

Considering
compounded
GLP-1s? What
to know

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Fit exercise
into your
daily routine

P. 22

Health Monitor[®]

Living



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**“I’m taking
control!”**

Lowering Your Risk of Heart Attack and Stroke

Marina Kerstanski had a strong family history of diabetes and heart disease. But despite knowing her risk factors, it took a heart attack to spring her into action—and a GLP-1 to finally help her get her health on the right track.

CONTENT REVIEWED BY



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THE BASICS

STEP INTO A HEALTHIER YOU!

Heart disease is on the rise, but you can take steps to protect yourself—starting now!

A

about 127 million people in the United States currently have a form of heart disease, according to the American Heart Association, and it continues to be the top cause of death regardless of gender, race or ethnicity. The reasons for this vary, but our high rates of obesity, diabetes, unhealthy nutrition habits and lack of physical exercise are among the top factors.

Heart disease often progresses slowly and silently, meaning that many people don’t realize they have it until they have a “major adverse cardiovascular event”—things like heart attack, stroke, blood clots, the sudden need for bypass surgery due to clogged arteries (i.e., coronary artery disease) or a heart failure diagnosis.

The good news? Heart disease can often be prevented or its progression slowed if you take steps to reduce your risk—and studies show it’s never too late to make a change.

Take Marina Kerstanski, for example (read more about her story on p. 8), whose strong family history of heart disease, diabetes and stroke should have alerted her that she needed to take steps to stay healthy. It wasn’t until she had a heart attack herself that she quit smoking, overhauled her eating habits, and started taking a GLP-1 medication that’s helped her get her diabetes under control. ►

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Or read Melissa Sloan-Williams' and Jayne Jones' stories starting on p. 17. Both Melissa and Jayne ignored their early symptoms and were shocked by their dual heart disease and diabetes diagnoses. Now, both are thriving after learning as much as they could about their conditions and cultivating healthier lifestyles.

The key takeaway: Learning more about your risk factors and the steps you can take to manage them can make all the difference.

Know your risk

While there's nothing you can do about so-called nonmodifiable risk factors for heart disease—such as your age (postmenopausal for women and older than 45 for men), personal health history and family history of heart disease—there's a lot you can do about modifiable risk factors. Work with your healthcare provider to find out where you stand on:

- **Weight:** It has been found that 69% of the U.S. population has obesity or is overweight. Multiple studies show maintaining a healthy weight can help lower risk of coronary artery disease, heart attack, stroke and heart failure.
- **Cholesterol levels:** The goal is to achieve low levels of “bad” LDL cholesterol (and triglycerides, another type of fat in the bloodstream) and high levels of “good” HDL cholesterol.
- **Blood pressure:** Over time, untreated high blood pressure can cause your arteries to become less elastic, disrupting the flow of blood and oxygen to the heart and setting the stage for coronary artery disease.

- **Diabetes:** Simply having diabetes means you're 2 to 4 times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke. That's because excess blood sugar damages arteries, causing them to stiffen and narrow, promoting the buildup of artery-clogging plaque.

Look at your lifestyle

Is there room to...

- **Drop excess pounds?** For most people, losing just 5% to 10% of their current body weight (that's 10–20 lbs. if you weigh 200 lbs.) can significantly improve their cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar levels. Many medications (such as antidepressants) can contribute to weight gain, so speak with your doctor about other options.
- **Be more active?** The benefits of moving more every day (think walking, dancing, gardening, yoga, weight training, cycling) include better cholesterol levels, improved blood pressure, healthier blood sugar levels, sounder sleep and better mood.
- **Eat healthier?** Can you ditch some processed foods and snacks (that's most stuff that comes in a bag or box)? Order, pick up or eat out less, and prep and cook more? Cut back on red meats and add more fish and beans? Switch from full-fat to lower-fat dairy products? Enjoy more complex carbs, like whole-grain bread or brown rice, and healthier fats, like olive and canola oil?
- **Stop smoking?** Smoking causes 1 out of every 4 deaths from heart disease and increases your risk for diabetes complications, according to the CDC. Get help to quit by visiting [smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov).

Understand your treatment options

When lifestyle measures aren't enough to bring heart disease risk factors into line, medications can help. Today, there are many effective treatments, from simple low-dose aspirin to the options listed below. Discuss the following with your healthcare provider:

- **For help losing weight:** appetite suppressants, GLP-1 agonists, lipase inhibitors, stimulants and antidepressants
- **For high cholesterol:** statins, ezetimibe, bempedoic acid, PCSK9 inhibitors
- **For high triglycerides:** prescription omega-3 fatty acids, such as icosapent ethyl
- **For high blood pressure:** diuretics (water pills), calcium channel blockers, angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors, angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs)
- **For diabetes:** insulin (necessary for people with type 1 diabetes and for some people with type 2), oral medications (such as metformin, SGLT2 inhibitors, DPP-4 inhibitors and GLP-1 agonists), non-insulin injectables (such as GLP-1 agonists and GLP-1/GIP agonist combinations)

Make a plan

Keep reading this guide to learn more about heart disease and how other folks are overcoming the threat. Then talk with your healthcare provider about your own situation. Today's medication options allow your care team to customize a treatment plan specifically for you, so there's every reason to believe you can enjoy a healthy, active future. ●

Considering compounded GLP-1s? *What to know...*

GLP-1 receptor agonists are FDA-approved medications used to manage both weight loss and type 2 diabetes. As demand for these medications surged, some companies began offering *compounded* versions. A compounded medication is one that is custom-made, typically in a pharmacy. It uses FDA-approved ingredients, but the customized medication itself is not FDA-regulated.

That's why compounded GLP-1 medications carry risks. Simply put, they don't undergo the same rigorous testing for safety, effectiveness or consistency as those produced by pharmaceutical manufacturers.

Risks of using compounded medications include:

- Inaccurate dosing
- Unverified ingredients (both active and inactive)
- Contamination/mixed in unsanitary facilities
- Poor absorption

Some compounded products may not even contain the correct active drug—posing serious health risks like adverse reactions. The FDA has also issued warnings about online vendors selling unsafe or mislabeled versions of GLP-1s, which in some cases have resulted in people being hospitalized.

