

HEART HEALTH

2015



Eat to Live

Mediterranean or vegetarian ... which heart-healthy diet reigns supreme?

4 Ways to Measure the Health of Your Heart

ASK THE EXPERT:
Can Heart Disease Be Reversed?

Women & Stress

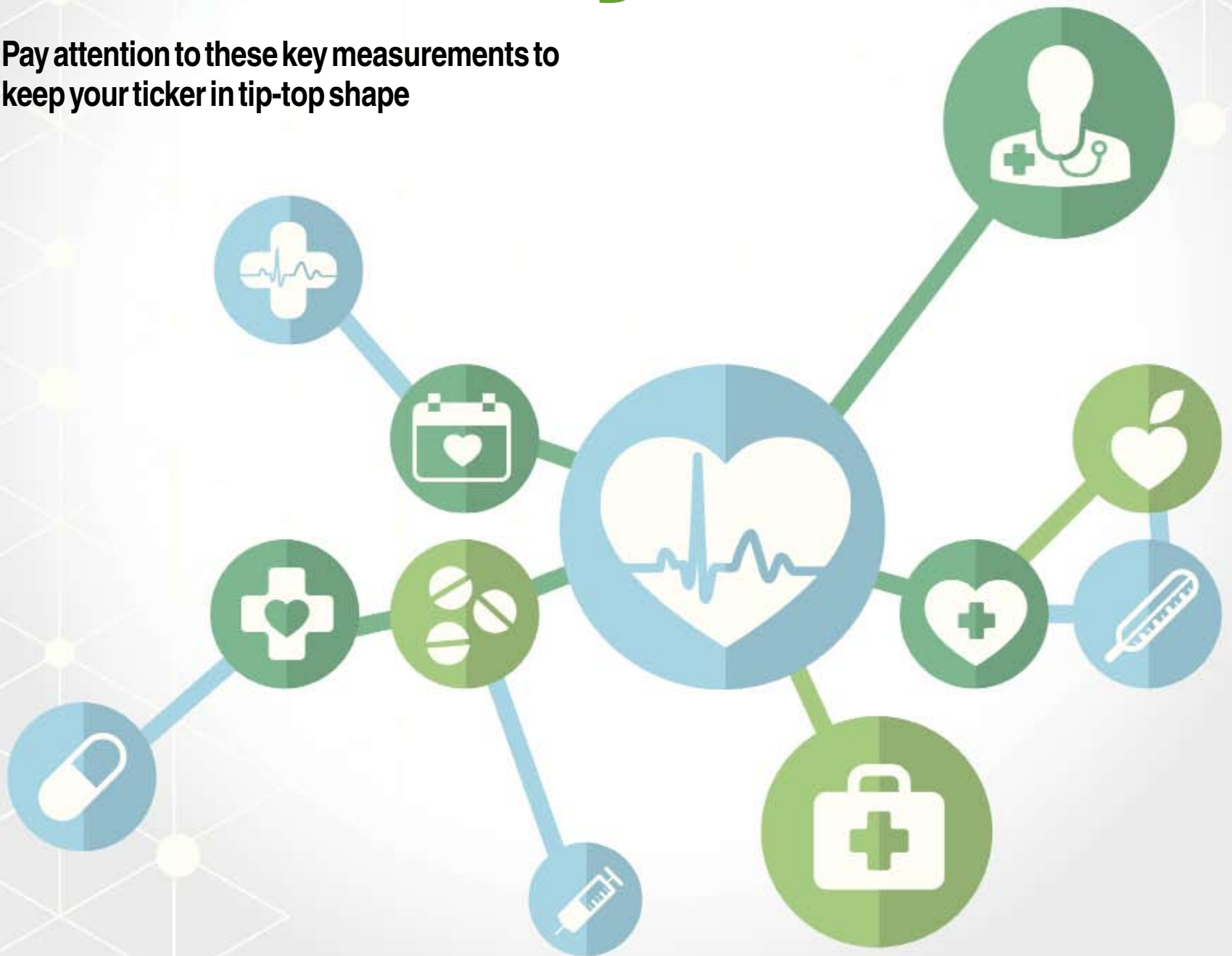
Act F.A.S.T.:
Know Stroke Symptoms to Save a Life

'PAWN STARS' HEART:
How Rick Harrison is getting on-track



4 Tests of a Healthy Heart

Pay attention to these key measurements to keep your ticker in tip-top shape



BY ANNE BURKLEY
CTW FEATURES

If you are heading to the doctor's office for a routine physical and blood test, and you are over the age of 20, the following four screenings will likely be part of the exam and for good reason. According to the American Heart Association, 2,150 Americans die from cardiovascular diseases every day - that's one every 40 seconds.

