



Making Communities Healthier®

FauquierHealth.org

FAUQUIER HEALTH NEWS + WINTER/SPRING 2022



How Healthy is Your Heart?

By Neel K. Shah, MD, Cardiologist

Your heart is one of the hardest working parts of your body. It's also one of the most threatened. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the U.S. – about one in four deaths.

There are many medical conditions due to genetics or aging, which are out of our control, that lead to sickness and early death. The most common form of heart disease, which is plaque clog up in the heart arteries, is largely a preventable and reversible disease. Critical to this effort of preventing and reversing heart disease is partnering with your healthcare provider to understand your risk factors for heart disease and knowing how healthy your heart is now.

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Ask a Dietitian



Isabel Maples, RD, is a registered dietitian.

QUESTION: *Healthier eating is one of my goals for 2022. How can I make it happen?*

ANSWER: Healthy eating is a great goal for this or any year – it can reduce the risk of illness and disease, boost our energy and even help improve our mental health. Changing your eating habits can seem daunting but there are some ways you can make a healthy change in what you eat, including planning and preparing healthy meals for the week ahead of time (“meal prep”); stocking your kitchen with healthier basics to have on hand, like olive and canola oils, brown rice, whole grains, frozen veggies and lean chicken and fish; drinking lots of water; and eating a breakfast high in protein and fiber. Whatever steps you take, try not to be overwhelmed. Make one or two healthy changes a week instead of all at once. It’s a small tip that can play a big role in ensuring your new healthy habits are here to stay. ■

*Want to talk with a dietitian about your eating plan? Call 540.316.2735 or visit **FauquierHealth.org** to connect with a provider for a referral.*



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Are you having symptoms of heart disease now? Chest discomfort? Unusual shortness of breath? Heart palpitations? Edema? Well, then you may need an investigation of your heart's structure and function with testing that can be ordered by your primary care provider or a cardiologist. What if you have no symptoms? Then it is just as critical that you control your blood pressure, cholesterol, obesity, and pre-diabetes/diabetes. That begins with understanding your baseline measurements and working with your healthcare provider on a plan for improvement.

Cholesterol is an essential substance that each of us needs for basic body structure and function, from ensuring the integrity of our cell membrane to helping make our sex hormones. We need a certain amount of cholesterol – we cannot exist without it. Did you know that our livers work to make the cholesterol we need? That is why any added cholesterol through what we consume in our foods have the potential to clog up our arteries. Foods derived from animals (dairy, chicken, beef, eggs) are full of cholesterol. Therefore, it's important to minimize animal products, and if your bad cholesterol (LDL) is still greater than 100mg/dl, talk to your healthcare provider options for further management, including medicine and non-prescription alternatives.

Blood pressure measures the pressure or force of blood within your arteries. Every heartbeat with high blood pressure can be somewhat damaging to the walls of your arteries and creates an environment for plaque clog up leading to heart attack and stroke. A normal blood pressure reading is less than 120 systolic and less than 80 diastolic. Readings above these levels would be considered elevated or high. Hypertension is prominent when readings are 130/80 or above. High blood pressure can be a significant contributor and sign of serious heart issues. Nearly half of American adults, according to the American Heart Association, present no symptoms the majority of the time so it's important to get your blood pressure checked regularly. High blood pressure can be lowered and managed with the proper care. Eating a largely (>90%) healthy plant-based diet with minimal hidden and added salt is very important. Most of the salt in our diets reside in meats, including white meats, as well as highly processed foods. Always read your nutrition labels and keep your sodium intake less than 2,000mg per day.

Blood Sugar that is poorly controlled is also a tremendously powerful risk factor for heart disease. This is a reflection of poor dietary habits with excess saturated fats and processed foods. Type 2 Diabetes is largely a man-made disease. Get your blood test called A1c checked—which is a 3-month average of blood sugar—and understand your options for managing and reversing high blood sugar.

Waist size can also be a harbinger for heart health and a predictor of heart problems. A study by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute showed that men with a waist size larger than 40 inches and women with a waist size greater than 35 inches are at higher risk for heart attack and stroke. The good news is that eating a healthy diet and regular physical activity can help you lower and maintain a healthy waist size and stay on the road of good health. ■

Need help to know your heart? You can count on us. From primary care to heart services, we're here for you with high-quality, compassionate care when you and your family need it. Call 540.316.DOCS (3627) or visit FauquierHealth.org and click on Find a Doctor to make an appointment.

