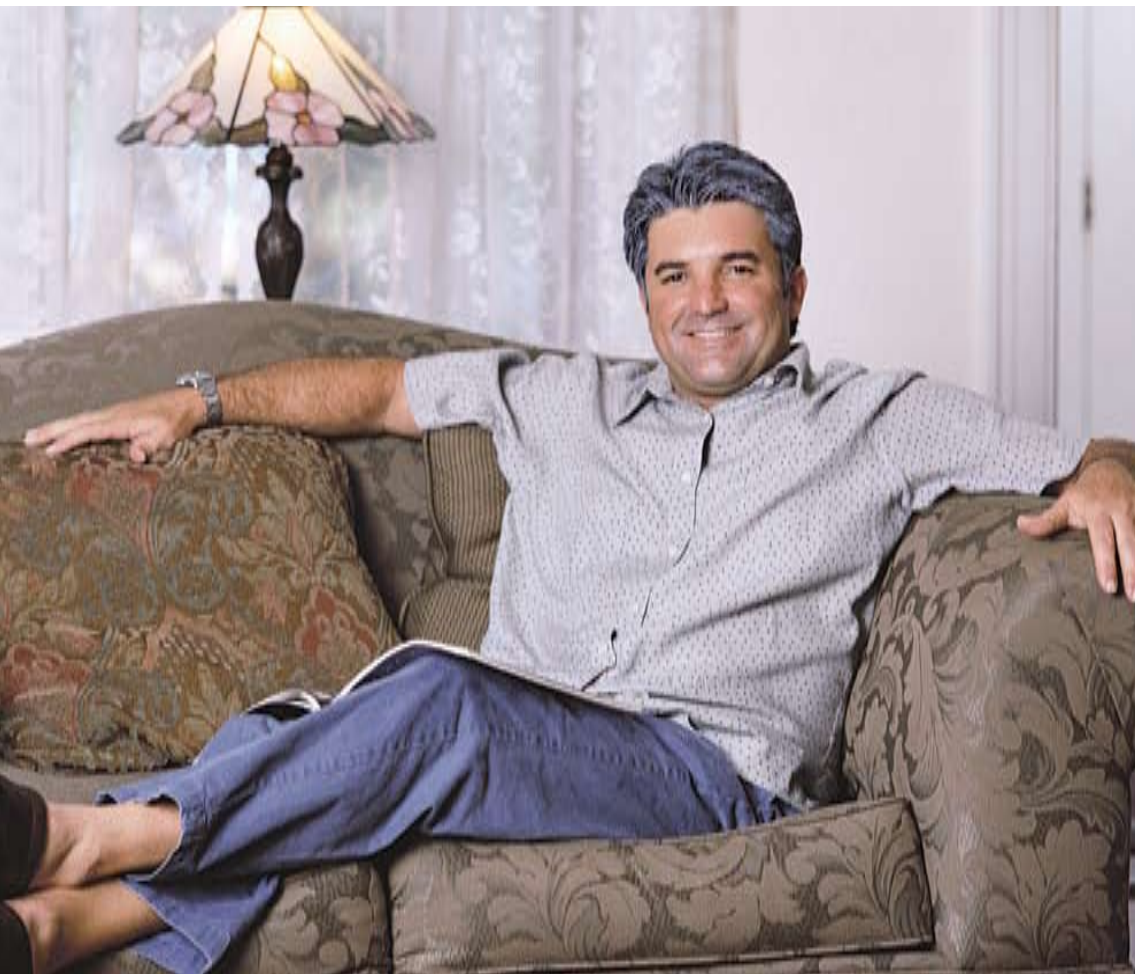


## De-Stress in a Minute

**S**tress cannot be avoided, but how we react to stress makes a difference. Life with no stress would be impossible. The following strategies can help you relax and reduce stress:

1. Try relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing. Here's how: Sit up or stand straight. Breathe in through your nose slowly for a count of two. Then breathe out through your mouth slowly for a count of four. Feel your belly move in and out as you breathe. Let your thoughts come and go—but try not to judge or become emotional about what pops into your head.

