

Jefferson Cardiology Association Happenings

Heart Attacks in Women

Each year 1.5 million heart attacks occur in the United States. As immediate treatment improves chances of survival, recognition of heart attack symptoms is critical. A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* analyzed information of more than 1.1 million heart attack victims between the years 1994 and 2006. Women were less likely to experience chest pain and women heart attack victims without chest pain had worse survival than male heart attack victims without chest pain. Younger women under age 55 were more likely to have heart attacks without chest pain.

The lesson here is the need to follow preventive measures. Controlling blood pressure, weight and cholesterol are key as is avoidance of cigarettes. Women should also be aware of increased cardiac risk if any of these risk factors is present.

The heart attack symptoms in women may vary. In addition to typical chest discomfort or pressure, pain in the arms, back, neck, jaw or stomach can occur. Other symptoms could include breaking out in a cold sweat, dizziness, lightheadedness or inability to sleep. Also, unusual fatigue and clammy skin could occur. Some women may experience some or none of these symptoms.

Prehypertension and Heart Disease

Many persons are aware that hypertension, high blood pressure, may increase risks for atrial fibrillation, a heart rhythm abnormality that can cause strokes and heart failure. Recently, a Norwegian study demonstrated the risks of borderline or prehypertension. This

entity include systolic blood pressures between 120-140 and diastolic blood pressures between 80-90.

This study followed 2000 men for an average of 30 years monitoring blood pressure and cardiac events. Men with systolic blood pressure over 140 at the start of the study were 60% more likely to develop atrial fibrillation over the next 30 years. However, men with systolic blood pressure between 128-138 had a 50% increased risk of atrial fibrillation. Men with diastolic readings of 80 or more were 79% more likely to develop atrial fibrillation when compared with those with lower diastolic pressure.

This study demonstrated the risk of borderline hypertension to lead to atrial fibrillation. Certainly many persons with borderline hypertension will develop hypertension with its multiple potential complications over time. This is reason why persons should try to maintain optimal blood pressure readings.

Can Air Pollution Trigger Heart Attacks?

There are about 1.5 million heart attacks annually in the United States and may account for 500,000 deaths annually. About half the deaths occur within one hour after the onset of the heart attack. The importance of prevention is obvious. Risks for heart attacks may be reduced by controlling blood pressure, cholesterol, and weight. Family history and age cannot be controlled. Now there is evidence to suspect that air pollution may be a risk factor.

Recently there was a study published analyzing results from 34 studies evaluating heart attacks and short-term

exposure to pollutants in the air that include ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter. In the recent study all pollutants but ozone were associated with an increased heart attack risk. It was calculated that up to 4.5% of heart attacks in the study population were due to pollution.

It is thought that pollution may cause heart attacks by triggering inflammation of blood vessels and increased

risk for blood clotting. Persons may re-

One Pan Whiskey-Flavored Pork Chops

2/3 cup fat-free sour cream	4 (6oz) bone-in center-cut pork chops
1/2 cup water	1/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour	1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt	1 teaspoon olive oil
1/2 teaspoon dried rubbed sage	1/2 cup chopped onion
1/4 teaspoon black pepper	1 (8oz) package sliced mushrooms
	1/2 cup Whiskey

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees
2. Combine first six ingredients in a small bowl
3. Sprinkle pork with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add pork; sauté for 5 minutes on each side or until golden. Remove pork from pan. Add onion and mushrooms to pan; sauté 3 minutes. Carefully add whiskey to pan. Cook for 1 minute or until liquid almost evaporates. Stir sour cream mixture into pan. Return pork to pan; spoon sauce over pork.
4. Wrap handle of skillet with foil. Cover and bake at 300 degrees for 1 hour. Serve immediately.



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