

# Richly Rewarding Living

## Takin' Care of Your Ticker - February is Heart Health Month

**Your Heart**—It beats on average 100,000 times a day and pumps the equivalent of 2,000 gallons of blood each day. Imagine what a workhorse our hearts must be! So vital to our life and yet not well taken care of by most of us. Heart disease continues to be the leading cause of death in the U.S., claiming close to a million lives each year. Over 30 million Americans live with the burden of heart disease; 60 million Americans have been diagnosed with hypertension, a major risk factor for heart disease.

While traditionally considered a "man's disease," heart disease has become a serious health challenge for women as well. Cardiovascular disease kills over 500,000 women each year, more than the next seven causes of death combined. To give you a perspective **1 in every 2.5 women will die of heart disease and stroke**, compared to 1 in 30 women who will die from breast cancer.

The even more frightening statistic is that more than half of women who die of coronary heart disease have either no classic symptoms, or have been misdiagnosed as anxiety, stress, or musculoskeletal disorders. The challenge comes is that coronary artery disease in women tends to show symptoms like shortness of breath or fatigue rather than the classic 'crushing' pain that is more typical in men.

Research conducted by NIH with 515 women surprisingly revealed that fewer than 30% of women reported having chest pain or discomfort prior to their heart attacks, and 43% reported to have no chest pain at all during any phase of the attack. The most common symptoms they reported were unusual fatigue, sleep disturbances, and shortness of breath.

So, whether you are male or female, today is the day to put your heart health on the radar screen.

Let's talk about what you can do...

First of all, let's assess your risk and then determine what you can do to lower your risks. Yes, there is much you can do to hopefully prevent a catastrophic event from happening to you down the road!

The seven major risk factors for coronary artery disease, and only one of these risk factors is not in your control—family history. You cannot change your family history, but knowledge is good—so if your family tree includes heart attacks, strokes, and diabetes, it behooves you to look at the other 6 risk factors—because these are **all modifiable risks that you have control over!**

Knowing your risk factors is the first step in preventing heart disease. Once you know your risk factors, you can begin to take the

steps needed to reducing your chances of developing heart disease.

### **Modifiable Risk Factor #1: Being overweight or obese**

If you're like 65% of Americans who are overweight or obese the number one thing you can do to reduce your risk of heart disease is to achieve a healthy weight. Too much body fat, especially around your waist, puts you at higher risk. Being overweight or obese also increase your risk of other conditions like high cholesterol, stroke, and Type 2 Diabetes. So by losing weight you can begin to reduce your risk of heart disease. And the good news is you don't have to lose a lot of weight to start to improve your health. Modest weight loss of even as little as 5-10% can make a significant difference.

### **Modifiable Risk Factor #2: Having High Blood Cholesterol levels**

You can have high cholesterol and not know it because in the early phases of accumulation of cholesterol plaque in your arteries, there are no symptoms! This buildup of plaque can narrow your arteries and reduce blood flow ultimately leading to arterial blockage or blood clots in arteries that feed the heart and brain. This in turn can cause a heart attack or stroke. Lifestyle changes like improving your diet and increasing your physical activity can help lower your cholesterol.

Consistently eating a diet rich in whole grains, fresh fruit, vegetables, legumes, and low fat sources of protein (like soy protein) can help lower cholesterol and protect your heart. The FDA has recognized that the consumption of 25 grams or more of soy protein per day may reduce your risk of heart disease.

Choosing healthy sources of fats is also incredibly important. You need to limit your intake of saturate fats (the type found in beef, butter, cheese, and regular fat dairy products) and completely avoid trans fats (found in fast foods, bakery products, packaged snack foods, and some margarines) as these have been clearly linked to increasing the risk of heart disease.

