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Why is heart health awareness important?

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Heart Health is something that we do control. By being aware of the factors that can lead to an increased chance of a heart attack. For instance, we need to know when our cholesterol is are. In conjunction with a health care provider, we need to keep track of our blood pressure along with a health care provider, we need to take the prescribed medications, certainly, if they're suggested by the healthcare provider. All of that is essential in preventing eventual bad outcomes with our hearts.

What are some risk factors that contribute to heart disease?

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Higher cholesterol leads to an increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, smoking tobacco, if one is diabetic, then we just need to acknowledge that that individual has a higher risk of heart disease, which can be mitigated with several important lifestyle and medication strategies. And then if one has a family history, where there is heart disease in the family, particularly before or during middle age, then that needs to be paid attention to and their own risk factors need to be evaluated early in life.

What are some lifestyle changes you recommend for a healthy heart?

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Most prominently exercise. Exercise has tremendous benefits, not only in terms of mitigating the risk factors we discussed helping to control blood pressure helping to prevent and control diabetes. One thing most don't know is that walking half hour a day five days a week prevents diabetes better than medications do. So keep that in mind. If you're looking for motivation to get out there and get going. Exercise is extremely prominent. Stop smoking tobacco if you do. Avoid recreational drugs, particularly meth and cocaine, as those imply significant heart health risks as well and take your medications if prescribed.

What's the best diet for a healthy heart?

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That's a good question. I'm not sure we have a lot of time to discuss that in detail. But here's what I would say. A lot of named diets come and go one that's very popular now is keto. keto gets it right in tempting to avoid refined carbohydrates and sugar, which is a very legitimate dietary principle. What keto maybe gets a little bit wrong is allowing all protein sources no matter what comes along with them. I also agree that eating a larger amount of protein than we classically have is fine and probably desirable. What we can't do is allow a lot of sodium and fat particularly saturated fat to come along with that protein. So sources of protein, there are some vegetable based ones. All whey proteins are excellent. Brown beans have significant amounts of vegetable based protein. But even animal based proteins such as low or nonfat dairy products are excellent sources of protein. As well as the better known fish, poultry, red meat, it's hard to find many cuts of red meat that don't have a lot of saturated fat. So those should be eaten in moderation if at all and processed meats, cold cuts, sausages, bacon should be eaten with caution. And perhaps if you do want to splurge look for non red meat sources and uncured if possible.