If you're considering a compounded GLP-1, talk with your healthcare provider first and only use medications mixed from licensed compounding pharmacies, which are inspected by the FDA. You can find a list of licensed pharmacies here: [fda.gov/drugs/human-drug-compounding/registered-outsourcing-facilities](https://www.fda.gov/drugs/human-drug-compounding/registered-outsourcing-facilities).



THE BASICS

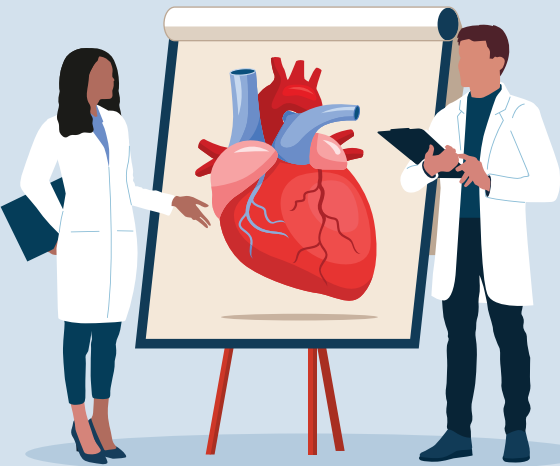
Where do you stand?

Your healthcare provider can test your blood pressure and prescribe a blood test to find out your current levels for blood fats and sugars. Compare your results to the charts below to see if you may need adjustments to your treatment plan.

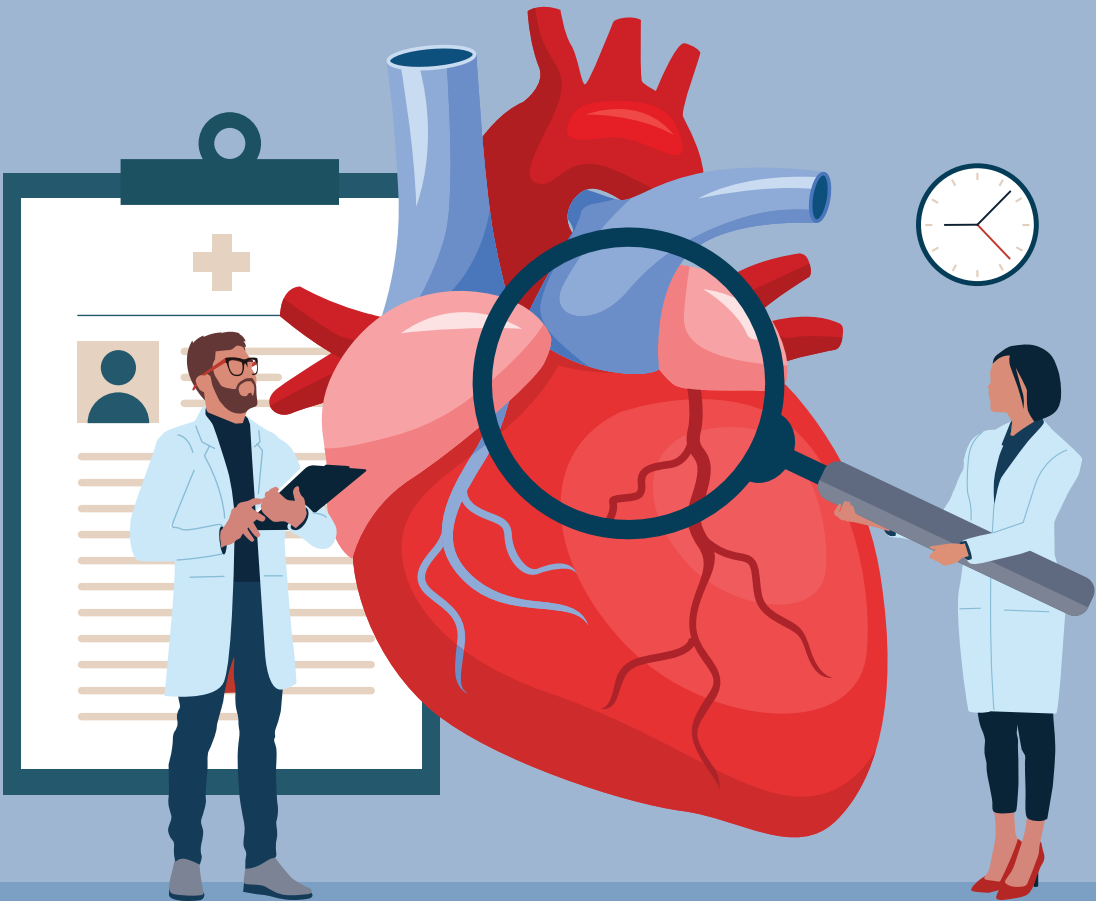
TOTAL CHOLESTEROL	
Less than 200 mg/dL	Desirable
200–239 mg/dL	Borderline high
240 mg/dL and above	High
LDL CHOLESTEROL	
Less than 100 mg/dL	Optimal
100–129 mg/dL	Near optimal/above optimal
130–159 mg/dL	Borderline high
160–189 mg/dL	High
190 mg/dL and above	Very high
HDL CHOLESTEROL	
Less than 40 mg/dL	Major heart disease risk factor
60 mg/dL and above	Gives some protection against heart disease

TRIGLYCERIDES	
Less than 150 mg/dL	Normal
150–199 mg/dL	Borderline high
200–499 mg/dL	High
500 mg/dL and above	Very high
BLOOD PRESSURE	
Less than 120/80	Normal
120–129/less than 80	Elevated; at risk for high blood pressure
130–139/80–89	High (stage 1)
140–179/90–119	Very high (stage 2)
180/120 or higher	Dangerously high; see your care provider

BLOOD SUGAR	
Target blood sugar levels for people <i>without</i> diabetes	
Before meals	72–99 mg/dl
2 hours after a meal	less than 140 mg/dl
Target blood sugar levels for people <i>with</i> diabetes	
Before meals	80–130 mg/dl
2 hours after a meal	less than 180 mg/dl
A1C levels	
Below 5.7%	Normal
5.7%–6.4%	Prediabetes
6.5% or more	Diabetes



Note: If you have diabetes, ask your healthcare provider about your personal blood sugar and heart health goals.



The pros on your side

No need to go it alone! Turn to your healthcare team to help bring your risk factors into line and head off major cardiac events.