Simultaneously, it is prudent to switch to monosaturated fats (found in olive oil, avocado, nuts, and seeds), as regular consumption of these fats has been shown to decrease your risk. Another important heart healthy fat is omega-3 fatty acids, a type of polyunsaturated fat found in foods like fish and flaxseed that may also help protect your heart by decreasing your risk of heart attack, protect against irregular heartbeats and helping to lower triglycerides and blood pressure. Fiber is another important part of a healthy diet. Look for dark breads that contain at least 3 grams of fiber per serving, whole grain cereal that provides at least 6 grams of fiber per serving. Fiber supplements that provide at least 5 grams of fiber, preferably a blend of soluble and insoluble fiber are a prudent addition for anyone dealing with elevated lipids.

### Modifiable Risk Factor #3: Having High Blood Pressure

You can also have high blood pressure or hypertension and not know it. With elevated blood pressure, your heart is working harder than normal, pushing your blood with too much pressure against your artery walls. In turn, this may enlarge your heart and damage your arteries and significantly increase your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. What can you do? Well, if you are overweight, losing weight can make a significant difference in your blood pressure. Eating a heart healthy diet rich in plant foods and heart healthy fats can also help. And make sure to get adequate amounts of potassium, calcium, and magnesium, but watch your sodium intake. Regular physical exercise also tends to strengthen the cardiovascular system and lower blood pressure. And, again, omega-3 fatty acids have been shown to support healthy blood pressure and help to maintain healthy heart rhythm.

### Modifiable Risk Factor #4: Having Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 Diabetes is a serious and increasingly common disease in which the body doesn't properly use insulin, the hormone produced by the pancreas that is responsible for transporting sugar in the blood into cells of the body where it can be metabolized. Left untreated, blood sugar levels increase and will damage blood vessels, thus increasing the risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

Being overweight and sedentary are two big risk factors for developing Type 2 Diabetes, and once again, modest weight loss can help prevent diabetes from developing in the first place. If you already have diabetes, weight loss, improvements in your diet and the addition of fiber can help to naturally improve your blood sugar control. Regular visits to your health care provider are critical if you already have diabetes. If you have a family member with diabetes, or you are overweight, have your doctor screen you for diabetes, which can often be without symptoms until it is advanced.

### Modifiable Risk Factor #5: Being Physically Inactive

Being a couch potato increases your likelihood of developing heart disease. And increasing your physical activity can make a big difference. If you're overweight, it will help you burn calories, it will also help lower your blood pressure and improve your cholesterol. The American Heart Association recommends 30 minutes a day, most days of the week. If you don't have time to do all 30 minutes at once, no worries, breaking it up into shorter periods of exercise is fine, just be sure it all adds up. In addition to vigorous activities like walking, running, or swimming, simple day to day activities count too. Activities like gardening, housework, mowing the lawn, are all activities that can help improve your heart health.

### Modifiable Risk Factor #6: Smoking

Smoking is the most preventable cause of death in the U.S. Even second hand smoke also increases your risk of developing heart disease and other serious conditions like cancer. If you smoke the best thing you can do for your health and the health of others around you is to quit. Discuss quitting with your doctor, they can help direct you to a program that's right for you.

So in honor of February Heart Health Month, we want to be sure you are taking special care of your most prized possession—your heart! Check which modifiable risk factors you have and make a change today. Start by following a heart healthy weight loss plan and increasing your physical activity. Next, eat a diet rich in plant foods, like whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, other lean protein and heart healthy fats. Incorporate soy protein and soluble fiber. And finally consider the use of heart-smart dietary supplements as added nutrition support.

### **Get a 30-day supply of this month's featured supplement, OMEGAGuard, for just \$29.95!**

February is Heart Health Month, a fantastic time to get started protecting your "ticker!" Call us today at (903)663-0246 or email [chris@personallyfitbychrishill.com](mailto:chris@personallyfitbychrishill.com) to order a 30-day supply of the highest quality Pharmaceutical Grade Fish Oil available...

#### **OMEGAGuard**

For just \$29.95

(or \$24.95 if you are enrolled in our nutritional program.)

