

CIRCULATORY

DISEASE MANAGEMENT NEWS



Decreasing risk for stroke



To decrease your chance of having a stroke, it is important know what the risk factors are so you can reduce them. Here are factors that may increase risk of stroke and how you can work to manage them.

1. High blood pressure

Having high blood pressure increases your risk of stroke. Consider reducing sodium and fatty foods in your diet to lower risk. Check your blood pressure regularly. Stay active or become active (after checking with your provider).

2. High cholesterol

This condition can cause buildup of plaque on blood vessel walls, leading to a higher risk of stroke. Monitor your cholesterol levels, and if they are high, talk to your provider about a management plan. This may include medication, dietary or activity changes.

3. Other possible risk factors

Other diagnoses that can affect risk of stroke include heart disease, diabetes, obesity and sickle cell disease.

4. Lifestyle habits

Daily and regular habits can predict the likelihood of having a stroke, but can also lower risk. Work with your provider to discuss diet, exercise/appropriate activity levels, alcohol intake and tobacco use.

FEBRUARY | 2024

VIRTUAL SUPPORT FROM YOUR DISEASE MANAGEMENT TEAM

We are glad to give you support with printed materials and expert disease management clinicians. However, we would also like to help you stay healthy through free virtual support, which we offer in three exciting ways:

Webinars: We offer live webinars via computer and phone. Our live webinars bring you up-to-date information about medical subjects from our clinical experts through presentations and audio. After the online session, you will have a chance to ask questions of the clinician. Getting signed up for a free Zoom session is easy. Visit HumanaMilitary.com/dm to make your reservation today.

Community groups: These live sessions, conducted by our clinical experts, give you the support you need to stay healthy. For beneficiaries struggling with diabetes or depression/anxiety disorder, signing up is easy. Visit the group meetings calendar at HumanaMilitary.com/dm.

Web-based training: On our disease management website, you will find videos about your disease and how to control it effectively. Available to you 24/7, these digital resources give you the knowledge you need to stay focused on your health. Please visit HumanaMilitary.com/dm to access this information.

We hope you will take advantage of these exciting tools to help you achieve your health and wellness goals.

An important note about TRICARE program information: At the time of publication, this information is current. It is important to remember that TRICARE policies and benefits are governed by public law and federal regulations. Changes to TRICARE programs are continually made as public law and/or federal regulations are amended.

Humana
Military





Heart health and cold temperatures



Extreme weather conditions can make physical activity more strenuous. For example, if you have heart disease and run out in the cold weather to shovel snow, you could experience chest pain or discomfort called angina. Strenuous exercise can increase blood pressure, push the heart rate up and increase blood concentration of fibrinogen, a protein involved in blood clotting. Combining intense physical activity with extreme weather can contribute to an increased risk of a heart attack.

If you must shovel snow or do any cold weather activity, consider these tips:

- **Wear layers of clothing.** This will trap air between layers, forming a protective insulation.
- **Wear a hat.** Keep your head and your ears warm. (Ears are especially prone to frostbite.) Keep your hands and feet warm too.
- **Don't drink alcoholic beverages before going out.** This will give you an initial feeling of warmth, because blood vessels in the skin expand. Heat is then drawn away from the body's vital organs.
- **Warm-up first.** Take time to do a few minutes of warm-up activity, like walking, to increase your heart rate slowly.
- **Plan frequent breaks.** Take a pause during cold weather activities so your body doesn't become too strained. You don't have to clear your entire driveway all at one time.
- **Avoid mealtime activity.** After eating a meal, don't shovel or attempt other vigorous activity immediately. The "work" of digestion on top of the physical activity could put too much strain on your heart.
- **Know the signs of a heart attack and listen to your body.** At the first sign of discomfort, shortness of breath, dizziness or nausea—pause; relax for a few minutes to see if you can catch your breath. If not seek medical attention immediately.
- **Look for snow removal programs.** See if your community offers assistance for snow shoveling or removal. Your heart condition may qualify you for services.