- Cardiologist:** Specializes in heart and blood vessel disease, and today often helps treat people with diabetes.

Endocrinologist: Specializes in disease related to hormones and organs of the endocrine system, such as diabetes.
- Primary care provider (PCP)/ Nurse practitioner (NP)/Physician associate (PA):** Healthcare professionals who can monitor your heart disease, prescribe medication and provide ongoing care.
- Diabetes care and education specialist:** A specially trained healthcare professional, such as a nurse, dietitian or pharmacist, who can counsel and educate people with diabetes how to self-manage their condition.
- Pharmacist:** A healthcare professional who can answer questions about your medicine, help you find affordable medicine options and send refill reminders so you stay on course.
- Registered dietitian:** A healthcare professional who specializes in helping you adjust your eating patterns to improve your health. ●

“I’M TAKING CONTROL!”

Marina Kerstanski had a strong family history of diabetes and heart disease. But despite knowing her risk factors, it took a heart attack to spring her into action—and a GLP-1 to finally help her get her health on the right track. —BY DIANE HERBST

Through much of 2021, Marina Kerstanski was on her feet all day managing four restaurants and working 11-hour days before collapsing on her couch in exhaustion. She was also a devoted mom of two and grandmother of three. “Anytime I had off,” Marina recalls, “I would drive three hours to Delaware from my home in New York to visit my children and grandchildren. They are my joy.”

She was, in fact, planning another trip in early September of that year when one day at work, Marina suddenly felt nauseated, as if she had a stomach virus. The symptoms continued, and on September 11, when the nausea began to worsen and lightheadedness and shortness of breath joined the cluster of symptoms, she left work at midday to head to a nearby urgent care.

Several years earlier, Marina had been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes and had been mostly keeping it under control with non-insulin medications. But in addition to worrying she might have caught some virus, she was concerned something could be going on with her blood sugar. Physicians at the urgent care did bloodwork and performed tests, including an EKG.

“The minute the nurse practitioner got the results back, she’s like, ‘I need to call an ambulance,’” Marina recalls. “All I heard was, ‘it could be something with your heart.’”

Continued on next page ►



“I hope I can help even one person make a change.”

“I should have been more proactive!”

Marina decided to drive herself to the hospital. Within seconds of handing a nurse her EKG results, a flurry of activity erupted. “A man came running over to me with a wheelchair, saying ‘We need to take you in right now,’” she remembers. “Within 20 minutes, I was in the cath lab getting two stents in my heart.”

Turns out, Marina had had a heart attack and had a 95% blockage in an artery on the left side of her heart. “They said I should not have been there, that the heart attack should have killed me,” Marina recalls. “It was really scary. I had no clue. I did not in a million years think those symptoms indicated anything wrong with my heart.”

However, Marina quickly realized a simple truth. “I had all the factors of being at risk for heart disease,” she says. Her mater-

nal grandfather suffered a fatal heart attack at 42; her maternal grandmother had a debilitating stroke at age 80. Marina’s mother, who also had type 2 diabetes, survived a heart attack and later suffered a stroke; and Marina’s father died of heart failure. Meanwhile, her sister tragically died of a heart attack at 63 and her brother, diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at age 19, experienced renal failure and later a stroke.

“I should have seen all that and taken better care of myself knowing that I had this family history,” she says. “I should have been more proactive.”

“It was time for a change!”

A smoker for 20 years, one of Marina’s first endeavors was to finally quit for good. She also knew she needed to revamp her diet—her sweet tooth in particular—since she carried about 235 pounds on her 5-foot-4 frame.



Photos by Colortone Photography

“And if all that wasn’t enough, I needed to cut back on my work hours—I should not have exposed myself to so much stress.”

After throwing her cigarettes in the trash, she turned to her diet, centering meals around salads, vegetables, grilled chicken and salmon. And since Marina had been having trouble keeping her blood sugar levels steady, her doctor suggested switching one of her diabetes medications to a GLP-1 receptor agonist.

“He explained that GLP-1s had recently been shown to help protect your heart as well as your blood sugar levels,” recalls Marina, who readily agreed. It didn’t take long for her numbers to fall into line, with her A1C (a measure of average blood sugar levels from the past three months) dropping from 8.7% to 6.4%. (A normal A1C level is below 5.7%, a level of 5.7% to 6.4% indicates prediabetes and 6.5% or higher indicates diabetes.)

“I feel fantastic,” says Marina, who’s also taking metformin, a statin, a blood thinner and a blood-pressure medication to keep her heart risk in check. What’s more, all her lifestyle changes helped her shed 56 lbs. within a year.

These days, Marina shares her story with others, including through the American Heart Association (AHA). “I hope I can help even one person make a change before they get diabetes or suffer a heart attack. I do everything my doctor tells me to do, and then some. Just the thought of not being around to see my grandchildren grow up...I have the ability to change that now. What matters most to me are my daughter, son, grandchildren and son-in-law. They’re what my heart beats for and makes me happy.” ●

Health **h Monitor**

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Know the signs of a heart attack

When told she’d had a heart attack, Marina was shocked, since she didn’t feel the classic symptoms such as pain in her chest. However, she’s learned that shortness of breath, nausea and lightheadedness are indeed symptoms, just lesser known ones, especially in women.

“One of my doctors said to me, ‘More women need to know that their symptoms are often not like textbook symptoms, it’s so different than what they expect,’ ” Marina says. “And if you feel any of the symptoms, you should go get checked, especially if you have diabetes, have a family history of heart disease or if you’re overweight.”

See below for the symptoms to keep an eye out for—if you suspect you are having a heart attack, call 9-1-1 immediately. (NOTE: Do *not* drive yourself to the emergency room, as Marina did!)

General signs:

- Pain or heaviness in the chest, especially with exertion
- Difficulty breathing, especially with exertion
- Discomfort or tingling in arms, back, neck, shoulders or jaw

Signs more common in women:

- Sudden dizziness or lightheadedness
- A heartburn-like feeling
- Cold sweat
- Unusual fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting

Discover the Power of Wegovy®



Actor portrayals

What is Wegovy®?

