

BETTER HEALTH 4 YOU

SMART LOCAL 36 BENEFIT FUND

DIABETES

Young at Heart

It's possible to reverse the course of heart disease

People who have diabetes are more likely to get heart disease. They are also more likely to die from a heart attack or stroke. So, if you have diabetes, it is smart to take care of your heart. You may know that diet and exercise can help prevent heart disease. There are medicines that can also help if you need them. Now there is even better news. There is build-up inside your arteries called “plaque”. This causes heart disease. Recent studies show that you can prevent this build-up. You can also reverse it!

We talked to Roger S. Blumenthal, M.D., about these studies. He directs The Ciccarone Center for the Prevention of Heart Disease at Johns Hopkins.

Up the Statins

Statins are often used to treat high levels of fat in the blood. This fat in the blood is called cholesterol. Statins may cut

back on how hard and narrow your arteries get. “Atherosclerosis” is when your arteries get hard; it leads to heart problems and strokes.

People in the study took a high dose of a statin for two years. The dose was 40 milligrams a day. LDL (“bad”) cholesterol fell by more than half. HDL (“good”) cholesterol went up 15 percent. And the amount of plaque in the arteries went down.

This is great news, says Blumenthal. You can lower the amount of plaque in your arteries. Talk to your doctor about your heart disease risk. If your cholesterol is high, ask if taking a statin would help.

Change Your Lifestyle

You can also reverse heart disease by changing your health habits. This was shown in a study led by Dean Ornish, M.D. One group got the usual care for hardening of the arteries. That included drugs to cut cholesterol. The other

Pineapple Cinnamon

Stuffed Acorn Squash

- 1 large acorn squash
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- ½ cup crushed pineapple, drain
- 1 tsp. nutmeg
- ½ tsp. each allspice & ginger

Servings: 6

Preheat oven to 325°. Cut squash in half and remove seeds and any excess membranes. Place cut side up in a covered dish and bake 45 min. Combine all seasonings. Let cool and scoop out the pulp and combine with pineapple and seasoning mixture. Replace mixture into shells and bake for 7 more minutes.

Calories per serving 58, Fat 0.3g, Chol 0mg, Sodium 4mg, Total Carb 14.9g, Fiber 2.2g, Protein 1g,



group didn't take these drugs. Instead, they:

- ate a very low-fat vegetarian diet
- quit smoking
- reduced stress
- exercised regularly

After one year, most people in the second (lifestyle) group had less plaque in their arteries. But plaque went up in the other group.

Blumenthal says that the Ornish approach does work. But it has not been endorsed by leading heart groups. That's because most people find it hard to stick with the strict diet.



Know Your ABCDEs

Blumenthal helped come up with a broad plan to manage and prevent heart disease. The plan is known as "ABCDE."

A is for antiplatelet therapy. When blood platelets clump together and form clots, these clots can clog arteries. Daily aspirin keeps blood from clotting. Read more at:

Mary Beth Cyliax, RN, CCM

314-652-8175 Ext. 310

Call me anytime for questions

All information contained within this newsletter is intended for educational purposes only. Members should never disregard medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something they may have read in this newsletter. Information obtained from Johns Hopkins Medicine & allrecipes.com.

<http://www.onetouch.com/articles/healthyheart>.

B is for:

- beta-blocker drugs (to treat abnormal heart rhythms)
 - blood pressure control
- Keep blood pressure below 130/80 mm/Hg. This goal comes from the American Diabetes Association (ADA).

C is for:

- cholesterol treatment
 - cutting out cigarettes
- The ADA's goal for LDL ("bad") cholesterol is less than 100 mg/dL.

D is for:

- diabetes management
- diet

The ADA suggests that A1C (a measure of diabetes control) be 7 percent or less. The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet helps bring down blood pressure. It is low in salt. It is high in produce and low-fat dairy products. To learn more, see "[Hardening of the Arteries: Some Hard Facts](http://www.onetouch.com/articles/hardarteries)" (<http://www.onetouch.com/articles/hardarteries>).

E is for exercise. Try a brisk half-hour walk each day.

Top Tips to Keep Your Heart Healthy

1. **See a heart specialist.** Work together to develop a heart-

health program you can live with for the long term.

2. **Know your cholesterol levels.** Ask your doctor how to lower it if it's too high.

3. **Control your blood pressure.** A low-salt diet, exercise and stopping smoking can all help.

4. **Track your diabetes.** Test your blood sugar levels at home. Know your targets.

5. **Move more.** Make physical activity part of your daily routine.

6. **Address stress and depression.** This is very important for women.

7. **Be aware of subtle symptoms.** In women, a heart attack may cause symptoms other than chest pain. These include:

- shortness of breath
- nausea or vomiting
- sweating,
- dizziness
- extreme fatigue.



SUICIDE PREVENTION/CRISIS LIFELINE 1-800-273-8255 24/7