Managing your health during colder months

While winter brings a lot of chances to get together with friends and family, it can also bring more opportunities for exposure to colds that can lead to infections. If you or a loved one has a respiratory or heart condition, or multiple health concerns, here are some tips to help you this season:

1. Prevent colds and infections! Remember the basics:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Sneeze into your elbow, not your hand—or even better, sneeze into a tissue and throw it away into the trash
- Eat as healthy as possible
- Get six to eight hours of sleep every night

2. Ask your provider about immunizations. You may need to get the flu, COVID-19, RSV or pneumonia shot this season. Talk to your doctor about which vaccines you need because of age and health conditions. **See what immunizations TRICARE covers.**

3. Make a plan for working in the office. Ask your employer what they are doing to prevent spreading illness in the workplace and what they will do if multiple people get sick. Consider wearing a mask, or find out if you can work from home.

4. Take medication with care. If you do get sick and need to take medication, watch out for these issues:

- Don't take too much acetaminophen. More than 3,000 or 4,000 mg can affect your liver.



- If you have a heart condition, talk with your provider about which medications are safe and which are not.
 - Stay away from the medications ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, and those that are high in sodium, unless otherwise recommended by your provider.
- 5. Seek care when sick.** Schedule an appointment. If it's after hours, **go to urgent care** or call the TRICARE Nurse Advice Line at (800) 874-2273.

FROM THE CLINICIAN



Small changes lead to big results. This is the idea that clinician Sarahjane shares with beneficiaries who participate in the disease management program. If a beneficiary is having a hard time getting medications, she helps resolve the issue. If they are coping with stress, she provides support. If they are having a monetary struggle, she connects them to community resources. Whatever blocks the beneficiary's path to better health, the clinician helps find them the best avenue of support.

Sarahjane believes that the important thing is to listen, reflect and plan with the beneficiary. While listening, Sarahjane tries to figure out what she can offer to the beneficiary. Recently, Sarahjane worked with a beneficiary, Sidney, to help him make adjustments

to his lifestyle. They worked together to build Sidney's knowledge about lifestyle modifications that would work for his busy life. Sarahjane answered his questions, and the two talked about ways to make changes to diet, smoking and exercise. After Sidney named his health goals, Sarahjane supported and encouraged him on his journey. Sidney was able to meet many of his objectives. Sarahjane said, "Seeing participants reach their goals is a very rewarding part of my job."

A PHYSICIAN'S PERSPECTIVE

What do you think of New Year's resolutions? Have you made a list of lofty goals only to abandon them after a few weeks?

Managing a chronic disease can be overwhelming, but making and sticking to resolutions can be done! Figure out your reason and make small changes that lead to habits you don't even have to think about.

Be specific and write it down. Try keeping track of everything you eat in a one-to-two week time frame, and then pick one thing to change. Here are some suggestions:

- If you drink soda twice a day, replace one of those with water.
- If you eat fast food three times a week, try going twice.
- Replace red meat with lean ground turkey or chicken in your favorite recipes.

Be intentional with your changes, and they will become a habit. Keep checking in with yourself, applauding your success and updating your goals.

The same idea applies to exercise. Simply begin with writing down your "why" and a goal. For example, "I will walk every day," is good, but, "I will walk 15 minutes every day at lunchtime," is better because it is specific. Keep track of your activity, celebrate your success and update your goals along the way.


The most important thing you can do to manage chronic disease is to make changes that lead to a healthier lifestyle. Only you can make those positive changes that turn into good habits.



*Connie Lorenzo, MD,
FAAPMR, CPC-A*



FROM THE PATIENT

 Sidney is a participant in the disease management program, which he said, "has really helped him in turning his health around." Before the program, he had a heart attack and was struggling with his lab values, dietary habits and overall health.

His clinician, Sarahjane, helped him see where changes could be made that would work for his lifestyle. Sidney said that he loved sweets and bread. Many days he was drinking sweet tea or coffee with sugar and eating pancakes or higher carbohydrate meals. Sarahjane was able to help him make small changes. Sidney now uses Stevia rather than sugar in his coffee and tea. He was also able to decrease his caffeine intake.