WEGOVY® (semaglutide) injection 2.4 mg is an injectable prescription medicine used with a reduced calorie diet and increased physical activity:

- to reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events such as death, heart attack, or stroke in adults with known heart disease and with either obesity or overweight
- that may help adults with obesity or overweight with weight-related medical problems, lose excess body weight and keep the weight off

Wegovy® contains semaglutide and should not be used with other semaglutide-containing products or other GLP-1 receptor agonist medicines.

It is not known if Wegovy® is safe and effective for use in children under 12 years of age.

Important Safety Information

What is the most important information I should know about Wegovy®?

Wegovy® may cause serious side effects, including:

- **Possible thyroid tumors, including cancer.** Tell your healthcare provider if you get a lump or swelling in your neck, hoarseness, trouble swallowing, or shortness of breath. These may be symptoms of thyroid cancer. In studies with rodents, Wegovy® and medicines that work like Wegovy® caused thyroid tumors, including thyroid cancer. It is not known if Wegovy® will cause thyroid tumors or a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) in people
- Do not use Wegovy® if you or any of your family have ever had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2)

Do not use Wegovy® if:

- you or any of your family have ever had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2)
- you have had a serious allergic reaction to semaglutide or any of the ingredients in Wegovy®

Before using Wegovy®, tell your healthcare provider if you have any other medical conditions, including if you:

- have or have had problems with your pancreas or kidneys
- have type 2 diabetes and a history of diabetic retinopathy
- have or have had depression, suicidal thoughts, or mental health issues
- are scheduled to have surgery or other procedures that use anesthesia or deep sleepiness (deep sedation)
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. Wegovy® may harm your unborn baby. You should stop using Wegovy® 2 months before you plan to become pregnant
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if Wegovy® passes into your breast milk

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Wegovy® may affect the way some medicines work and some medicines may affect the way Wegovy® works. Tell your healthcare provider if you are taking other medicines to treat diabetes, including sulfonylureas or insulin. Wegovy® slows stomach emptying and can affect medicines that need to pass through the stomach quickly.



Lose weight

For adults with obesity or overweight who also have weight-related medical problems, along with a reduced calorie diet and increased physical activity



Keep it off



Lower the risk of major cardiovascular (CV) events

Such as death, heart attack, or stroke in adults with known heart disease and obesity or overweight, along with a reduced calorie diet and increased physical activity

Wegovy® is the only FDA-approved weight-management medicine that is also approved to reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events such as death, heart attack, or stroke.

In medical studies, people who stopped taking Wegovy® generally regained weight.

ONCE-WEEKLY

wegovy®

semaglutide injection **2.4 mg**



Check your cost and coverage at [Wegovy.com](https://www.wegovy.com) before asking your health care professional about Wegovy®.

Important Safety Information (cont'd)

What are the possible side effects of Wegovy®?

Wegovy® may cause serious side effects, including:

- **inflammation of your pancreas (pancreatitis).** Stop using Wegovy® and call your healthcare provider right away if you have severe pain in your stomach area (abdomen) that will not go away, with or without vomiting. You may feel the pain from your abdomen to your back
- **gallbladder problems.** Wegovy® may cause gallbladder problems, including gallstones. Some gallstones may need surgery. Call your healthcare provider if you have symptoms, such as pain in your upper stomach (abdomen), fever, yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice), or clay-colored stools
- **increased risk of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), especially those who also take medicines for diabetes such as insulin or sulfonylureas.** This can be a serious side effect. Talk to your healthcare provider about how to recognize and treat low blood sugar and check your blood sugar before you start and while you take Wegovy®. Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar may include dizziness or light-headedness, blurred vision, anxiety, irritability or mood changes, sweating, slurred speech, hunger, confusion or drowsiness, shakiness, weakness, headache, fast heartbeat, or feeling jittery
- **kidney problems (kidney failure).** In people who have kidney problems, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting may cause a loss of fluids (dehydration), which may cause kidney problems to get worse. It is important for you to drink fluids to help reduce your chance of dehydration
- **severe stomach problems.** Stomach problems, sometimes severe, have been reported in people who use Wegovy®. Tell your healthcare provider if you have stomach problems that are severe or will not go away.
- **serious allergic reactions.** Stop using Wegovy® and get medical help right away, if you have any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction, including swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat; problems breathing or swallowing; severe rash or itching; fainting or feeling dizzy; or very rapid heartbeat

- **change in vision in people with type 2 diabetes.** Tell your healthcare provider if you have changes in vision during treatment with Wegovy®
- **increased heart rate.** Wegovy® can increase your heart rate while you are at rest. Tell your healthcare provider if you feel your heart racing or pounding in your chest and it lasts for several minutes
- **depression or thoughts of suicide.** You should pay attention to any mental changes, especially sudden changes in your mood, behaviors, thoughts, or feelings. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any mental changes that are new, worse, or worry you
- **food or liquid getting into the lungs during surgery or other procedures that use anesthesia or deep sleepiness (deep sedation).** Wegovy® may increase the chance of food getting into your lungs during surgery or other procedures. Tell all your healthcare providers that you are taking Wegovy® before you are scheduled to have surgery or other procedures

The most common side effects of Wegovy® may include: nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, constipation, stomach (abdomen) pain, headache, tiredness (fatigue), upset stomach, dizziness, feeling bloated, belching, low blood sugar in people with type 2 diabetes, gas, stomach flu, heartburn, and runny nose or sore throat.

Wegovy® is a prescription medication. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

FDA, US Food and Drug Administration.

Please see Brief Summary of Information about Wegovy® on the following page.

