

Health Tips

from Dr. Matthews

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FOR PEOPLE WHO TAKE THE TIME

AMSC NEWS

Secondhand Smoke at Home Affects Young Kids' Heart

Second hand smoke



in the home appears to induce markers for heart disease as early as the toddler years, researchers reported at the American Heart Association's 48th Annual Conference on Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention.

It has long been known that many forms of cardiovascular disease in adults are initiated and progress silently during childhood. Now researchers have found a young child's response to smoke may not just affect the respiratory system, but the cardiovascular system as well.

HEALTH TIPS

Easy Exercises For A Healthy Heart & Body

Begin with a "warm-up" session.

Stretch muscles slowly to avoid injury during the actual exercise. Get your respiration, circulation, and body temperature to increase by beginning with some low-impact exercises.

Your warm-up should last about three to five minutes.

Begin the actual exercise phase at a moderate intensity. The duration will build cardiovascular fitness. Don't overexert yourself. If you exercise regularly,

you'll be able to lengthen the time and increase the intensity. While you're exercising, you should feel your heart beating faster. You should be breathing more rapidly and deeply,

yet still be able to carry on a conversation. You should begin to sweat. These are ways that your system responds to the challenges of exercise.

End with a "cool down" session.

Spend a few minutes walking slowly to let your body gradually decrease itself. Just as you needed to gradually begin to exercise, you need to gradually begin to rest.



Annapolis Medical Specialty Clinic

3800 Woodward Suite 1022
Detroit, Mi 48202

1286 Middlebelt,
Inkster, Mi 48141

25650 W Outer Drive
Lincoln Park, MI

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Signs & Symptoms

Diabetes and Your Heart: Tests You May Need

If you have diabetes, you have a higher risk of heart disease. The good news is that you can prevent or reduce your risk of developing many problems associated with heart disease by getting an evaluation and accurate diagnosis, and starting treatment early when it's most effective.

Talk to your doctor about the following tests recommended by the American Heart Association to see if you might have signs of heart disease. Then follow the proper medications and lifestyle changes your doctor prescribes to prevent further problems.

- **Blood pressure check.** A painless test that uses a special meter called a sphygmomanometer that measures the force of blood pushing against vessel walls. Untreated or controlled high blood pressure can lead to stroke, heart attack, heart failure, or kidney failure.
- **Carotid ultrasound.** This imaging procedure uses high-frequency sound waves to view the major neck arteries called carotid arteries and to determine the presence of narrowing caused by atherosclerosis. Finding plaque buildup in these arteries may help predict future heart attack.
- **Computerized tomography (CT) of the heart and calcium scores.** This imaging test is used to detect calcium deposits in vessels on the heart. More calcium means more coronary atherosclerosis, suggesting a greater likelihood of narrowing and a higher risk of future cardiovascular

problems. Your doctor can use the calcium-score screening heart scan to evaluate risk for coronary artery disease.

- **Electrocardiogram (EKG/ECG).** This diagnostic test measures the electrical activity of the heart. It can detect abnormal heart rhythms, heart chamber enlargements, poor blood flow, a heart attack, and other abnormalities of the heart.
- **Ambulatory Electrocardiogram (Holter monitor).** This test measures the electrical activity of the heart during daily activities.
- **Echocardiograph (echo).** This test uses ultrasound to get a graphic outline of the heart chambers and their movement. The test examines the heart's structure and motion and shows how thick the heart muscle is and how well the heart pumps.
- **Exercise stress test.** This treadmill or exercise tolerance test helps a doctor find out how much blood flow gets to your heart when it works hard such as during exercise. This test can show if blood flow is reduced in the arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle. It can help decide a safe level of exercise.
- **Coronary angiography.** This procedure, also known as cardiac catheterization, is used to help doctors evaluate the number and severity of blockages in arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle. The image produced is an angiogram.

ANNAPOLIS MEDICAL SPECIALTY CLINIC

3800 Woodward
Suite 1022
Detroit, Mi 48202