### *CLIENT OF THE MONTH*

This month's client of the month is husband and wife team **Eddy & Sherrie Anderson.**

***The Andersons have lost a combined 20 lbs. and 11.2% body fat.***

Client of the Month receives 1 free personal training session.

### *Welcome New Clients!*

**Ann Adamson** - (Referred by **Judy Weeks!** Thanks!)

**Will Adamson** - (Referred by **Ann Adamson!** Thanks!)

**Benjamin Weeks** - (Referred by **Judy Weeks!** Thanks!)

**Mary Rea** - (Referred by **Ronda Dickey!** Thanks!)

**Brittany Brown** - (Referred by **Donna Powell!** Thanks!)

We would also like to welcome **Hazel Hickey, Cindie Porter, Gina Roberts, and Annette Bray!**

***And don't forget,*** if you have any questions or concerns about your health, **talk to us.** Contact us with your questions. We're here to help, and don't enjoy anything more than participating in your lifelong good health. If you have a question about fitness, weight loss, health trends, or a supplement/nutritional product you would like checked out, email your question and I'll do my best to address it in an upcoming issue (or with you personally).

***I'd love to hear from you.***

**My email address for comments is [Chris@PersonallyFitByChrisHill.com](mailto:Chris@PersonallyFitByChrisHill.com)**

# "If there is a nutritional 'magic bullet' it is pharmaceutical grade fish oil."

**Stephen Chaney Ph.D**

Director of Nutrition and Professor of Biochemistry, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

According to the Centers for Disease Control and the American Heart Association (AHA), heart disease - specifically coronary artery disease - is still **the number one cause of death of men and women**. And while it was once considered a man's disease, today more women than men die from heart disease. And unfortunately, *at least 100 million Americans have one or more risk factors for heart disease*.

To reduce the risk of heart disease, the AHA recommends eating two servings of fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids each week. But most people eat fish only three times per month or less. Additionally, there are growing concerns about unsafe levels of contaminants such as mercury and lead that are now commonly found in many fish.

Today, most fish swim in oceans, lakes, and streams that contain incredibly high levels of mercury and other health deteriorating toxins. The EPA itself has stated that one drop of mercury in a lake is enough to shut it down for contamination. Yet, most fish that we eat have at least one drop of poisonous mercury. Frankly, the risks of consuming mercury from the eating of fish are real. **But with Pharmaceutical Grade Fish Oil, all the mercury and toxins have been eliminated**. Take just a few capsules per

day and you're getting more Omega 3 Fatty Acids than you would get from eating an entire fish.

Now, do NOT mistake Pharmaceutical Grade Fish Oil with any of the store bought brands. Many of the fish oil supplements bought in stores have not been purified. As such, they still contain mercury and other toxins - and are harmful to your health. Not only that, but store bought fish oil has a foul odor and when consumed can cause unsavory burping and belching.

This is not the case with Pharmaceutical Grade Fish Oil - especially the brand we recommend - OMEGAGuard by Shaklee - which is the very highest quality on the market today. Be sure to get started on it. It won't take but a few days for you to be convinced that it is indeed an *"All-Natural Miracle Supplement and The Only Fish Oil Worth Taking!"*



*Here are some of the many scientifically proven benefits of taking pharmaceutical grade fish oil:*

- Reduced cholesterol levels
- Reduced chance of contracting cancer
- Reduced blood pressure
- Improvement in ratio of HDL to LDL cholesterol
- Decreased risk of heart attack or stroke
- Decreased chance of Alzheimer's
- Improved memory
- Increases and balances hormone levels
- Improved athletic performance
- Decreases inflammation throughout entire body
- Helps eliminate joint pain
- Improves digestion and elimination
- Improved eyesight
- Helps eliminate depression and mood swings
- Increased emotional well being
- Increased sex drive
- Improved I.Q. scores
- Increased strength and stamina
- Improved functioning of kidneys
- Overall improvement in immune system
- Improved hormonal function