**High Blood Pressure**

Many adults over the age of 60 have high blood pressure – 54 percent of men and 57 percent of women, with the numbers rising among African Americans.

Dr. William Lewis, MD, Chief of Cardiology. "Unfortunately, it's not about just dying. Rather, it’s the disabling stroke, heart attack, kidney disease and even vision loss that may result."

"For a long time, we thought people over the age of 60 to maintain blood pressure of 160/100 is acceptable. But a 2014 guideline has presented evidence to support treating hypertension in persons age 60 and older to a blood pressure goal of less than 150/90," says Dr. Lewis.

Lowering blood pressure even just slightly is helpful. "If you reduce the diastolic blood pressure the lowering by just six or seven points, say from 160/90 to 150/90, the risk of strokes is reduced by 15 percent and risk of heart disease by 20 percent," says Dr. Lewis.

Managing the rise in blood pressure that frequently accompanies the aging process starts with diet and exercise. Dr. Lewis emphasizes the importance of a healthy diet. Such as the DASH diet and the Mediterranean diet – which combat high blood pressure with an emphasis on fruits, vegetables and grains. It is a low-sodium diet, which Dr. Lewis says is the biggest most important dietary factor to mention. "People over 60 with high blood pressure should cut sodium intake to 1,500 milligrams per day," he says.

When called for, physicians usually start with one of four classes of medications to treat existing blood pressure, diuretics, angiotensin receptor blockers, ACE inhibitors and calcium channel blockers each have blood pressure in different ways.

A physician will recommend a treatment plan based on the individual.

"Blood pressure medications sometimes have side effects such as fatigue and dizziness. I try to get patients to see these as an investment they make every day to prevent serious health outcomes," says Dr. Lewis. "Rather, it’s the disabling stroke, heart attack, kidney disease and even vision loss that may result."}

**Preventive Care**

"Don’t think that prevention doesn’t matter just because you are older," says James Campbell, MD, Director of Geriatric Health at MetroHealth.

"We do not want to diminish the value that seniors bring to our society. Every preventive care action that seniors take provides results."

**Upcoming Events**

**Healthy Skin Tips**

Tuesday, June 16  7 to 8 p.m.

North Chagrin Nature Center

3037 SOM Center Road

Brecksville, OH 44141

**Healthy Habits: Summer Recipes**

Friday, July 21  5 to 6 p.m.

MetroHealth Old Brooklyn Health Center

Room T-140

Cleveland, OH 44112

**Pain Management: How to Take Control**

Saturday, June 6  10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

MetroHealth Old Brooklyn Health Center

Room T-140

Cleveland, OH 44112

**Sensory Yoga**

MetroHealth offers seniors Gentle Yoga classes at the Chagrin Heights. To register for classes, please visit metrohealth.org or call 216-957-2800. To register, or for a listing of additional events, visit metrohealth.org or call 216-367-2000.

**MetroHealth: bringing you more**

MetroHealth continues to expand its reach and will soon be bringing you more. MetroHealth’s future health center in Brunswick, opening Fall 2016, will provide a wide array of primary care, rheumatology and general surgery consult/follow up. MetroHealth’s Old Brooklyn Health Center will open June 2015. Services at the new facility will offer a wide range of services, some of which include an Emergency Department, Seniority Surgery, Primary and Specialty Care.

**Free Blood Pressure Tracking Card**

Regular monitoring of blood pressure is your own health’s most important preventive care steps to take at any age. The MetroHealth’s free blood pressure tracking card can be used to keep track of your numbers. For more information, call 216-957-2800.
Don’t forget that MetroHealth offers yearly Medicare Wellness visits to develop or update a personalized prevention plan based on your current health and lifestyle. A physician referral/order is required.

Healthy habits help improve your life

A balance of sound, healthy habits play a key role in a long and healthy life. A number of studies have shown that regular physical activity only keeps you in shape, it keeps you in tune with your body. It’s a matter of life or death," Dr. Campbell notes.

Screenings catch challenges early on

Our bodies wear down as we age. Much can be done to support body parts showing signs of compromise, especially if they are caught early on. Preventative health care is alive and well and continues to provide extra protection against problems that could arise. Immunity at the prevention of challenges is a youthful zeal caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. It is actually a virus that is believed to have caught it from a family member or grandparents and great-grandparents should be concerned to get the vaccine.

A Prime Time to Lose Weight

A balance of sound, healthy habits play a key role in a long and healthy life. A number of studies have shown that regular physical activity only keeps you in shape, it keeps you in tune with your body. It’s a matter of life or death. "It’s not how many years you have behind you, but rather, it’s how many years you have ahead of you," Dr. Campbell notes. "Wear your seat belt. Don’t drive drunk. We see much of that and a big bowl of salad. Others see a doughnut or a cookie at a bakery counter. I see a heart attack or a stroke." Toole has found ways to handle the food traps in her life such as office gatherings, taking the long way around and stopping to chat on the way, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, using self-control. "It’s a triumph of this, understanding of that, and a bit of willpower to make the right decisions," says Dr. Campbell.

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