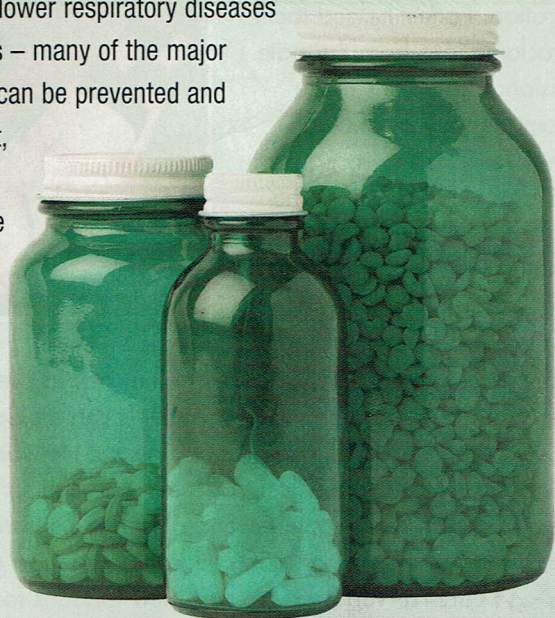


PREVENTION IS THE BEST MEDICINE

How Men Can Take Charge of Their Health

While the gap between the life expectancy of women and men is narrowing, worldwide men live an average of two years less than women. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the overwhelming killers of American men are heart disease and cancer, followed by accidents, stroke, chronic lower respiratory diseases and diabetes. Staying healthy requires regular screenings and exams – many of the major health risks that men face, such as colon cancer and heart disease, can be prevented and treated with early diagnosis, along with maintaining a healthy weight, eating right, not smoking and knowing risks from family health histories. Fortunately, Louisiana offers resources to allow patients the tools necessary to combat these devastating diseases. Advances in diagnostics and treatments mean that more and more lives are saved each year. Knowledge is essential to finding good health. Resources like hospitals, clinics and health organizations can empower men to take control and live longer, healthier lives.



The American Heart Association

Cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the U.S. Stroke is the No. 3 cause of death in the U.S., and it's a leading cause of serious disability. In Louisiana, 35 percent of all deaths are a result of cardiovascular diseases. Also in Louisiana, cardiovascular disease was responsible for more than 91,000 hospitalizations and \$2.4 billion in hospital charges. That's why it's so important to reduce your risk factors, know the warning signs and know how to respond quickly and properly if warning signs occur. **The American Heart Association** offers information and preventative tips about these deadly diseases.

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense but most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- **Chest discomfort.** Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body.** Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- **Shortness of breath** with or without chest discomfort.
- **Other signs** may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness

For stroke, the AHA lists the following warning signs:

- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

Learn the signs but remember this: Even if you're not sure it's a heart attack, have it checked out (tell a doctor about your symptoms).

Minutes matter! Fast action can save lives – maybe your own. Don't wait to call 9-1-1.

For more information about heart disease and stroke, call (800) AHA-USA1 [(800) 242-8721] or visit the American Heart Association's Web site: www.americanheart.org.

American Cancer Society

Prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer found in men.

The American Cancer Society estimates that there will be about 186,320 new cases of prostate cancer in the U.S. in 2008. About 28,660 men will die of this disease this year. Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in men. Lung cancer is the first. While one man in six will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during his lifetime, only one man in 35 will die of this disease. The death rate for prostate cancer is going down, and the disease is being found earlier as well.

The American Cancer Society has numerous resources and services to help men fight cancer. The American Cancer Society's Man to Man education and prostate cancer support group provides information and discussion about the disease, treatments and their side effects as well as tips on coping.

By calling (800) ACS-2345 Cancer patients and loved ones can ask questions, get disease-specific information, learn about treatment options or find out about a prostate cancer education and support group in their community. This service is free and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For more information, call (800) ACS-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.