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<div><div><div>Brief Summary of Information about WEGOVY® (semaglutide) injection</div><div><div><div>wegovy®</div><div>semaglutide injection 2.4 mg</div></div></div></div><div><div>Rx Only</div><div>This information is not comprehensive. How to get more information:</div><div><div>Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist</div><div>Visit www.novo-pi.com/wegovy.pdf to obtain the FDA-approved product labeling</div><div>Call 1-833-Wegovy-1</div></div></div></div>	
<div><div>What is the most important information I should know about WEGOVY®?</div><div>WEGOVY® may cause serious side effects, including:</div><div><div>Possible thyroid tumors, including cancer.</div><div>Tell your healthcare provider if you get a lump or swelling in your neck, hoarseness, trouble swallowing, or shortness of breath. These may be symptoms of thyroid cancer. In studies with rodents, WEGOVY® and medicines that work like WEGOVY® caused thyroid tumors, including thyroid cancer. It is not known if WEGOVY® will cause thyroid tumors or a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) in people.</div><div>Do not use WEGOVY® if you or any of your family have ever had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC), or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2).</div></div></div>	<div><div>How should I use WEGOVY®?</div><div>• WEGOVY® is injected under the skin (subcutaneously) of your stomach (abdomen), thigh, or upper arm. Do not inject WEGOVY® into a muscle (intramuscularly) or vein (intravenously).</div><div>• Change (rotate) your injection site with each injection. Do not use the same site for each injection.</div><div>• Use WEGOVY® 1 time each week, on the same day each week, at any time of the day.</div><div>• If you take too much WEGOVY®, call your healthcare provider or Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away. Advice is also available online at poisonhelp.org.</div></div>
<div><div>What is WEGOVY®?</div><div>• WEGOVY® is an injectable prescription medicine used with a reduced calorie diet and increased physical activity:</div><div><div>to reduce the risk of major cardiovascular events such as death, heart attack, or stroke in adults with known heart disease and with either obesity or overweight.</div><div>that may help adults and children aged 12 years and older with obesity, or some adults with excess weight (overweight) who also have weight-related medical problems to lose weight and keep the weight off.</div></div><div>• WEGOVY® contains semaglutide and should not be used with other semaglutide-containing products or other GLP-1 receptor agonist medicines.</div><div>• It is not known if WEGOVY® is safe and effective for use in children under 12 years of age.</div></div>	<div><div>What are the possible side effects of WEGOVY®?</div><div>WEGOVY® may cause serious side effects, including:</div><div><div>See “What is the most important information I should know about WEGOVY®?”</div><div>inflammation of your pancreas (pancreatitis).</div><div>Stop using WEGOVY® and call your healthcare provider right away if you have severe pain in your stomach area (abdomen) that will not go away, with or without vomiting. You may feel the pain from your abdomen to your back.</div><div>gallbladder problems.</div><div>WEGOVY® may cause gallbladder problems including gallstones. Some gallbladder problems need surgery. Call your healthcare provider if you have any of the following symptoms:</div><div><div><div>pain in your upper stomach (abdomen)</div><div>yellowing of skin or eyes (jaundice)</div><div>fever</div><div>clay-colored stools</div></div></div><div>increased risk of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), especially those who also take medicines to treat type 2 diabetes mellitus such as an insulin or a sulfonylureas.</div><div>Low blood sugar in patients with type 2 diabetes who receive WEGOVY® can be both a serious and common side effect. Talk to your healthcare provider about how to recognize and treat low blood sugar. You should check your blood sugar before you start taking WEGOVY® and while you take WEGOVY®. Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar may include:</div><div><div><div>dizziness or light-headedness</div><div>sweating</div><div>shakiness</div><div>blurred vision</div><div>slurred speech</div><div>weakness</div><div>anxiety</div><div>hunger</div><div>headache</div><div>irritability or mood changes</div><div>confusion or drowsiness</div><div>fast heartbeat</div><div>feeling jittery</div></div></div><div>kidney problems (kidney failure).</div><div>In people who have kidney problems, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting may cause a loss of fluids (dehydration) which may cause kidney problems to get worse. It is important for you to drink fluids to help reduce your chance of dehydration.</div><div>severe stomach problems.</div><div>Stomach problems, sometimes severe, have been reported in people who use WEGOVY®. Tell your healthcare provider if you have stomach problems that are severe or will not go away.</div><div>serious allergic reactions.</div><div>Stop using WEGOVY® and get medical help right away, if you have any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction including:</div><div><div><div>swelling of your face, lips, tongue or throat</div><div>severe rash or itching</div><div>very rapid heartbeat</div><div>problems breathing or swallowing</div><div>fainting or feeling dizzy</div></div></div><div>change in vision in people with type 2 diabetes.</div><div>Tell your healthcare provider if you have changes in vision during treatment with WEGOVY®.</div><div>increased heart rate.</div><div>WEGOVY® can increase your heart rate while you are at rest. Your healthcare provider should check your heart rate while you take WEGOVY®. Tell your healthcare provider if you feel your heart racing or pounding in your chest and it lasts for several minutes.</div><div>depression or thoughts of suicide.</div><div>You should pay attention to any mental changes, especially sudden changes in your mood, behaviors, thoughts, or feelings. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any mental changes that are new, worse, or worry you.</div><div>food or liquid getting into the lungs during surgery or other procedures that use anesthesia or deep sleepiness (deep sedation).</div><div>WEGOVY® may increase the chance of food getting into your lungs during surgery or other procedures. Tell all your healthcare providers that you are taking WEGOVY® before you are scheduled to have surgery or other procedures.</div></div><div><div>The most common side effects of WEGOVY® in adults or children aged 12 years and older may include:</div><div><div><div>nausea</div><div>stomach (abdomen) pain</div><div>dizziness</div><div>gas</div><div>diarrhea</div><div>headache</div><div>feeling bloated</div><div>stomach flu</div><div>vomiting</div><div>tiredness (fatigue)</div><div>belching</div><div>heartburn</div><div>constipation</div><div>upset stomach</div><div>runny nose or sore throat</div></div></div><div>low blood sugar in people with type 2 diabetes</div></div><div><div>Talk to your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of WEGOVY®.</div><div>Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.</div></div></div>

Manufactured by: Novo Nordisk A/S, DK-2880 Bagsvaerd, Denmark
More detailed information is available upon request.
Available by prescription only.
WEGOVY® is a registered trademark of Novo Nordisk A/S.
For more information, go to startWegovy.com or call 1-833-Wegovy-1.

PATENT Information: <http://novonordisk-us.com/products/product-patents.html>
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US24SEM001815 December 2024



YOU & YOUR CARE TEAM

Evaluate your heart health

Fill out this worksheet and review with your healthcare provider to find out if you’re doing all you can to protect yourself from heart attack, stroke and other types of heart events.

Know your numbers

Cholesterol levels

Total: _____

LDL: _____

HDL: _____

Triglycerides: _____

Blood pressure: _____

Blood sugar

Fasting blood sugar: _____

A1C: _____

Discuss your risk factors

1. Age: _____

2. Gender: _____

3. Have you had any of the following events or procedures? (Check all that apply.)

☐ Heart attack

☐ Stroke

☐ Angina (chest pain)

☐ Heart or blood vessel surgery

☐ Other

4. Do you smoke?

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. Do you have any of the following? (Check all that apply.)