While the following tests don't diagnose disease, the results, along with age, weight, lifestyle and

genetic factors, can predict a person's risk of heart disease. "The bottom line is that we want to detect heart disease risk early, so we can do something about it," says Barbara Fletcher, RN, president of the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association and clinical associate professor at the Brooks College of Health School of Nursing, at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville, Fla. "For the most part," she added, "all of these risks can be impacted by diet and exercise and, if needed, stress management."



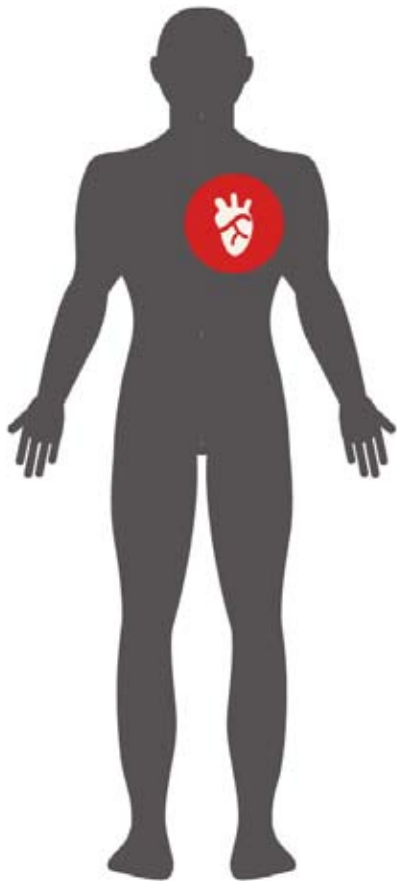
1. Resting Heart Rate

Today, resting heart rate is used as much more than an indicator of fitness level; it is used as a risk factor for early death from heart disease and other conditions. A 2013 Danish study reported that those who have resting heart rates of 80 beats per minute die four to five years earlier than those who have pulses of 65 beats per minute. Pulse measurement is routine, but for many sitting in a doctor's office isn't relaxing. A more accurate resting heart rate can be determined by measuring the heart rate first thing in the morning before getting out of bed.

2. Blood Pressure

"High blood pressure can lead to heart disease, heart failure, stroke and kidney failure, so it's very important for it to be controlled," Fletcher says. A normal adult blood pressure is below 120/80. The systolic pressure, the top number, measures pressure in the arteries while the heart beats. The diastolic pressure measures the pressure in the arteries between heartbeats. Without diagnostic testing, the first symptom of hypertension may actually be a heart attack or stroke.

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3. Cholesterol

Cholesterol levels that are too high or low, depending on the type of cholesterol, coupled with other risk factors, can predict the risk of heart disease and stroke. A typical blood panel provides levels for both high-density lipoprotein (HDL, "good" cholesterol) and low-density lipoprotein (LDL, "bad" cholesterol) cholesterol levels. An HDL level less than 40 mg/dL is considered low and an LDL level less than 100 mg/dL is optimal.

4. Triglycerides

Triglycerides are a common type of fat in the body. High triglyceride levels, particularly when combined with low-HDL or high-LDL levels can speed up atherosclerosis, the buildup of fat deposits on artery walls, which increases risk of heart disease. Triglyceride level should be 150 mg/dL or less.



ASK THE EXPERT: DR. JOEL K. KAHN

One of America's foremost holistic heart doctors reveals his beliefs on preventing – and reversing heart disease



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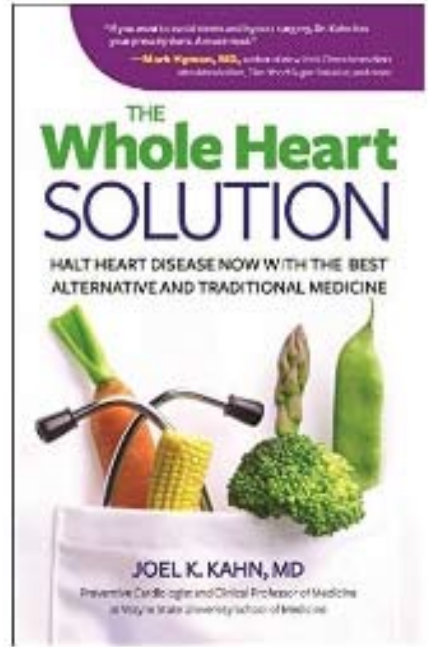
One in every four deaths in the United States is caused by heart disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, who reported this startling fact, estimates that 600,000 people die of heart disease each year in America.

