Stop Smoking in the New Year!

Every year we go through the same cycle — make a resolution, quit but then start again. This year, let’s change the way we approach quitting. So don’t resolve to quit for the New Year… resolve to quit for yourself! The New York State Smokers’ Quitline can help you create a plan that works so that you never have to make a “quit smoking” resolution again. To join the program, call 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487), TTY call 711.

Coronary artery disease, or CAD, is when plaque builds up in the arteries. This can lead to a heart attack. There are two ways to treat or control CAD risk factors: change your lifestyle and take the proper medication. Know your risk factors for CAD and work on the ones you can change.

Major Risk Factors You CAN Change

• **Smoking.** If you smoke, quit smoking! Help is available — call the New York State Smokers' Quitline. People who smoke are at twice the risk of heart attack than people who’ve never smoked.

• **High cholesterol.** The risk of CAD rises when blood cholesterol rises. Cholesterol is affected by age, sex, family history and diet. Talk with your doctor about getting your cholesterol numbers to where they need to be.

• **High blood pressure.** High blood pressure, called hypertension, causes the heart to work too hard. High blood pressure increases your risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney failure and congestive heart failure.

• **Physical inactivity.** Regular physical activity helps prevent heart disease. Even milder activities, like walking, are good if you do them regularly over a long period of time.

• **Obesity and overweight.** A lot of body fat (especially in the waist) can cause people to develop heart disease and stroke even if there are no other risk factors. But by losing just 10% of your current weight, you can lower the risk for heart disease.

• **Diabetes.** Diabetes increases your risk of heart disease and stroke — even when your blood sugar is under control. Keep blood sugar under control by losing weight, and work with your doctor to create a diabetes care plan if you have diabetes.

(Continued on page 2)
Good Health Habits for Preventing Seasonal Flu

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated each year. Yearly flu vaccine for everyone aged 6 months and older is the first and most important step in protecting against this serious disease. Getting the flu vaccine as soon as it becomes available each year is always a good idea, and the protection you get from vaccination will last throughout the flu season. The following are tips on good health habits that can help stop the spread of germs:

1. **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.** When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.
2. **Stay home when you are sick.** If possible, stay home from work, school and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
3. **Cover your mouth and nose.** Keep tissues in your pocket and cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. But don’t use your hand!
4. **Clean your hands.** Washing your hands often will help protect you and others from the spread of germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
5. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.
6. **Practice other good health habits.** Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work and school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

(Continued from page 1)

Other Heart Disease Risk Factors You CAN Change

- **Stress.** Stress in life, how you treat your health and your access to health care can affect your risk for heart disease. If you are under stress, talk with your doctor for ways to manage it.
- **Alcohol.** Drinking too much can raise blood pressure, cause heart failure and lead to stroke. It can contribute to high triglycerides, cancer, an irregular heartbeat and other diseases.
- **Diet and nutrition.** A healthy diet is one of the best weapons to combat CAD. Choose foods full of vitamins, minerals and fiber, but low in calories. The keys are vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fiber, fish, lean protein and fat-free dairy products.

Major Risk Factors That Can’t Be Changed

- **Aging.** About 82% who die from CAD are aged 65 or older.
- **Gender.** In general, men are at greater risk than women, but women are equally at risk after menopause.
- **Family history.** Most people with a family history of heart disease have one or more risk factors for CAD.
- **Race.** More African Americans have severe high blood pressure than whites and are at a higher risk of heart disease. This risk is also high among Mexican Americans, Native Americans and some Asian Americans for two main reasons: higher rates of obesity and diabetes.
Use a Daily Weight Log

When you are at risk for heart disease, monitoring your weight is important. Make copies of this weight log and fill it in daily. Use your weight log to keep track of your weight every day. Weigh yourself (always the same way, with or without clothes on) at the same time of the day (first thing in the morning is best) using the same scale. If you have a blood pressure machine, check your blood pressure every morning and write it down here also. Call your doctor if you gain 2 pounds in a day or 5 pounds over 5 days. Be sure to make and keep a symptom management plan with your doctor. Don't forget to take your weight log to your doctor appointments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood Pressure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Getting Ready for Your Next Office Visit

Trying to remember all of the things you want to talk about with the doctor can be hard. Before your next office visit, read over the suggested topics below and put a check mark next to the ones you want to discuss with your doctor. Then take this list with you, and you will have a reminder of everything you want to talk about at your fingertips!

Your Medicines

☐ Ask your doctor to explain what medicines you take every day and why you need to take them. For example, do you take any medicines to prevent chest pain or reduce cholesterol?

☐ Have you told your doctor about all of the medicines you take, including those prescribed by other doctors and over-the-counter medicines and supplements?

☐ Do you know how to take your medicines? For example, should they be taken with or without food or at a certain time of day? Are there any medicines that are not safe to take together?

☐ Tell your doctor about any side effects you’re experiencing. These can include leg or muscle cramps, darker stools, skin rash, dizziness when standing up, cough or tiredness.

Other Medical Treatment

☐ Let your doctor know if you have been to the emergency room or an urgent care center since your last appointment. Also let your doctor know if you have been seen by a medical specialist.

Alcohol Use

☐ Find out from your doctor if the amount you drink interferes with your medicine.

Recommended Tests or Shots

☐ Is it time for you to have the following tests or shots (if applicable)? Check those you want to ask about.

- Cholesterol test
- Heart checkup (eg, EKG, stress test)
- Pneumonia shot
- Pap smear
- Mammogram
- Prostate exam
- Flu shot
- Body mass index

Scan this code with your smartphone or go to www.emblemhealth.com/heartfailure to learn more about heart failure.
HEALTHY EATING TIPS

• Fill up your plate with fresh vegetables and whole grains.
• Limit lean meat portion to the size and thickness of a deck of cards.
• Choose grilled fish or skinless chicken.
• Choose high-fiber foods such as dried beans and peas, lentils and dark green vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, spinach and kale. Whole-grain foods such as brown rice, couscous and whole-wheat bread are also good choices.
• Avoid dishes with a lot of mayonnaise, sour cream or butter.
• Fresh fruit for dessert is an excellent source of fiber, vitamins and minerals. Also, fruit has zero fat.
• Try to drink water or unsweetened tea with your meal.