

TICK...TICK...TICK



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What you don't know could hurt you. If you don't understand what the numbers mean in your cholesterol and glucose results, you could be a ticking time bomb for heart disease – the No. 1 killer of men and women in the U.S.

Most of us know by now there is “good” (HDL) cholesterol and “bad” (LDL) cholesterol. But “bad” may not really be so bad, depending on several other factors, such as not having a family history of heart disease or high HDL (good) cholesterol levels.

And – you are not necessarily safe just because your total cholesterol is “normal.” Your age, a strong family history of heart disease, diabetes, whether you smoke and your blood pressure all play a role in heart disease.

Confused yet? Don't be – you can learn all about your risk for heart disease and have the opportunity to ask questions when you attend a “Talk to Your Cardiologist” education session by Dr. Cam Campbell, Cedar Rapids Heart Center, PC, through Mercy Medical Center.

The free sessions are offered to businesses that participate in Mercy's Corporate Wellness program, as well as to the public. To learn more about the next session, visit our website or call (319) 221-8567. You'll hear Dr. Campbell's “Bill Clinton Theory of Heart Disease” and walk through President Obama's risk of heart disease as an example.

One-third of the people in the U.S. are at intermediate risk for heart disease and one-third have Metabolic Syndrome (formerly known as pre- or borderline diabetes). Do you know if you

fall into one – or even both – of these groups?

Factors in determining Metabolic Syndrome include waist circumference (men > 40 inches; women > 35 inches) and blood pressure (optimal is < 130/85), as well as triglyceride, HDL and fasting glucose levels. Elevated numbers in three or more of these conditions increase your risk of diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

If you would like to have an individualized assessment and learn more about your heart risk, call to schedule a Heart2Heart screening at Mercy Medical Center at (319) 861-7778.

Check out several heart-health videos at www.youtube.com/mercymedicalcentercr as Dr. Campbell takes a unique look at heart-related topics and gives you an inside look at treatments.

Fast Facts

- Fish oil (2 grams) lowers triglycerides
- Oat hulls & flax seed reduce cholesterol
- One drink per day can raise HDL and lower your risk for heart disease
- Taking calcium without vitamin D may increase heart risk
- Folic acid (0.8 mg a day) appears to lower risk for stroke.