

Better Health, Naturally!!

A Monthly Newsletter from Your VADA 'Jump Start to Better Health' Program May 2006

Take Advantage of a New Program to Help Manage Your High Blood Pressure, Diabetes, Prediabetes, or Multiple Risks for Heart Disease

This free, confidential program allows you to see a naturopathic doctor who specializes in using diet, lifestyle, physical activity, herbal medicine, vitamin and mineral supplementation, and other natural therapies. Naturopathic doctors are licensed physicians and experts in the treatment and prevention of high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease using natural medicines. Even if you already have a doctor, a naturopathic doctor may be able to help you better manage your condition, feel better, and/or reduce your medication usage.

Naturopathic physicians typically spend more time with patients, taking a comprehensive approach to the doctor-patient relationship. Sharing information and answering questions is considered an essential aspect of naturopathic health care.

Although your health plan doesn't normally pay for visits to a naturopathic doctor (ND), under the 'Jump Start to Better Health' plan you can see an ND and have it fully covered. What's more, you won't have to worry about any copays or deductibles that your health plan would otherwise require!

**Naturopathic
Doctors Are
Physicians Who
Listen**

Naturopathic medicine blends safe and effective natural therapies with the most current advances in modern medicine. Naturopathic doctors treat patients by finding the underlying cause of the patient's condition and restoring overall health, rather than suppressing a few key symptoms. Naturopathic treatments are less likely to result in adverse side effects than most drugs and prevent the chronic conditions that inevitably arise when the cause of the disease is left untreated.

If you have health insurance through your dealership, you are now eligible to take advantage of this great program, whether or not you participated in the on-site wellness screenings. To sign up, request an enrollment form from your dealership's healthcare benefits person, or call Green Mountain Wellness Solutions at 802-229-2038. There are a limited number of openings in this program, so sign up now!



An Apple a Day Keeps the Doctor Away

It turns out that this old adage is true, as evidenced by a wealth of recent scientific studies that have shown that the more fruits and vegetables you eat, the less likely you are to suffer from a number of diseases. The list of diseases includes heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, and many types of cancer including prostate, breast, stomach, liver, lung, colon, oral and pharyngeal. Furthermore, a study examining the risk of death from all causes determined that those who ate the most fruits and vegetables were 37% less likely to die compared to those eating the least fruits and vegetables over the thirteen year study period.

Fruits and vegetables are known to contain a variety of compounds that help to protect against disease, in addition to vitamins and minerals. Following is a list of some of those we know about. Future research will undoubtedly identify many more.

Flavonoids – These are powerful antioxidants that help to protect against heart disease and cancer, as well as many other diseases. Darkly colored fruits and vegetables tend to have the highest content.

Lycopene – A relative of beta-carotene that reduces the risk of prostate cancer. Found in especially high amounts in tomatoes, as well as carrots, green peppers, apricots, and pink grapefruit.

Lutein – Another relative of beta-carotene that helps to protect against macular degeneration, the leading cause of blindness in the U.S. It's found in green plants, corn, potatoes, spinach, carrots, tomatoes, and fruits.

Indole-3-carbinol – It and its relative di-indoyl methane modify the way estrogen is metabolized in the female body, reducing the risk for breast cancer. It's found in broccoli and other brassica vegetables including cabbage, brussel sprouts, and kale.

Double Your Chances of Quitting with Your 'Jump Start to Better Health' Smoking Cessation Program



Smoking Cessation Program Now Open to Most Employees

Research has shown that when people attempt to quit smoking using a quit coach, they are twice as likely to succeed. If you have health insurance through your dealership, you are now eligible to take advantage of this great program, whether or not you participated in the on-site wellness screenings. Through this program you can get help from a local quit coach and take advantage of either one-on-one or group smoking cessation programs. If you prefer, you can also get access to a telephone based coach instead, via the Quitline. You are also eligible for \$120.00 in cash incentives if you stay smoke free. This is in addition to the \$1300.00 - \$2000.00 you'll save in the first year from not buying cigarettes if you're a one pack per day smoker. To sign up for this confidential program, request an enrollment form from your dealership's healthcare benefits person, or call Green Mountain Wellness Solutions at 802-229-2038. There are limited openings in this program, so sign up now!



MAY—National Physical Fitness and Sports Month

GET MOVING FOR YOUR HEALTH

Regular physical activity can make you healthier, happier, and more productive. Join Americans nationwide in May and make a commitment to get active and get fit.