☐ High cholesterol

☐ High blood pressure

☐ Diabetes

☐ Overweight or obesity

☐ Sleep apnea or other sleeping disorder

☐ Family history of heart disease

Have diabetes? Make sure your treatment is all it could be!

People with diabetes are 2 to 4 times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke, so if you have diabetes, ensure your blood sugar management plan is working.

1. My most recent A1C is: _____

2. My goal A1C is: _____

3. My average blood sugar readings are:

_____ When I first wake up

_____ Before meals

_____ Two hours after meals

_____ At bedtime

_____ Other (please specify: _____)

4. Check the box next to the statements that you agree with:

☐ I’m worried my blood sugar levels are too high/too low.

☐ I’m having problems taking/using/affording my medicine.

☐ I’m concerned my medicine is impacting my weight.

☐ I’m concerned about side effects.

☐ I’m concerned my medicine isn’t helping lower my risk for heart disease.

☐ I’m concerned I’m not doing enough to manage my diabetes.



THE DIABETES-HEART HEALTH LINK I have type 2 diabetes and at my last doctor’s appointment, I found out my cholesterol levels are too high. My doctor told me that managing my diabetes could help protect my heart. But I don’t understand the connection—what does my diabetes have to do with high cholesterol or my heart health?

Q
A

Answers to your questions about lowering your risk for heart disease

A: The high blood sugar levels associated with type 2 diabetes can, over time, damage your blood vessels if not properly controlled. Unmanaged diabetes can also impact organs like your liver and kidneys, which can lead to your body producing too much LDL (i.e., the “bad”) cholesterol, not enough HDL (i.e., the “good”) cholesterol, and too many triglycerides, which are another blood fat your body uses for energy. All these features can contribute to a higher risk of heart disease, and because of that, nearly all patients with type 2 diabetes need to be on a statin to lower their LDL cholesterol levels. In addition to that and other possible medications that can help protect

the heart and lower blood sugar levels, you can try reducing the amount of carbohydrates you eat, get regular exercise and try to maintain a healthy weight to improve your blood sugar levels while increasing your HDL cholesterol levels.

TIME FOR NEW MEDS?

Q: In the past year, I suffered two minor strokes. Luckily, they didn’t cause permanent disability, but I’m concerned about having another. I also have diabetes, and I read somewhere there is a medication that can help me control my blood sugar and also lower my risk of another stroke. Could this medication be right for me?

A: The medication you read about is likely either a GLP-1

receptor agonist or an SGLT2 inhibitor. While both are proven to help manage blood sugar levels and reduce the risk of heart disease, GLP-1s have shown better efficacy at reducing the risk of stroke. Everyone is different, however, so discuss your treatment options with your healthcare provider to determine which medication, if any, makes sense for you.

FAMILY HISTORY WOES

Q: I have a strong family history of heart disease—multiple relatives on my mom’s side died at young ages from heart attacks, and my brother had one at 43. Will I have one, too?

A: Genes are not destiny—lifestyle always plays a major role! A famous study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that a healthy lifestyle can be a protective measure against heart disease, including in those with a family history of it. If lifestyle changes alone aren’t enough, medications can assist with managing both your blood sugar levels and your heart health, including managing high cholesterol or blood pressure. Meet with your healthcare provider, preferably a preventative cardiologist, so you can put together a plan. ●

—**Michael Blaha, MD,**
Director, Clinical Research, Ciccarone Center for the Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease; Professor of Medicine; John Hopkins, Baltimore, MD

“We’re overcoming heart disease!”

Both Melissa and Jayne ignored their early symptoms and were blindsided by diagnoses of heart disease and diabetes. Today, thanks to completely revamped lifestyles and the help of medication, they are feeling healthier than ever and ready to share their journeys with the world. —BY DIANE HERBST



“Don’t ignore your symptoms!”

MELISSA SLOAN-WILLIAMS, 43
DESLOGE, MO

After she was diagnosed with high blood pressure at just 26 years old, Melissa Sloan-Williams’ weight hit the high 200s due to unhealthy eating and stress from her job as a medical assistant. At 30, routine blood work revealed her A1C (a measure of average blood sugar readings from the past three months) was 11% (a normal A1C level is below 5.7%, a level of 5.7% to 6.4% indicates prediabetes, and a level of 6.5% or more indicates diabetes), leading to a type 2 diabetes diagnosis.

Melissa was put on medication to help her manage her blood sugar but didn’t make healthy lifestyle changes, admitting, “I wasn’t taking the best care

of myself. And I was tired all the time.”

One night three years later, at 33, Melissa experienced severe left arm pain and dangerously high blood pressure. In the ER, doctors diagnosed her with an active heart attack. “I just burst into tears,” she says. “I was shocked. I had been a ticking time bomb and I had no clue.”

Sitting in the ICU after receiving a stent, Melissa was determined to revamp her life. Her resolve deepened eight months later when her father suffered a fatal heart attack and stroke.

Melissa embraced a diet rich in vegetables and low-fat proteins, started exercising, and lost 90 pounds within two years, a loss she’s maintained ever since. To reduce stress, she switched careers and became an aesthetician. Today, her A1C is 6%, which Melissa’s doctor said is a sustainable number for her. She and her husband also recently adopted a baby girl—“the light of my life,” Melissa says of her 6½-year-old daughter. Here is how Melissa makes sure she continues to remain healthy for herself and her family.

Commit to a healthier lifestyle.

“This is truly what saved me,” says Melissa. “Learn all you can about nutrition. In cardiac rehab we met with a nutritionist and she gave me a diet plan based on plants and low fat, healthy proteins. It was a total change from what I had been eating before, which was a lot of

food high in saturated fat and sodium, both of which are not good for your heart.” After her heart attack, Melissa also slowly started exercising, and today walks two to three miles a day and does weight training two to three times a week. “Exercise has changed my life; it’s kind of my therapy,” she says. “It’s something I enjoy doing and it’s my time to myself.”

Prioritize your mental health, too.

