

# Trover Health

## Update

WINTER 2007

## Guarding Against Stroke: The Role of Carotid Artery Disease



Our bodies are an intricate network of arteries. Two of these arteries—the carotid arteries—are the main suppliers of blood to your brain. Carotid artery disease (CAD) jeopardizes that flow, putting you at an increased risk for a stroke.

### How CAD Starts

CAD occurs when the carotid arteries become narrowed or blocked by plaque. Plaque is fat, cholesterol, calcium, and other substances found in the blood.

When plaque builds up in the carotid arteries, blood flow to the brain is diminished. A stroke occurs when blood flow is blocked long enough to cause a section of brain tissue to die.

### No Advance Warning for CAD

The first symptom of CAD often is a transient ischemic attack (TIA). A TIA is sometimes called a “mini-stroke” or a “warning stroke” because it may precede a full-blown stroke. Symptoms of a TIA are similar to those of a stroke, but they

usually disappear within an hour. However, they can linger for up to 24 hours.

Symptoms for a TIA and a stroke occur suddenly and may include:

- numbness or weakness in the face, arm, or leg, particularly on one side of the body
- confusion or difficulty talking or understanding speech
- vision problems
- dizziness
- difficulty walking
- loss of balance and coordination
- severe headache with no known cause.

If you experience any of these symptoms, call 911 immediately.

### Risk Profile and Early Detection

Cigarette smoking puts you at risk for CAD. You’re also at increased risk if you have:

- high blood pressure
- high cholesterol
- diabetes.

The good news is that, in most instances, an ultrasound test can detect plaque buildup in your carotid arteries. Talk with your doctor about your risk factors to determine if an ultrasound test is right for you. ■

Are you at risk? To learn more about carotid artery disease and the ultrasound test that can detect it, call the Center for Heart & Vascular Services at 1-800-662-2474.

## Apples Get “A+” for Antioxidants

Apples are a good source of antioxidants, substances that may help the body fight disease.

One small, red apple was found to have as many antioxidants as 1,500 milligrams of vitamin C. But keep the skin on: There are more antioxidants in the skin than in the flesh.

*Nature, Vol. 405,  
No. 6789*



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Nothing is as important as your health and the health of your loved ones.

Trover was founded on the belief that people who live in rural communities deserve access to the same level of high-quality, comprehensive care as those who live in urban areas.

Through this region's support of our nonprofit health care system, we are able to provide health care throughout western Kentucky, advanced medical technology, medical education, and much more.

Trover is committed to improving the health of the people of western Kentucky through dedication to strong core values of safety, quality, compassion, and accountability. Our mission is to provide excellent care, every time.

Thank you for letting us be a part of this great community.

From all of us, we wish you a very happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

E. Berton Whitaker  
Trover President and CEO

# Five Strategies for Reducing Your Breast Cancer Risk



Thanks to major inroads on the research front, the odds against breast cancer are improving every day. Scientists have begun to shed some light on what women can do to prevent or increase their chances of surviving this common cancer. Here are five:

**1. Cut down or quit drinking alcohol, if you drink.** Women who drink about two to five alcoholic drinks a day

run a 41% greater risk of developing breast cancer than nondrinkers, one study found. Even light drinking may carry a modest risk—having one drink a day carries a 9% increased risk.

**2. Manage your weight.** Evidence suggests that postmenopausal women who gained 11 to 22 pounds after age 18 may have an 18% higher risk of breast cancer than women who only gained 4 to 5 pounds.

**3. Eat foods that can counter the effects of estrogen.** Experts believe that high estrogen levels fuel breast cancer. Women may be able to decrease the cancerous effects of estrogen by eating a diet rich in the following foods:

- Soy products, such as tofu and soybeans
- Olive, canola, and other oils rich in monounsaturated fats
- Cruciferous vegetables, such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, radishes, and watercress

**4. Get regular screenings.** Women in their 20s and 30s should schedule a clinical breast exam every three years.

The American Cancer Society recommends that women age 40 and older have a mammogram, or breast X-ray, every year.

**5. Consider drug therapy if breast cancer risk is very high.** Women who face a very high risk of breast cancer—for example, those who have a history of breast disease or have a close relative who developed breast cancer—may want to discuss drug therapy with their doctor. ■

## Staying Well

■ Sorting out breast cancer facts from fiction can be challenging—especially if you surf the Internet. For example, one report has stated that using antiperspirant boosts the risk of breast cancer. This rumor has circulated so widely over the last few years that health organizations finally issued statements debunking it.

In fact, there have been no studies to support or deny a link between antiperspirants and breast cancer...until now. After observing more than 1,600 women, researchers found no association between these products and breast cancer.

*Journal of National Cancer Institute, Vol. 94, No. 20*

■ Older women who have had breast cancer face an especially high risk of developing osteoporosis. In a study of postmenopausal breast cancer survivors, 80% of the women were found to have either osteoporosis or osteopenia, a

condition that may lead to osteoporosis if left untreated. If you have had breast cancer, talk to your doctor about how to protect yourself from osteoporosis.


*Cancer Nursing, Vol. 25, No. 1*



Please call the Center for Women's Health today, at **1-866-826-2496**, to schedule your yearly mammogram.

# Q&A

## How to Keep Your Lungs Disease-Free



Emphysema and chronic bronchitis—illnesses that limit how much air you can breathe—are known together as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Though largely preventable, COPD is the fourth leading cause of death in the U.S.