2. Limit or avoid alcohol and caffeine.
3. Think of a stressful event as a problem to be solved. For instance, how could you change your work situation to make it less stressful?
4. Take time for a stretch. Sit upright in your chair or seat. Press your palms together—in the prayer position—near your chest and hold for five counts. Relax, then repeat.
5. If you can't change a stressful situation, change how you react to it. For example, instead of getting upset when a grocery line moves at a snail's pace, use the time to practice deep breathing or flip through a magazine. ●



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## Could It Be COPD?

**D**o you know what COPD is? COPD stands for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. It is a major cause of illness, and effective treatment is available, but many people have it and don't even know it.

If you answer these questions, it will help you find out if you could have COPD.

1. Do you cough several times most days? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
2. Do you bring up phlegm or mucus most days? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
3. Do you get out of breath more easily than others your age? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
4. Are you older than 40 years? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
5. Are you a current smoker or an ex-smoker? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If you answered yes to three or more of these questions, ask your doctor if you might have COPD and if you should have a simple breathing test. If COPD is found early, there are steps you can take to prevent further lung damage and make you feel better!

Take time to think about your lungs...learn about COPD! ●



### OXYGEN THERAPY: JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED

Oxygen therapy helps more than 1 million people feel better and keep doing the activities they enjoy. But, just as with any prescribed medicine, it's important to follow your doctor's instructions exactly when using oxygen.

These instructions include:

■ **How much oxygen you need.** This is called your flow rate, and is usually defined as liters per minute (LPM). Blood tests show what your flow rate should be. Both too little and too much oxygen can damage your brain and your heart. *Never change the flow rate*

*without your doctor's OK.*

■ **How often you need it.** Many people with COPD, for example, need oxygen therapy for at least 15 hours a day. Some may need it 24/7. Even if you start feeling better, stay with the schedule your doctor has prescribed. *Never use less oxygen than prescribed or stop using it without talking with your doctor.*

■ **How to use it.** Your oxygen may come as either a gas or a liquid in a tank or you may use an oxygen concentrator, which pulls oxygen from the air around you rather than from a

tank. With any of these, you may inhale the oxygen through small tubes that you wear in your nostrils, or through an oxygen mask. If you're having trouble using your oxygen, talk with your doctor. You may need to change systems to find what's best for you.

While oxygen won't explode, it will make fire burn hotter. *Never smoke, or allow others to smoke, near your oxygen.* And, stay at least 5 feet away from heat sources such as candles, fireplaces, or gas stoves.

# Hypoglycemia: When Blood Sugar Isn't in Balance

**P**eople with diabetes know that managing their blood sugar takes consistency and vigilance. But there may be some times when you don't eat enough, feel stressed, or skip your medicine—and that can send your blood sugar way down.

## When Blood Sugar Slumps

Blood sugar that drops too low is called hypoglycemia. It occurs most often as a side effect of diabetes treatment.

Hypoglycemia can make you suddenly feel weak, anxious, irritable, confused, shaky, and hungry. If you experience any of these symptoms, you should check your blood sugar right away. If the level is 70 mg/dL or below, you need to drink or eat something to avoid fainting or having a seizure.

The quick fix for low blood sugar: Try drinking 1 cup of milk or ½ cup of fruit juice. After 15 minutes, check your blood sugar again. If it's not above 70 mg/dL, eat something else. A small box of raisins or five pieces of hard candy are options that are easy to carry with you. Repeat this process until your blood glucose is stable.



You can help prevent hypoglycemia by following these steps:

- Never skip or delay meals or snacks by more than 30 minutes.
- Take your diabetes medicine exactly as prescribed.
- Check your blood sugar regularly.
- Limit alcohol intake.
- If you have low blood sugar several times a week, see your doctor, who may review your diabetic medication and your meal plan. You may need a glucagon injection to keep at home and work. If you pass out, a friend or family member can give you this hormone injection, which will raise your blood sugar. ●

## recipe: BAKED PORK CHOPS

- 6 lean, center-cut pork chops, ½-inch thick OR try boneless chicken breasts
- 1 egg white
- 1 C evaporated skim milk
- ¾ C cornflake crumbs
- ¼ C dry bread crumbs
- 4 t paprika
- 2 t oregano
- ¾ t chili powder
- ½ t garlic powder
- ½ t black pepper
- ⅛ t cayenne pepper
- ⅛ t dry mustard
- ½ t salt—as needed

- nonstick spray coating
- 1. Trim fat off pork chops.
- 2. Beat egg white with evaporated skim milk until smooth. Place chops in milk mixture and let stand for five minutes, turning chops once.
- 3. Mix together cornflake crumbs, bread crumbs, spices, and salt.
- 4. Spray a 9 x 13-inch baking pan with nonstick spray.
- 5. Remove chops from milk mixture. Coat with crumb mixture.

