

# Advancing Health Newsletter



February is American Heart Month  
Keep your heart healthy...



DIABLO CLINICAL RESEARCH

## Advice for a Healthy Heart

Lambert H.K. Chee MD, FACC

Heart disease is still the second greatest killer of Americans under the age of 85. Each year, at least 500,000 Americans die from heart disease or the complications of heart disease. Yet heart disease is a PREVENTABLE disease. Because of the advances made in terms of diagnosis, treatment, as well as preventive measures, we can safely say that with appropriate treatment, diet, exercise, and mental discipline, heart disease can be arrested or even reversed.

The most common form of heart disease today occurs in the form of coronary artery disease, a condition characterized by blockage of the arteries that feed the heart muscle. (The heart is actually made up of two pumps in series, each pump powered by the muscles making up the walls of the heart chambers.) Coronary artery disease occurs as a result of multiple risk factors, including high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus, obesity, cigarette smoking, abnormal lipid levels, lack of physical exercise, and genetic disposition. While genetic therapy is not available at the present time, each of the other risk factors can be (continued on page 2)

### Special points of interest:

- It's **Heart Health Month**. Don't miss Dr. Chee's *Advice for a Healthy Heart*.
- **FREE Cardiovascular Screening** for those who qualify. See page 3 for details.

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### A message from our Medical Director:

## Dr. Richard Weinstein

Dear Friends of Diablo Clinical Research,

An integral part of our mission at Diablo Clinical is to advance health through medical research and community service. We hope this first issue of "Advancing Health Newsletter" is a useful tool in safeguarding your health and that of your family and friends.

Our 1st quarter issue focuses on Heart Health during National American Heart Month. You will find helpful tips for keeping your heart healthy, preventing strokes and maintaining a heart-healthy diet. On Friday, February 25th, we are hosting a special cardiovascular screening for our heart disease prevention clinical study. Call us to learn if you qualify for this screening, or if you just want to make an appointment to check your cholesterol.

Now is the time to think about your heart health! We look forward to seeing you in our clinic soon.

Sincerely,

Dr. Weinstein



## Advice for a Healthy Heart (continued from page 1)

addressed. Studies have shown that addressing any of the risk factors can bring down the risk of developing heart disease, and if a multi-faceted approach is taken, heart disease can even be prevented.

Listed below are the most important steps necessary to control and prevent heart disease:



Maintain an ideal body weight

1. **Regular physical exercise.** Hundreds of studies have shown that regular physical exercise reduces heart attacks, strokes, accidents, suicides, and deaths from all causes.

2. **Do not smoke, and avoid second hand smoke.** No study has shown that smoking is good for anyone; the studies linking cigarette smoking to cancer, heart and vascular disease, and lung disease are overwhelming.

3. **Maintain a normal blood pressure of 120/80 or lower.** Medical studies as well as insurance statistics have shown that a lower blood pressure correlates with a better survival curve. High blood pressure causes heart attacks, strokes, heart failure, kidney failure, and rupture of aneurysms.

4. **Maintain an ideal body weight.** Each 2.2 lb increase in body weight increases the risk of diabetes by 9%. A 25 lb. weight gain doubles your risk of diabetes. Having diabetes means your risk of having another heart attack is just as great as someone who has already had a heart attack.

5. **Eat appropriately.** Eat to satisfy your body's metabolic needs, not your psychological cravings.

6. **Address any lipid abnormalities.** Most cardiologists would look at any LDL cholesterol level above 100 with caution. For someone with documented heart disease, the ideal goal at the current time is an LDL level of 70 or below. Any HDL cholesterol level below 45 is a cause for concern.

7. **Keep your blood sugar in the normal range.** For diabetics, tight control is now the accepted form of therapy. Keeping the blood sugar in the normal range has been shown to prevent the micro vascular complications of diabetes.

8. **Let go of stress.** Stress can cause high blood pressure, heart disease, depression, and suicides. Use meditation, guided imagery, biofeedback, or just lie perfectly still and concentrate on your breathing.

If you have questions or comments on this article, please feel free to contact Dr. Chee at Diablo Clinical Research 925 930-7267 or [studies@diabloclinical.com](mailto:studies@diabloclinical.com)

"A 25 lb. weight gain doubles your risk of diabetes."

**Be a Healthy Volunteer!** Would you like to make a difference in the health of future generations? Volunteer today for a clinical study. Healthy volunteers are needed for blood samples used in clinical studies. Study stipend is available for your time & travel. Call or email the clinic for details.

925 930-7267 / [studies@diabloclinical.com](mailto:studies@diabloclinical.com)

**Fat Facts—the Bad and the Good.** The type of fat you eat does make a difference!

While all fats have the same number of calories, some raise your blood cholesterol levels and others lower your blood cholesterol levels. Cholesterol-raising Fats include: **Saturated Fats & Trans Fatty Acids.** Cholesterol-lowering Fats include: **Monounsaturated Fats & Polyunsaturated Fats.**

**The Bad Fats:** Of all the types of fat, **saturated fat** is the most dangerous for your blood cholesterol level. This type of fat is found in animal or vegetable foods and is hard or solid at room temperature. If you were to leave a well-marbled steak on you counter at room temperature, would the fat become liquid? No! It would remain solid; therefore it is a saturated fat. Saturated fat is found mostly in meat products, dairy products, tropical oils (palm and coconut), and processed baked goods. It is important to remember that even if these foods contain no cholesterol, they will still raise your blood cholesterol level because they contain saturated fat.

**Trans Fatty Acids** are produced when liquid oil is hydrogenated, meaning it is chemically changed from a liquid to a solid. The reason that food manufacturers use this process is to lengthen the shelf life and to provide flavor stability. Trans fatty acids will increase the level of cholesterol in your blood even though a particular food may be low in saturated fat and contain no cholesterol.