According to Melissa Johnson, executive director of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (PCPFS), "Americans of all ages need to incorporate more movement in their daily lives."

Here are some guidelines from the PCPFS on how much:

- **Adults need at least 30 minutes of activity 5 days each week.** This can be done by choosing to bike or walk instead of driving, taking stairs instead of elevators, or pushing a lawnmower instead of riding one.
- **Children need at least 60 minutes of active play daily.** They need to run, climb, jump, and just get up and move around, away from their desks, the television and computer games.
- **Twenty minutes of vigorous physical activity three times a week has added health benefits.** Examples of these activities include sports, aerobics, working out in the gym, and running.

Johnson notes, "It's important to understand that you don't need to sweat in a gym or run a marathon to reap the health benefits of daily physical activity. Even 30 minutes a day, broken up into shorter increments of ten or fifteen minutes, can greatly improve your health."

Already Active? Help a Friend Get Moving

If you are already physically active—at least 30 minutes a day on five or more days each week—get an activity buddy. Invite a friend or family member to be active with you. Show your activity buddy that being physically active doesn't take a lot of time and can be fun. Here are some tips to get started:

- **Identify an activity that both of you enjoy,** such as taking a walk, hiking, bicycling, or playing tennis or golf.
- **Take it easy.** Your friend may not have the same stamina, flexibility, or muscular strength that you do.
- **Encourage your buddy to gradually build on his or her activity time.** If you start off with five days of high-intensity cardiovascular workouts, you will likely find your friend injured and/or burnt out two to three weeks later.
- **Motivate your buddy.** Recognize each small accomplishment to ensure your activity buddy will stay with it. Find small, healthy, and enjoyable ways you can reward each milestone, such as a pack of gum, a gift certificate to the movies or take in a show together, new tennis or golf balls, a homemade card saying "Congrats."

For more tips on physical activity for all ages, see the President's Council on Physical Activity and Sports website <http://www.fitness.gov>.



Half of Cancer Deaths Are Preventable

At least half of all cancer deaths could be avoided if people would stop smoking, have screening tests, reduce levels of obesity and overweight, and improve nutrition and physical activity. A new report from the American Cancer Society estimates that about one-third (188,277) of cancer deaths in 2006 will be due to poor nutrition, lack of exercise and excess weight alone.

Source: "Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Facts and Figures 2005," American Cancer Society.

The Research Says...

Regular Exercise Lowers Risk of Alzheimer's and Other Dementia

Results of a large, six-year research study, suggest that people over 65 who exercise regularly are less likely to develop Alzheimer's or other dementia. Even modest activity, such as walking 15 minutes three times a week, seemed to help. The benefit was greater in those who were the least fit and started to exercise.

Source: *Annals of Internal Medicine*, January 17, 2006.



Blood Pressure Tip of the Month :

The Salt Connection in Managing High Blood Pressure

Salt can aggravate high blood pressure. If you have high blood pressure, it is important that you reduce your salt intake.

The current dietary recommendation is no more than 2,400 milligrams of sodium (6000 mg of salt) per day. Your doctor may recommend even less salt in your diet. Recent research has shown that people who consumed 1,500 milligrams of sodium per day had even better results in lowering their blood pressure.

Reducing your salt intake is no easy task. Many prepared foods contain large amounts of salt. For example, a one-cup individual serving of a typical canned soup can have up to 1,000 milligrams of sodium.

To reduce salt in your diet, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute recommends:

- Buy fresh, plain frozen, or canned "with no salt added" vegetables.

- Use fresh poultry, fish, and lean meat, rather than canned or processed types.
- Use herbs, spices, and salt-free seasoning blends in cooking and at the table.
- Cook rice, pasta, and hot cereals without salt. Cut back on instant or flavored rice, pasta, and cereal mixes with added salt.
- Choose "convenience" foods that are lower in salt. Cut back on frozen dinners, pizza, packaged mixes, canned soups or broths, and salad dressings that often have a lot of salt.
- Rinse canned foods, such as tuna, to remove some salt.
- When available, buy low- or reduced-sodium, or no-salt-added versions of foods.
- Choose ready-to-eat breakfast cereals that are lower in salt.



Source: "Your Guide to Lowering High Blood Pressure," National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, www.nhlbi.nih.gov.