, forgetting phone numbers, and losing things more often are often accepted as a normal part of aging. But don't ignore them. When they affect daily life, they may be early symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. Symptoms can vary from person to person. Some common symptoms of Alzheimer's are:

- Memory loss
- Problems doing familiar tasks
- Problems with language
- Trouble knowing the time, date, or place
- Poor or decreased judgment
- Problems with abstract thinking
- Misplacing things often, such as keys
- Changes in mood and behavior
- Changes in personality
- Loss of interest in starting projects or doing things.

IS IT ALZHEIMER'S?

If someone close to you has memory loss, it may be Alzheimer's. Forgetting some things can be a normal part of aging. But it could be an early sign of Alzheimer's when it affects daily life. Only the doctor can tell if the symptoms are Alzheimer's.



Don't Forget Your Juice

Your morning glass of juice may be a brain saver.

Drinking fruit or vegetable juice at least three times per week may lower a person's risk of Alzheimer's disease, a recent study suggests. Antioxidants in the juice may be responsible for the effect. To keep your waistline from expanding, choose low-calorie or pure juices without any added sugar.

HEALTH FOCUS

ABC's of DVT

Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) is a painful condition in which a blood clot – called a thrombosis – forms, usually in the deep veins of the legs. If the clot moves to the lungs, causing venous thromboembolism, it can be life threatening. In fact, complications from DVT-triggered blood clots contribute to more deaths every year than breast cancer and AIDS combined.

Triggers: When blood circulation in the legs' deep veins slows due to illness, injury or immobility, blood may pool, leading to clot formations.

Prevention: Exercise the legs regularly – take a daily brisk 30 minute walk – and stay an appropriate weight to control risk.

Symptoms: A clot may cause swelling, warmth and redness of the leg and pain

that is noticeable, or worse, when standing or walking. Such symptoms are not necessarily a sign of DVT, but if you have them, you should talk to a doctor immediately.

Treatment: Goals include stopping the clot from enlarging; preventing it from moving to the lungs or elsewhere; and reducing the risk of having another one. Medications used to treat and/or prevent DVT and associated problems include anti-coagulants (warfarin, heparin and the newer fondaparinux) that reduce blood's ability to clot. Treatment usually lasts 3-6 months.

CHOLESTEROL CONTROL

When it comes to protecting your heart, your cholesterol levels tell you how your health adds up.

You really need cholesterol. This fat like substance produced in your liver is essential for making the walls of cells in your body, vitamin D, and male and female hormones.

But if you are an average fast-food-loving sedentary American, you really don't need all that much cholesterol. In many Americans, excess fats and cholesterol from animal foods (burgers, eggs, and butter) begin settling into the walls of arteries during adolescence. If it isn't reined in, the arterial speed bump of cholesterol-rich plaque becomes a serious roadblock. Chest pain (angina) can be a distress call from the downstream heart muscle deprived of blood.

More often, waxy yellowish plaque burrows beneath the surface of the artery's inner wall without affecting the flow. Most diseased arteries are not severely narrowed. The artery walls are just filled with cholesterol, vulnerable to injury and rupture which are preludes to a heart attack.

Testing Tips – A basic blood test can reveal your cholesterol profile. The most accurate cholesterol readings come from blood samples taken after fasting for 9-12 hours. Results typically include numbers for LDL, HDL, triglycerides, total cholesterol and, possibly, C-reactive protein levels (CRP), a newer measure of heart risk.

Your Cholesterol IQ True or false?

1. Baked goods are always cholesterol safe as long as they are reduced-fat and contain fiber. **False: Read the label. If it mentions "partially hydrogenated" oil, it contains trans fats, which can boost cholesterol.**
2. Lowfat foods are always low in cholesterol. **False: Organ meats like liver are low in fat and high in cholesterol.**
3. Cholesterol isn't a problem for teenagers. **False: Abnormal cholesterol levels often begin in childhood.**
4. High LDL cholesterol levels mean I am at risk of plaque buildup in heart arteries supplying blood to the brain. **True: LDL contributes to cholesterol rich deposits in artery walls, causing atherosclerosis and raising the risk of heart attack and stroke.**
5. We know for sure that reducing LDL levels lowers the risk of heart attack. **True: Evidence shows that treatment for high LDL reduces cardiovascular risks. What we don't know for sure is that raising good HDL cholesterol lowers the risk of heart attack.**
6. If my overall cholesterol is 200 or lower, I don't have to worry about heart disease. **False: For some women, elevated triglyceride levels may be a stronger indication of heart health than cholesterol levels, and for some people, the ratio of LDL to HDL may be a more precise indication of heart disease.**

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Raisins: Chewy Treat for Teeth

Research reveals that chewy raisins may provide special benefits to your choppers.

Phytochemicals in raisins appear to help fight cavities by inhibiting the growth of certain types of oral bacteria. Raisins also prevent the bacteria from sticking to teeth. Keep your teeth healthy by brushing and flossing every day, having regular dental checkups and professional teeth cleanings, and choosing smile-friendly snacks.

Dial It Down!

Need to lower your Blood Pressure? Eat more Fiber.

According to a recent study in the *Journal of Hypertension*, if you eat a high fiber diet, you can lower your blood pressure and even improve healthy blood pressure levels. Eating more vegetables and fruits may provide the best boost to dietary fiber intake. If you have hypertension and are unwilling or unable to consume additional fiber, fiber in a pill form is an option.

FYI: Dietary fiber protects the heart and helps the digestion.

Recipe Corner



Black Bean Chili

A great source of fiber, black beans give a rich, full flavor to chili. Serves 4-6

1 ½ pound Ground beef
1 large Onion, diced
½ teaspoon Garlic, minced
1 ½ Tablespoons Cumin
2 cups Black beans
1 cup Tomatoes, diced
½ cup Mild green chilies, chopped
1 cup Beer
Salt, pepper, and hot sauce to taste
Monterey Jack cheese, grated

In a heavy soup pot, brown the beef. Add the onion and garlic and cook until just brown. Drain off any excess fat. Add the remaining ingredients (except the cheese). Bring to just under a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 1 ½ hours. Serve warm, garnished with the cheese.



This newsletter is brought to you courtesy of Med-Cert, Inc. Our sources for this edition were the Web MD, Real Age - Health Tools and Tips for Living Younger, Remedy magazine and the Happy Day Cards (fishing for a healthy recipe) web sites.