Sidney started keeping a food log and planning meals. He began

eating foods he loves in moderation and increasing his intake of vegetables. He lost about 30 pounds, stopped smoking and lowered his blood pressure. He also improved his cholesterol, lipids and blood sugar levels to normal ranges.

"This program has really helped me take a step back and look at my choices," Sidney said. He said the benefits of the program were the tireless support, coaching and mentoring. As a result, he thinks more carefully about his food choices.

Sidney recommends this program because the support and resources helped him make better choices to change his mindset. He is no longer overwhelmed when making healthy decisions. He feels more in control of his health and is seeing the positive effects of the steps he's made.



OVEN-CRUSTED CHICKEN BREAST

Prep time: 20 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes
Yield: 4 servings
Serving size: 3 oz chicken breast, 1 C salad

Ingredients:

For chicken:

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (3 oz each)
 1 egg white (or substitute liquid egg white)
 1 C fat-free evaporated milk
 1 C breadcrumbs
 ¼ C rolled oats, crushed; pulse a few times in the food processor or crush between fingers to make smaller pieces
 1 C whole-wheat flour
 2 Tbsp olive oil or vegetable oil

For salad:

2 Tbsp lemon juice
 ½ Tbsp olive oil
 4 C red leaf lettuce, rinsed and dried
 1 C cherry tomatoes, rinsed and halved
 ¼ tsp salt
 ¼ tsp ground black pepper

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
2. Place chicken in a freezer bag with the air squeezed out, and pound each breast down to ½-inch thickness.
3. Combine the egg white and evaporated milk in a bowl, and mix well. In a separate bowl, combine the breadcrumbs and crushed oats, and mix well.
4. Coat the chicken breasts in flour, and shake off the excess. Dip the chicken breasts in the egg and milk mixture, and drain off the excess. Then dip the chicken breasts in the breadcrumb mixture to coat, and shake off the excess. After all chicken breasts have been coated, discard any leftover breading mixture.
5. Heat oil in a large sauté pan. Stir fry the chicken over medium-high heat on one side until golden brown, about 2–3 minutes. Turn carefully, and pan fry the second side for an additional 2–3 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from the pan, and place on paper towels to soak up excess oil. Place on baking sheet, and finish cooking in a 350 °F oven for about 5–8 minutes (to a minimum internal temperature of 165 °F).
6. For the salad, combine lemon juice and olive oil, and mix well to make a dressing. Toss the lettuce leaves and cherry tomatoes with the dressing, salt and pepper.
7. Serve 1 cup salad with one piece of chicken.
 Tip: Try serving with a side of oven-roasted potatoes.

Nutritional information (per serving):

Calories	264	Cholesterol	49 mg	Saturated fat	2 g
Total fat	11 g	Potassium	553 mg	Total fiber	3 g
Protein	24 g	Carbohydrates	18 g	Sodium	263 mg
<i>Percent daily values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.</i>					

Humana Military
PO Box 740017
Louisville, KY 40201



Care management program

- Toll-free phone number: **(800) 881-9227**
- Find information on the My health page **[HumanaMilitary.com/dm](https://www.humana.com/military/dm)**

Humana
Military



XBLR0224-A

© 2024 Humana Military

02/2024

Resources



Humana Military is here to help you on your health journey. Do you have a new diagnosis affecting your heart or circulatory system? Do you just want to know what else you can do to manage your condition? Did you start a new medication? We have resources to support you.

First, there are online resources you can use to manage your health, including videos and live, web-based events. Also, consider working with a disease management clinician for your heart and vascular health. To learn more about this free program, or to join, call Humana Military at (800) 881-9227. Your dedicated clinician can help you set up some health goals to better manage your condition. As always, don't forget to routinely check in with your provider, and take all medications as instructed. Look forward to a healthier you by keeping your health under control.