- 6. Place chops in pan and bake in a 375° F oven for 20 minutes. Turn chops and bake 15 minutes longer or until no pink remains.

**YIELD:** 6 servings

**SERVING SIZE:** 1 pork chop  
Each serving provides:  
Calories: 186  
Total fat: 5 g  
Saturated fat: 2 g  
Cholesterol: 31 mg  
Sodium: 393 mg

**SOURCE:** National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute/National Institutes of Health

## Is Sexual Activity Safe if You Have Heart Disease?

**H**eat disease can affect many aspects of daily living, including your love life. Many couples shy away from intimacy because they fear that sexual activity will trigger a heart attack. This belief is based more on myth than on fact.

It's very rare for people to die during or after sex. Sexual activity generally affects the body like other forms of mild to moderate exercise. It is about as strenuous as golf, wallpapering a room, or walking up one or two flights of stairs.

And contrary to popular belief, the risk of having a heart attack during or after sex is actually very low. This is true even in people with coronary artery disease and those who've already had a heart attack.

### When Your Mind, Not Your Heart, Holds You Back

While your heart and body may be ready for intimacy, your mind may not. For instance, people who have had a heart attack may have to deal with fear, depression, anger, worry, and other strong feelings that may affect their sex drive.

These feelings are normal and should fade over time. Sharing your feelings with your partner can help you cope better—and rediscover your love life sooner.

### Reigniting the Flame

If you've just had a heart attack, your doctor may advise you to hold off on sexual intercourse for a while. Many people who have had a mild heart attack are able to have sex in a week to 10 days. Those who have had more serious heart attacks may need to wait a little longer.

If your doctor says it's safe to enjoy intimacy again, there's a lot you can do to bring back the passion. Here are some suggestions:



- **Stick to your treatment.** This may include taking medicine, exercising, eating better, and not smoking. Also, realize that some heart medications can curb your sex drive. Talk to your doctor if you think your medicines may be cooling your desire. Your doctor may be able to change the drug type or dose. You also should talk to your doctor if you want to take medicine for erectile dysfunction.

- **When you're ready, pick a familiar setting where you won't be interrupted.** Make sure the room is a comfortable temperature. Having sex in a room that's too hot could overwork the heart.

- **Choose a good time before eating, rather than afterward.** Try to avoid having sex one to three hours after eating a heavy meal. Your heart has to work hard to digest food, so it's best not to add more stress.

- **Don't get discouraged.** Rekindling the flame takes time. In the beginning, you may want to start slowly by adding more kissing and cuddling. Just don't force the issue because you want things to be normal again. Allow the spark to come back naturally. ●

### HEALTH TIP

**Talk to your doctor to find out how soon you can resume sexual activity.**



Deborah Zimmerman, MD  
ForeSee Health Medical Director

## Q&A: Ask Dr. Debbie

Dear Dr. Debbie,

Exactly what does “heart disease” mean?  
What is the difference between heart disease  
and a heart attack?

**W**hen the arteries that lead to your heart become thickened, hardened, or clogged with fat and cholesterol, that’s called “heart disease.” If one or more arteries become completely blocked and the blood flow to the heart is cut off, that’s a heart attack.

Heart disease is the number-one killer of men and women alike. Your risk increases as you grow older, beginning at age 45 for men and age 55 for women. A family history of heart disease also raises your risk.

Fortunately, there are more risk factors for heart disease that you *can* control than ones you can’t. Here’s how to protect yourself:

- Don’t smoke.
- Eat a nutritious, low-fat diet.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Exercise 30 minutes a day, most days of the week.
- Keep blood pressure and cholesterol under control. Your blood pressure should be less than 130/80, your “good” cholesterol (HDL) should be greater than 40, and your “bad” cholesterol (LDL) should be less than 100.

You can also protect your heart by knowing the warning signs of a heart attack. Both men and women may experience:

- chest pain, which may be crushing, or just a feeling of pressure, tightness, or fullness

- pain in the arms, neck, jaw, back, or stomach
- shortness of breath
- nausea or vomiting
- sweating, dizziness, or faintness
- extreme fatigue.