Dr. Joel Kahn, clinical professor of medicine at Wayne State University School of Medicine and director of cardiac wellness at Michigan Healthcare Professionals PC, is hoping to put a serious dent in that number. "It seems radical, but 80 to 90 percent of heart disease is preventable," he says. Diets that consist of over-processed and nutritionally void foods eaten in excess, sedentary jobs, inactive lifestyles and high stress levels all contribute to the prevalence of heart disease in modern society.

The good news is that heart disease is preventable and can even be reversed. "You can basically design a lifestyle that doesn't cost a whole lot of money and is well within your reach and make yourself almost completely heart-attack proof," Kahn says.

In his practice, Kahn goes beyond drugs and surgery and uses an integrated approach to cardiology, which includes prescribing yoga, meditation, supplements and nutrition in an aggressive way. A patient might walk out of his office with a prescription for five more servings of vegetables and fruits a day and a daily dose of meditation.

The thing is, when patients successfully change their lifestyle, they experience life-changing – and maybe even live-saving – results, said Kahn. Those who start eating a plant-based diet, for example, might see their cholesterol and blood pres-



sure improve, but also find they are able to better control diabetes, lose weight and have more energy.

In his book "The Whole Heart Solution" (Readers Digest, 2014) Kahn explains how the heart works with all of the other systems of the body. "The heart is affected by other organ systems, so I am always in-tune to the thyroid, the GI [gastrointestinal] system, the hormonal system outside the thyroid system... everything works together as a whole," he said. Because your body works as a unit, if one system isn't working at its best, the other systems will be stressed. By living a healthy lifestyle, said Kahn, you do more than ensure heart health; you ensure the health of your entire body.

Like most physicians, Kahn bases his recommendations on evidence. Utilizing his own experiences and expansive studies of heart-healthy lifestyles (MORGEN, Karolinska and CARDIA studies), he suggests adopting these healthy habits that have been observed to keep your ticker in tip-top shape:

Don't Smoke

The chemicals in tobacco smoke harm blood cells, damage the heart and damage the function and structure of blood vessels. Plus, it damages every other organ in the body.



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Eat Well

“Food is medicine,” Kahn says. He follows a vegan diet and highly recommends it, but is supportive of any diet that advocates portion control, and lots of vegetables, fruits and whole grains and limits sugar, fat and salt.

Exercise Regularly

Find something that works for you – walking, biking, going to the gym – and do it for a half an hour a day most days of the week.

Drink in Moderation

It comes as a surprise to many, but in studies, those who drank in modera-

tion and on a regular basis were among those with a lower risk of heart disease.

Keep Your Weight Near Ideal

Participants in studies that stayed nearest to their ideal weight were not as likely to have heart disease.

Get a Good Night's Sleep

According to the MORGEN study, people who don’t get enough sleep and experienced poor sleep quality have a 79 percent higher risk of getting heart disease in the future. Kahn recommends seven hours a night.



Reduce Stress

Find a way to reduce stress levels. Whether it is breathing techniques, meditation, yoga, massage or prayer, find a method that works for you.

Move

“Sitting is absolutely detrimental to your health,” Kahn says. If you have to sit at a desk all day, get up for 10 minutes every hour, even if it is just stretching and standing at your desk.



EAT RED FOR HEART HEALTH

No, red meat doesn't count! But Dr. Joel Kahn, author of the book "The Whole Heart Solution" does recommend these five heart-healthy foods that are delicious, versatile and readily available.

1. Tomatoes

Cooked tomatoes contain lycopene, a chemical shown to help prevent heart disease and cancer. The seeds of raw tomatoes have been shown to thin the blood.

2. Strawberries

The antioxidants, potassium and folate in strawberries work together to control cholesterol, blood pressure and homocysteine levels.

3. Pomegranates

Pomegranates can alter cholesterol in a favorable way, said Kahn. Plus, people who drink four to eight ounces of unsweetened pomegranate juice a day can reduce arterial plaque.

4. Red grapes

The skin of red grapes has a chemical called resveratrol that has anti-aging properties and may lower blood cholesterol and blood sugar.

5. Broccoli

It's not red, but broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables (kale, Brussels sprouts, bok choy, cabbage, cauliflower) are good for the heart. When raw and damaged (by chewing or chopping), broccoli contains a chemical and enzyme that work together to create sulforaphane, which has been shown to lower blood pressure and cholesterol. Unfortunately, cooking kills the enzyme. To retain the heart-healthy benefits, mix a handful of raw broccoli with cooked broccoli to retain the enzyme, or season cooked cruciferous vegetables with dried ground mustard powder, since it contains the enzyme needed to create sulforaphane.