### What Causes COPD?

Long-term smoking is largely to blame for the disease. Other factors that increase risk include:

- frequent, prolonged exposure to certain types of dust and chemicals
- breathing in secondhand smoke
- a history of childhood respiratory infections
- a family history of the disease.

### Lifestyle May Keep Lungs Healthy

The most important step toward preventing COPD is to avoid smoking. Experts say certain foods may also help you avoid this disease. For example, a diet high in fruits—particularly apples and pears—may lower the risk of COPD. Other foods that may offer protection include whole grains and fish.

The following strategies also may ward off COPD:

- Exercise regularly to strengthen your lungs. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on most, if not all, days of the week.
- Wear a protective mask over your nose and mouth when working around large amounts of dust or when using paint, paint remover, varnish, or any other chemical with strong fumes.
- Steer clear of secondhand smoke.
- Limit exposure to polluted air. On high-pollution days, stay indoors as much as you can and confine outside activity to early morning or after sunset, when pollution levels are typically lower.

Early discovery of a breathing problem can prevent COPD from progressing to the point where it seriously interferes with your life. A simple, painless test called spirometry can tell whether your breathing is normal. Ask your doctor if you should have a breathing test.



## EAT YOUR WAY TO HEART HEALTH

What did you eat today...or yesterday? More importantly, what do you plan on eating tomorrow...and the rest of your life? The foods you choose to eat—or limit—can add up to a higher or lower risk of heart disease. The meals you eat each day—and everything in between—can help you prevent or treat heart disease. Take the following quiz, and learn how to take smart eating habits to heart.

### Which Foods Are Best?

Please choose the best answer for each question.

**Q**

1. Which of the following is a heart-healthy choice?

**A**

- Use olive oil, canola oil, or soft margarine instead of butter or stick margarine.
- Eat fish, especially salmon and other fatty fish, at least twice a week.
- Consume lots of fruits, vegetables, nuts, and whole-grain products.
- All of the above are correct.

**Q**

2. Which of the following choices will help control and prevent high blood pressure?

**A**

- Eat low-fat dairy products.
- Drink more water.
- Take garlic supplements.
- All of the above are correct.

**Q**

3. Name the major troublemakers that raise LDL—"bad"—cholesterol.

**A**

- Eating saturated fats and trans fats elevates cholesterol.
- Egg yolks and other cholesterol-rich foods are culprits.
- A and B are correct.
- None of the above are correct.



### And the Answer Is...

- D. All of these dietary habits can protect you from heart disease.
- A. Eating two to four servings of low-fat dairy products a day is just one strategy in the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet. The DASH diet—aimed at reducing high blood pressure—also encourages you to eat fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fish, poultry, and nuts.
- C. Healthy adults should limit their saturated fat intake to less than 10% of daily calories. Aim for less than 7% if you have heart disease or high cholesterol. To reach this goal, choose low-fat milk and cheese, lean meat, poultry, and fish.

To dodge trans fats, limit your intake of cookies, crackers, baked goods, and fried foods.

Most people should eat less than 300 milligrams of cholesterol each day. Those with existing heart disease, diabetes, or high LDL cholesterol should aim for less than 200 milligrams a day.

Got a health question?  
Email us at [info@trover.org](mailto:info@trover.org).

# Community Calendar

## GENERAL CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

SPONSOR: Mahr Cancer Center

TIME: **First Wednesday**

**of the month**

CONTACT: Rita Cates

**270-825-5815**

## BECKY WEST BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

SPONSOR: Mahr Cancer Center

TIME: **Second Tuesday**

**of the month**

CONTACT: Rita Cates

**270-825-5815**

## ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

TIME: **Third Tuesday**

**of the month**

CONTACT: Patty Simmons, RN

**270-825-4103** or Patsy Ball

**270-821-4488**

Trover offers a wide array of health events and programs for the community. Call Trover Community Health today, at 270-824-3454, to find out more.



## Exercise Away the Blues

Experts now know that moving your body is one of the best mood boosters around. Here are some facts about the mental benefits of exercise.

**Evidence shows that exercise can prevent depressive symptoms and treat major depression.**

Some evidence shows that exercise may prevent depressive symptoms in high-risk adults. Two studies found that exercise improved mood in college students who suffered from some depressive symptoms. Exercise also contributes to high self-esteem and positive feelings of well-being.

Research also suggests that, by itself, regular exercise can treat major depression as well as therapy and antidepressant medicine. Antidepressants brought a quicker response among patients. But exercise alone provided similar improvements with fewer side effects.

Exactly how exercise helps depression is unclear. Exercise may release mood-enhancing chemicals in the body, such as serotonin or beta-endorphins. Or exercise may improve other factors, such as boredom or sleep problems, which contribute to depression.

**All you need is one session of exercise to improve your mood.**

Even a single, 25-minute workout can improve your mood, the research says. But for the most mood-boosting benefits, you'll need to exercise on a regular basis.



**Both aerobic activity and strength training are good forms of exercise for depression.**

Aerobic exercise and strength training appear to offer similar benefits for treating and preventing depression.

For example, one study of 40 depressed women found that running and weight lifting were almost equally effective for treating depression.

If you want to start an exercise program, follow these guidelines:

- Choose an activity you like, such as walking, jogging, or cycling.
- Start exercising slowly, even for just a few minutes at a time if you are out of shape. Over time, build up to at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week. ■

Ready to start an exercise program? Call Fitness Formula at **270-824-2020**.

Winter 2007 • [www.troverfoundation.org](http://www.troverfoundation.org) • Trover Health • 800-998-5100

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## Trover Health

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