Studies show that many people delay going to the hospital because they’ll feel embarrassed if it turns out to be a false alarm. Experts agree: If there’s any chance you’re having a heart attack, *call 911*. The sooner you’re treated, the better your chances for a complete recovery. ●

**Do you have health questions you would like Dr. Debbie to answer? Let us know! Write ForeSee Health at 14528 S. Outer Forty Road, Suite 300, Chesterfield, Missouri 63017 with your questions. You also may e-mail [info@foreseehealth.com](mailto:info@foreseehealth.com).**



### Low-Fat Dairy Foods May Keep Blood Pressure Low

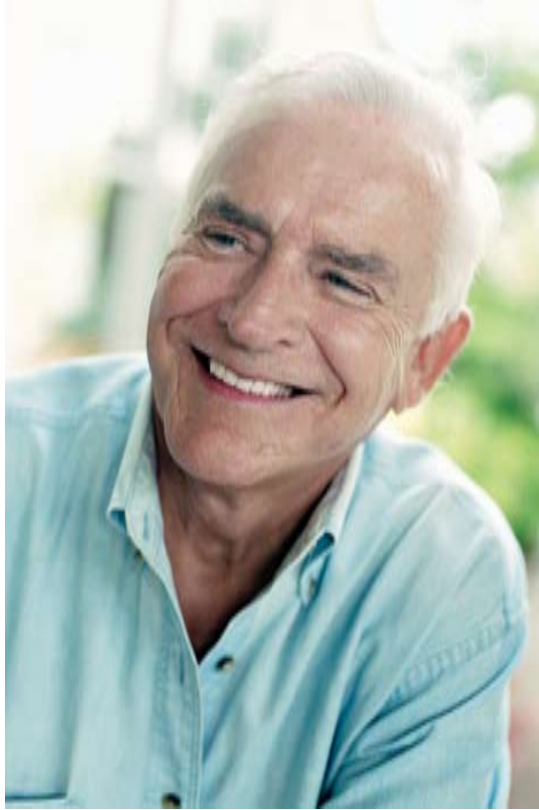


Got low-fat milk? If not, you might want to get some, suggests a recent study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Participants who took in the highest amounts of low-fat dairy foods every day had a 50% lower risk for high blood pressure as those who consumed the lowest amounts. The study of nearly 6,000 adults took place over about two years.

Only low-fat dairy products, such as skim or low-fat milk and yogurt, appeared to combat high blood pressure. Higher-fat dairy foods, including whole milk, didn’t seem to help.

More good news: Eating low-fat dairy products may lower your risk for diabetes and could even help you lose weight, according to two other new studies.

# Take the Right Dose . . . the Right Way



It is important to know how to take your medicine the right way. The best way to become better informed is to read and understand the labels for your medications. Talk to your doctor about your medicine.

Did the doctor say to take one with every meal or without food? Can I take this over-the-counter (OTC) cough suppressant with my doctor-prescribed heart medication?

Used incorrectly, some medications can do more harm than good. So, whether you're starting a new prescription or shopping for cold medicine, the details do matter.

## Ask About Prescriptions

Ask these questions every time you get a new prescription from your doctor.

- What's the name of my medicine?
- How will this medicine help me?
- When should I take this medicine?
- How long will I have to take this medicine?
- Should I take this medicine with or without food?
- Are there any other medications that I should avoid while taking this medicine?
- What should I do if I forget to take a dose?

Write the answers down. It's a good idea to let your doctor know how you are doing on any new medicine. You also may want to talk to your doctor about your current medicine(s). Never chew, crush, break, or dilute any capsules or tablets unless you talk first with your doctor or pharmacist. ●

## HEALTH TIP

Many liquid medications today come with a plastic cup that holds just the right amount. If yours doesn't, ask your pharmacist for a dosing spoon or an oral syringe.

**We want to hear from you!** What topics would you like to see in *For Your Health*? Please e-mail [info@foreseehealth.com](mailto:info@foreseehealth.com), or write us at ForeSee Health ATTN: Newsletter Department 14528 S. Outer Forty Road, Suite 300, Chesterfield, Missouri 63017.



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