When Melissa’s father died from a heart attack shortly after her own, she struggled to deal with the emotional fallout. “I was terrified I was going to die. I didn’t know what anxiety was before this, and I wouldn’t wish it on my worst enemy.” Melissa shared her fear of dying with her primary care doctor, who prescribed anti-anxiety medication. “I still suffer with it 10 years down the road, and I’m still making sure I take my medicine,” Melissa says. “Our mind and body are connected—if you don’t take your anxiety and stress seriously, they can manifest in your physical health.”

Focus on finding joy.

After Melissa’s heart attack, a nurse practitioner told her it would be dangerous to get pregnant due to the fact pregnancy can put stress on the heart. “That was so hard to hear, especially because I always wanted a baby,” says Melissa.

Continued on next page ►



“But I believe that things happen for a reason—we were destined to adopt and the daughter we brought home needed us.” Melissa, who danced as a child, now takes her daughter to dance classes. “She’s following in her mommy’s footsteps,” says Melissa. “And now that I have the opportunity to be her mom, I am even more committed to staying healthy for her.”

Share your passion.

Melissa’s goal is to educate women about early prevention. In her work as an aesthetician she happily shares her story with clients. “I’ve inspired at least a dozen people to go to their primary care doctor to have their numbers checked,” she says. Melissa is also involved with the American Heart Association’s GoRed campaign to raise awareness and hopefully save lives. Says Melissa: “I want others to avoid the experience I went through.”



Photo by Beautiful Mess Photography

“Find what works for you!”

JAYNE JONES, 50
SARASOTA, FL

When Jayne Jones was experiencing severe gastrointestinal issues almost five years ago, she thought she had a stomach flu. But after two weeks of being unable to keep food down, her husband insisted on driving her to the emergency room. There she discovered her blood pressure was dangerously high: 289/189 (normal blood pressure is 120/80 or lower) and test results showed a blood sugar level over 600 mg/dL (a normal fasting blood sugar level is 99 mg/dL or lower). The doctor told Jayne she had type 2 diabetes.

“She said my high blood pressure and blood sugar levels meant I was at the risk of having a stroke at any minute,” Jayne recalls. While in the emergency room, Jayne’s husband called her mother, who shared that

both Jaynes’ paternal and maternal grandparents also had type 2 diabetes. “The doctor said, ‘Oh my gosh, how do you not know this? You have a double whammy,’” Jayne recalls.

After returning home, Jayne’s doctor prescribed several medications to help manage her cholesterol—which also turned out to be high—her blood pressure, and her blood sugar. She also made a pact with herself that she would improve her numbers via a drastic change in her eating and exercise habits, deciding to go completely sugar-free as a start. After six months, her A1C was down from above 12% to 6%, she had lost 60 pounds, and her cholesterol and blood pressure had dramatically improved. Here is how Jayne continues to thrive.

Turn lemons into lemonade.

Jayne, a lawyer, had once used baking as an outlet for her incredibly stress-

ful job, and was sad when she decided to go sugar-free that she could no longer cook what she loved. Then, while out shopping one day, she noticed zero-sugar sweeteners and decided to experiment with recipes, making chocolate chip cookies that were a big hit with her family. Over the next four years, Jayne developed more than 250 sugar-free recipes, which she shares on her blog nosugarbaker.com, and even created varieties of frozen cookie dough that sold out three times on QVC. Now those frozen no-sugar goodies are available in more than 185 Albertson’s and Randall’s groceries in Texas and Louisiana, and she is in talks with other retailers to expand.

Seek support.

“When you are diagnosed with a chronic condition, you can feel like you are by yourself, like the sky is falling. I found a support group online and I

was like, ‘Wow, I am not the only person going through these things! Someone else out there knows what this is like! It can be very validating, and helpful when you’re looking for answers and others are sharing things that helped them.’”

Discover your path.

“I can’t go and tell anyone else what to do for your body, but for me, if I skip my 30 minutes of daily exercise of jogging in my pool or walking outside, my blood sugar goes up and I can start having diabetes-related vision problems,” says Jayne. “For healthy eating, in addition to my choice to cut out sugar, my family physician recommended The Omega Diet, which is high in salmon, shrimp and eggs and I am a whole different person, I crave it. It’s all about finding what works for you and what works to benefit your body.” ●

“If I don’t get my daily walk in, it really impacts my blood sugar levels,” says Jayne, here with her husband, Chris.



Photo by Jina Morgese



Stress relief that appeals to *all* your senses!

When small stressors—work meetings, getting the kids to their sports games on time, home repairs, etc.—build up, they can eventually lead to chronic stress. That's bad news for your heart, according to the American Heart Association, since chronic stress can raise blood pressure, increase heart rate and damage blood vessels. And while it's not realistic to avoid stress altogether, there *are* methods you can use to defuse its impact on your everyday life.

Here, some expert-recommended ways to get you started. —BY SARA ROTONDI

Stall stress by appealing to your sense of...



Sight:

"Nature gazing—like watching trees sway or clouds pass, naturally slows down racing thoughts," says therapist Victoria Grinman, PhD, LCSW-R. That's because it triggers the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for rest and relaxation. When you can, take a step back from your devices and look out your window or go outside—even just 20 minutes can lower your cortisol levels (a stress hormone) by 20%, according to a University of Michigan study.

Boost the effect by playing iSpy.

"Playful exercises like spotting a chosen color during a walk can help orient the mind and body to the present moment," advises Grinman. It's a great way to reset and allow your brain to rest if you've been struggling to tackle a difficult task.



Hearing:

"Sound is a direct pathway to the nervous system, which is why listening to music can have such a dramatic effect when we're stressed," says Grinman. While classical or slow jazz music work great, Grinman recommends binaural beats, which produces tones in different frequencies in each ear. Your brain perceives the tones together, creating a third tone that's been proven to be one of the most effective types of music for stress reduction. Look up "binaural beats" on YouTube for free options.

Boost the effect with nature sounds.

"Nature soundscapes like rain, birdsong or ocean waves reduce your cognitive load and promote mental quiet," says Grinman. Search for "nature soundscapes" on YouTube.