**The Good Fat: Monounsaturated Fats**—These are the fats that lower your blood cholesterol level without lowering your HDL-C (the good cholesterol.) People that eat a diet rich in monounsaturated fats usually have low levels of coronary heart disease. Monounsaturated fats are found in olive oil, canola oil, nuts, olives and avocados.

**Polyunsaturated fats** are often considered neutral in their effect on blood cholesterol levels. They help lower LDL-C (the bad cholesterol), however, they can also cause small reductions in the HDL-C. Polyunsaturated fats are found in liquid vegetable oils including corn, cottonseed, safflower, sesame seed, soybean, and sunflower seed oils. (This information adapted from "Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes (TLC) Dietary Handbook"—a resource used in cholesterol related studies at Diablo Clinical Research. Author: Cheryl Marco, RD, CDE)

## FREE HEART HEALTH SCREENINGS

Diablo Clinical Research

### Are you at risk?

- Research has shown that almost half of all cardiovascular events occur among apparently healthy individuals with low to normal LDL (bad) cholesterol.
- Recent studies have shown that C-reactive protein (CRP), a marker of inflammation, may be a predictor of cardiovascular events in patients with normal levels of LDL.
- CRP can be measured with a simple blood test.

### The screening is for:

- Men 55 + older
- Women 65 + older
- No history of prior heart attack, stroke, diabetes, cancer (except skin cancer) uncontrolled high blood pressure or acute

liver disease, and

- Patients who are NOT currently taking cholesterol lowering medication and...who may be interested in participating in a medical research study that may ultimately help you and others avoid a future heart attack or stroke –

For more information on this study go to:

[www.jupiterstudy.com](http://www.jupiterstudy.com)

*Space is limited. Call to make your screening appointment:*

*(925) 930-7267 x 237*

*Date: call for an appointment*

*Time: 7am–1pm*

*Location: Diablo Clinical Research*

*2255 Ygnacio Valley Road, Suite M*

*Walnut Creek*



*“Research has shown that almost half of all cardiovascular events occur among apparently healthy individuals”*

## What is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a soft, fat-like, waxy substance found in the bloodstream and in all your body's cells. It's normal to have cholesterol. It's an important part of a healthy body, used for producing cell membranes and some hormones, and serves other needed bodily functions. But too high a level of cholesterol in the blood, known as hypercholesterolemia, is a major risk for coronary heart disease, which leads to heart attack. It's also a risk factor for stroke.

You get cholesterol in two ways. Your body produces some of it, and the rest comes from cholesterol in animal products that you eat, such as meats, poultry, fish, eggs, butter, cheese and whole milk. Food from plants – like fruits, vegetables and cereals – doesn't have cholesterol. Some foods that don't contain animal products may contain trans-fats, which cause your

body to make more cholesterol. Foods with saturated fats also cause the body to make more cholesterol.

Cholesterol and other fats can't dissolve in the blood. They have to be transported to and from the cells by special carriers called lipoproteins. There are two types of cholesterol that you need to know about. Low-density lipoprotein, or LDL, is known as the "bad" cholesterol. Too much LDL cholesterol can clog your arteries, increasing your risk of heart attack and stroke.

High-density lipoprotein, or HDL, is known as the "good" cholesterol. Your body makes HDL cholesterol for your protection. It carries cholesterol away from your arteries. Studies suggest that high levels of HDL cholesterol reduce your risk of heart attack.

(Adapted from American Heart Association guidelines. For more information visit [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org))

### Prevention of Strokes By: Lambert Chee MD, FACC

#### Necessary Steps to Prevent Strokes:

- ~ Get regular physical exercise
- ~ Stop Smoking
- ~ Control high blood pressure
- ~ Control or prevent the complications of Diabetes
- ~ Lose weight if obese or overweight
- ~ Implement dietary changes: increase consumption of whole grains, fruits and vegetables
- ~ Use warfarin for blood thinning in atrial fibrillation
- ~ Use antiplatelet agents such as aspirin or Plavix
- ~ Get surgery for severe blockage of the carotid artery in the neck
- ~ Use agents to lower LDL-Cholesterol and raise HDL-Cholesterol levels
- ~ Use Folic acid to reduce plasma homocysteine levels
- ~ Ask your doctor if you are at high risk for stroke



Diablo Clinical Research conducts clinical studies in many therapeutic areas:

- Areas of Study**
- Anxiety & Depression
  - Arthritis
  - Cholesterol
  - Chronic Pain
  - Diabetes
  - Disease Prevention
  - Fibromyalgia
  - Gastrointestinal Disorders
  - High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)
  - Men's Health
  - Neuropathy
  - Obesity/Weight Loss
  - Osteoporosis
  - Sexual Dysfunction
  - Women's Health

***Do You Have High Blood Pressure?***

If so, you may be at greater risk for stroke, heart attack, and kidney failure.

Dr. Richard Weinstein is participating in a research study for those with high blood pressure. This investigational study will use two different combinations of different ***medications already approved to lower blood pressure.*** The study is designed to see if these medications may reduce the occurrence of future health complications associated with high blood pressure.

***You may qualify if you:***

- ~Are 55 years of age or older
- ~Have high blood pressure
- ~Have or had heart problems, circulation problems, kidney problems, stroke or diabetes

All study-related care and investigational medication will be provided for those who take part.

To learn more, please call:

**(925) 930-7267**

***For more information:*** If you would like to learn more about any of our clinical studies or to find out if you may qualify for participation please call the clinic at (925) 930-7267, or visit us online at: [www.diabloclinical.com](http://www.diabloclinical.com) and fill out our volunteer form . You may also email us at: [studies@diabloclinical.com](mailto:studies@diabloclinical.com)