

# Heart TALK

Heart-healthy and Stroke-free Living with Amy L. Doneen, MSN, ARNP

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## Amy's Notes

Thoughts from  
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MSN, ARNP

### It's Fall! Are You Prepared?

Fall is a wonderful time of the year and brings in new fall colors and crisp mornings. If you get the chance to step outside, just as the sun comes up, you will experience a crispness to the air that is invigorating and light. You will hear the crinkle of



the leaves under your feet and you will enjoy the smell of the change in season.

Please take advantage of this time and step outside for a brisk walk to experience the thrill of living in a 4-season climate. Remember: it only takes 22 minutes of exercise per day to reduce risk of a heart attack or stroke.

Fall also brings an array of opportunistic illnesses such as environmental allergies, respiratory colds, and gastric viruses. It is important to be up to date with your flu vaccine, pneumonia vaccine, and shingles vaccine. All of these pathogens (influenza, pneumonia, and shingles) can cause vascular inflammation that can cause heart attacks and strokes.

Getting a flu vaccine annually drops your risk of dying from a heart attack by 50%. Getting the shingles vaccine and pneumonia vaccine when you are over 50 years old and have plaque in your arteries will drop your risk of vascular events. Remember – you might be able to fight off the flu but we don't want your arteries to have to deal with these deadly viruses!

Per the Spokane Health Department in an October 4, 2012 statement: 138 people in Spokane County were hospitalized last year due to the flu. Protect yourself and your loved ones. These vaccines are attenuated, meaning they are not live and they cannot induce the virus you are trying to avoid (ie. the flu shot does not give you the flu).

**HASPC Center Flu Vaccine Clinic  
Come and get your flu shot!**

**\$20 dollar flat fee**

**November 8<sup>th</sup> 1-5 pm**

**Call to sign up – spaces are limited!**

Sometimes the fall weather brings bacterial sinus or lung infections that require antibiotic use. Please avoid the following antibiotics if you are taking these medications:

**If you take Altace (Ramipril) – avoid Bactrim (TMP-SMX).** If taken together this can cause a dramatic increase in potassium which could lead to deadly electrolyte imbalances.

**If you take Zocor (Simvastatin) – avoid Erythromycin, Clarithromycin, and Telithromycin.** When combined with

simvastatin, these antibiotics can cause dangerous muscle problems.

Remember – Antibiotics are only useful when a *bacterial* infection must be treated – they do nothing for *viral* infections! Taking antibiotics when not necessary contributes to dangerous antibiotic resistant infections.

Also please avoid ANY over-the-counter cold/allergy products that contain the common decongestant, pseudoephedrine, because it can elevate blood pressure and heart rates.

How can you avoid common infections?

- \* Wash hands frequently
- \* Drink 6-8 tall glasses of water daily
- \* Eat a balanced diet with 6-8 servings of brightly colored fruits and vegetables every day
- \* Use saline nasal spray to keep nasal membranes moist
- \* Use sinus rinses such as the Netti Pot or the NeilMed Sinus Rinse
- \* Avoid outside exercise when high pollen counts
- \* Get adequate rest – 6-8 hours of sleep nightly
- \* Exercise daily – 22-30 minutes, 7 days/week

Enjoy the wonderful days of fall! Just be sure you protect yourself and stay healthy!

~ Amy

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## Tomatoes!

*Eat tomatoes raw to get vitamins C, A, and K as well as potassium. Cook them to get the maximum amount of lycopene, a heart-protective, cancer-fighting antioxidant that becomes more concentrated when tomatoes are heated.*



## Try This Wonderful Recipe: Halibut with Tomatoes and Olives

A study published in *Neurology* October 9, 2012 evaluated over 1000 men aged 46-65 years old followed for 12 years.

Over this time frame, there were 67 strokes (50 were ischemic). The study was adjusted for age, body-mass index, blood pressure, smoking, cholesterol, diabetes and stroke history. For those who had the highest serum levels of lycopene (a common element in tomatoes), there was a significant decreased risk of stroke by 59 percent.

Try this super easy halibut recipe from Prevention.com with tomatoes and olives. Enjoy the health benefits!

### Halibut with Tomatoes & Olives

**Prep Time:** 10 minutes  
**Total Time:** 25 minutes  
**Servings:** 4

- 2 cloves garlic, smashed
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1-1/2 lb sm tomatoes, quartered or chopped
- 3 Tbsp chopped pitted kalamata olives
- 1 Tbsp chopped marjoram
- 4 halibut or other fish fillets (6 oz each)
- 1/4 c fresh whole wheat bread crumbs

**1. HEAT broiler.** Cook garlic in 1 Tbsp oil in broiler-safe pan over medium heat, 1 minute. Add tomatoes,

olives, and marjoram. Simmer until tomatoes have wilted, 5 minutes. Add fish, skin side down, and cook until almost done, about 6 minutes.

**2. TOP fish** with crumbs. Broil until crumbs are golden and fish is done, 1-2 minutes.



**3. SERVE fish** with sauce and drizzle with 1 Tbsp oil.

**Nutrition** (per serving): 306 cal, 37 g pro, 9 g carb, 2 g fiber, 13 g fat, 1.5 g sat fat, 232 mg sodium

## October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

We celebrate the advances and public recognition of Breast Cancer! My mother was a breast cancer survivor and I am very pleased with the national attention given to breast cancer in this country and I strongly believe that the campaign has improved lives, impacted science, and promoted awareness.

Likewise, we know that 10 times as many women die from heart disease than breast cancer. I crave the time when women and heart disease garners the same important social attention as breast cancer!

A couple of interesting thoughts regarding Breast Cancer and Heart Attack and Stroke Prevention. . .

1) For women who drink one or more alcoholic beverage per day, the risk of breast and rectal cancer is significantly increased. (Sometimes women are told to drink one serving of alcohol per day for cardiovascular benefit – be aware of cancer risk.)

2) For women undergoing breast cancer treatment, the Journal of American College of Cardiology stated that the decrease in physical activity, chemotherapy medications, and psychosocial issues all increased the risk of heart attacks and strokes significantly.

If you, or someone you know, has been diagnosed with breast cancer and is anticipating treatment, please allow for a complete cardiovascular risk assessment as soon as possible. It is essential to make sure your body (arterial system) is poised to handle the stress of breast cancer treatment.



**The HASPC is accepting new patients!**

*Please mention this to others who might benefit from our care.*



*Watch for our 2013 membership forms to arrive this month. Please get them in right away to reserve your spot. Although payment will not be due until January, your immediate response allows us to plan ahead to ensure optimal care for every patient we serve.*