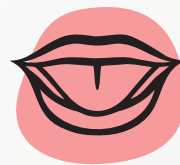


Smell:

Your olfactory nerve (the nerve dedicated to your sense of smell) sends messages directly to your hypothalamus, the hub in charge of your body's physiological responses to your emotions. "That's why aromatherapy with essential oils has been shown to lower cortisol levels," says Reid-Vanas. Scents like lavender, ylang-ylang and chamomile in particular impact neurotransmission in your brain, calming and slowing down your thought processes.

Boost the effect with a bath.

Add a few drops of a calming essential oil to your bathwater to get the twofold advantage of the stress-reducing scent with the relaxing effect of the warm water.



Taste:

"Evidence shows that slowing down and bringing awareness to the eating process itself can release endorphins and lower cortisol levels," says Cory Reid-Vanas, MA, LMFT, founder of Rocky Mountain Counseling Collective in Denver, CO. This is known as mindful eating, and whether you're eating a mint or indulging in your favorite comfort food, you'll want to chew at least 30 to 50 times for each bite to get the most benefit.

Boost the effect with a warm beverage.

"Warm, noncaffeinated beverages like herbal teas help the body relax by physically causing the muscles around your face and neck to unclench," says Reid-Vanas. If you don't like tea, something as simple as warm water with a little lemon also works, he adds, or you can try warm milk.



Touch:

"Weighted blankets can be incredibly calming and supportive," adds Grinman. That's because they activate the parasympathetic nervous system, promoting relaxation and reducing feelings of anxiety. Their gentle pressure also triggers the release of calming hormones like serotonin and oxytocin. Look for one that's about 10% of your total body weight for the best effect.

Boost the effect with a ground stone.

Often used for people managing PTSD, grounding stones are simply small rocks or crystals you can easily hold in your hand. When feeling stressed, cozy up under a weighted blanket, then hold the stone in your palm and gently rub your thumb over the grooves in the rock. The tactile input can help redirect your brain to the present. ●



Take the Journey to Better Thyroid Health

The path to a healthier you takes you on a journey of personal care. And for people who have (or suspect) a thyroid condition, that journey can be complex, emotional and often confusing. If you've been searching for answers, your next step should be on the **AACE Journey for Patients with Thyroid Disease**. Presented in easy-to-understand terms, the AACE Journey for Patients with Thyroid Disease is derived from clinical guidelines of the American Association of Clinical Endocrinology (AACE), reviewed by AACE experts, and helps you to navigate your path through understanding your condition, treatment options, and wellness goals.

Features include:

- Common signs and symptoms of thyroid conditions
- Thyroid screening options
- Tests used to determine different thyroid conditions
- Planning and treatment options
- Care and continuity
- Support groups and more

Visit [AACE.com/patient-journey/thyroid](https://www.aace.com/patient-journey/thyroid) and start your journey to better thyroid health.



SCAN ME!



Fit your exercise into your daily routine *without skipping a beat!*

A recent survey found that more than 40% of Americans listed a lack of time as the top reason they don't exercise more. Turns out, though, that you don't actually need to block off an hour or two to get a workout in—short spurts of activity sprinkled throughout your day can be just as effective, according to the American Heart Association. Here, ways to do just that. —BY SARA ROTONDI



Kick your morning off right!

7:00 AM:

Consider starting your day with a 10- to 20-minute “wake up workout,” suggests New York City-based certified personal trainer Mario Ortiz, owner of Mario Fitness LLC. “These short sessions usually involve some stretching and light cardio moves like jumping jacks to get your blood flowing. They can be a really great way to start your day feeling energized.” You can find dozens of free classes by searching for “wake up workout” on YouTube—include the words beginner, intermediate or expert depending on your current level of fitness.

7:30 AM:

While you're washing your face or brushing your teeth do some calf raises. To do: Simply lift yourself onto your tip toes and then lower yourself back down. Repeat this 10-15 times for 3 sets to fully complete the workout. When you get more advanced, you can also do one leg at a time, which simultaneously makes it a balance-building exercise.



Build in mid-day energy boosts!

12:00 PM:

Running errands? When you get to the store, park in the back of the lot to build in extra steps. Opt for stairs over the elevator when available, and when you're carrying in groceries, try doing some bicep curls with the bags.

1:00 PM:

Doing light housework? Work some moves in while you clean. Do lunges while vacuuming, squats while putting laundry away and try adding in some wall push-ups while wiping down the bath. “Now you've basically made housecleaning into a strength-training session!” says Ortiz.



Finish your day off strong!

5:30 PM:

Waiting for water to boil or veggies to finish roasting for dinner? This is a great time to throw on some of your favorite music and start dancing. “Dance is great cardio, and you're adding an extra element of fun to your exercise which might keep you motivated to do more,” says Ortiz. It doesn't need to be a long dance break, a song or two will do the trick!

7:00 PM:

After dinner, gather the family for a short walk around the block. “Walking as a family can be a great opportunity to bond and get away from the TV for a bit,” says Ortiz. “But if you prefer to walk solo, this can be an opportunity for you to listen to music, a podcast or the audiobook you've been meaning to get to, too.” In addition to getting you moving, this can also be a great way to reduce stress!

9:30 PM:

Wind down before bed with a short gentle yoga session. One pose Ortiz suggests is the wall stretch. “This can be an especially great exercise to loosen you up if you sat at a desk for a lot of hours,” says Ortiz. “This way you'll be less likely to wake up feeling stiff the next day.” To do: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and put your right hand on the wall so your arm is straight. Take your left arm and put it over your right arm and twist so you feel the stretch in your back. Hold for 30 seconds and switch so your left hand is against the wall and your right arm is reaching over. Twist and hold. ●

IMPORTANT:
Ask your
healthcare
provider
before
starting any
new fitness
program.

Health Monitor Living

Questions to ask at today's exam



Scan this QR code for a free digital copy or home delivery

What is my risk of heart disease?



What are my target blood pressure and cholesterol levels?



Am I a candidate for medications that help lower my risk of heart disease?



Will any of my medications cause me to gain weight? What if I need help dropping some extra pounds?



Are there any lifestyle changes you can recommend to lower my risk for heart disease?



Am I at risk for diabetes? What can I do to lower my blood sugar levels?



Is my current treatment program as effective as it could be?



On treatment and need help covering the cost?

Ask your healthcare provider about patient assistance programs or call the manufacturer of the treatment you have been prescribed. Many pharmaceutical companies offer copay assistance programs that can make treatment more affordable.