For more information on heart health, visit heart.org

You can also take our free heart health assessment by visiting FauquierHealth.org/heart-and-vascular

A note from the the Fauquier Health team

As we take our first steps into 2022, our team wants to publicly thank our fellow employees, providers and medical staff for their continued commitment to caring for those we serve. We also want to thank you for your continued support of our efforts and for all that you have done and are doing to help get us closer to an end to the COVID-19 pandemic, including getting vaccinated and boosted and wearing your mask when appropriate.

It has certainly been a challenging couple of years for ours and other communities around the world, and we couldn't do what we do without our fellow staff and without community members like you. We are so proud to call this community home, and we are honored that you continue to trust us with your care.

This year, as always, we will continue to be there for you and your families' healthcare needs and the overall well-being of our community as we advance our mission of Making Communities Healthier.

Wishing you health and happiness in 2022,

Fauquier Health Team



Mission Moment

Samantha James, RN
JOB TITLE

Fauquier Health honored Samantha James, RN, (right, pictured with Dr. Christine Hart Kress, CNO) as the fourth quarter DAISY Team award recipient for 2021.

Ms. James was nominated multiple times and was commended for her compassion and personality.

One nominating patient wrote, “We talked, joked and laughed which put my nerves at ease. To be honest, I forgot I was there for surgery and felt like I was talking to a good friend.” Another patient said, “... she comforted me and made me feel like she truly cared. If I had to go through this again, I would definitely want her to be my nurse again.” ■

Is It Time for a Colonoscopy?

If you're 45 or older, yes. A colonoscopy is a simple and effective procedure which serves two very important purposes: it helps to find colorectal cancer quickly and early so that it can be treated much more easily, and it helps to prevent colorectal cancer by identifying and removing any colorectal polyps before they become cancerous.

The American Cancer Society now recommends that adults should begin colorectal screening at age 45. If you have a higher than average risk for colorectal cancer, you may need to start sooner and get tested more frequently. You should talk with your doctor about your risks and when a screening might be right for you. To find a provider, call **540.316.DOCS (3627)** or visit **FauquierHealth.org** and click on Find a Doctor to get connected to a provider who can help you schedule this important screening. ■



Managing Your Medications Safely

Medications can be a great tool to help us heal and get healthy again, but they can also pose a serious health risk when misused or handled improperly. There are some simple steps you can take to practice medication safety:

- Take your medications only as directed by your provider and for the intended purpose.
- Properly store your medications, with relocked caps on bottles and in a safe place out of reach of children and out of sight of friends and guests.
- Don't share your medications with others.
- Safely dispose of unused or expired medications to help prevent accidental poisoning, and overdose or abuse.

If you need to safely dispose of unused or expired meds, medication drop boxes are an easy and convenient way to do so, and they're free and anonymous. Visit [fda.gov/drugs/disposal-unused-medicines-what-you-should-know/drug-disposal-drug-take-back-locations](https://www.fda.gov/drugs/disposal-unused-medicines-what-you-should-know/drug-disposal-drug-take-back-locations) to find one near you. ■

Tropical Green Smoothie

Kickstart your day the healthy way!

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|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2 handfuls spinach | $\frac{3}{4}$ cup frozen mango chunks |
| 1 cup coconut water | $\frac{1}{2}$ medium banana |
| 1 tbsp flax seeds | 2 cups ice |
| 1 tsp honey | |
| 1 medium orange | |

1. In a food processor or blender, process the spinach, water, seeds and honey until blended.
2. Add the orange, mango and banana. Process until smooth.
3. Add the ice, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup at a time, until the desired consistency.

Makes 2 servings.

*Recipe from the American Heart Association.
Find more healthy recipes at heart.org/recipes



Meet Hasina Hamid, MD

Fauquier Health is excited to announce the welcoming of Hasina Hamid, MD.

Dr. Hamid joined our team in March 2022 and specializes in internal medicine. She has begun seeing patients in our newest Primary and Specialty Care office located in Lake Manassas. She will also see patients in Warrenton at our Piedmont Internal Medicine location.

If you need a provider, call **540.316.DOCS (3627)** or visit **FauquierHealth.org** and click on Find a Doctor. 

DISCLAIMER: *The information and practices described in this newsletter are not intended as substitutes for a diagnosis or clinical or medical advice prescribed by a medical provider for an individual patient that is based on the individual's history, condition and current medical assessment. This information is not intended to be comprehensive about the subjects addressed and may include information that is time-sensitive and subject to change.