



Implantable Cardiac Devices: Can Save Lives.

BY WILL C. HURLEY, M.D., FACC
Board Certified Cardiologist
at Yankton Medical Clinic, P.C.
Also Board Certified in Nuclear
Cardiology.

Implantable cardiac devices such as pacemakers, implantable defibrillators and cardiac resynchronization therapy devices are designed to treat a variety of problems that stem from a faulty electrical system in the heart. A healthy heart normally beats between 75 to 100 times a minute. Heart beats that are too fast (tachycardia—usually more than 100 beats per minute and as many as 400 beats per minute) or too slow (bradycardia—less than 60 beats per minute) can result in dizziness, fainting, extreme tiredness and shortness of breath. Other disorders include heart failure and sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), which occurs when the heart suddenly starts beating very fast or quivering instead of pumping.

Implantable devices are tiny, battery-powered computers about the size of a pocket watch. They are implanted under the skin on the left side of the chest up near the collarbone, and connected to the heart via leads. These tiny wires are inserted into the chambers of the heart through blood vessels for two purposes: to carry information signals from the heart to the device, and to carry electrical impulses to the heart. The third part of the implantable device system is an external computer used to a.) program the device b.) detect and properly treat an abnormal heart rhythm and c.) retrieve information from the device that will assist the doctor in treating the disorder.

Types of devices:

- Pacemakers are most commonly implanted to treat symptoms of bradycardia. The pacemaker is designed to monitor the heart's natural electrical activity and send out tiny electrical pulses that signal the heart to increase the heart rate if it senses an irregular rhythm. When it senses a natural heartbeat, it will not send an electrical pulse to the heart. The pacemaker also stores data about the heart's activity in its memory banks, which a doctor can access to better monitor the heart's activity and condition.

- Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillators (ICDs) are implanted in individuals who are at risk for developing ventricular tachyarrhythmias, or fast heartbeat, as well as sudden cardiac arrest. Similar to a pacemaker, an ICD continuously monitors the heart. If the heart is beating too fast, the device may first use small painless electrical pulses to correct the heart rate. If the dangerously fast heart rate continues, the defibrillator will deliver necessary life-saving shock to restore a



Will Hurley, M.D., FACC

normal rhythm. In addition, if the heart is beating too slowly, the pacemaker within the implantable defibrillator will help return the heart to a normal rhythm.

- Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy (CRT) is a treatment option for some people who suffer from heart failure, which occurs when the heart is weakened or damaged and unable to pump properly on its own. CRT devices help the heart beat in rhythm through tiny electrical pulses sent to the lower chambers (ventricles) to make them beat in a synchronized rhythm. This improves the heart's ability to pump blood and oxygen to the body.

There are two types of heart failure devices: 1) a heart failure CRT pacemaker (CRT-P) and 2) a combination CRT with defibrillator (CRT-D). Both of these devices help coordinate the heart's pumping action and improve blood flow. They can also speed up a heart that is beating too slowly. The CRT with defibrillation also offers the ability to detect and terminate dangerously fast heart rhythms, which some individuals with a damaged heart muscle may be at risk for developing.

For me, saving a life is the most important contribution I can make as a physician. Today, too many people who could benefit from advanced technology to save their life still do not have the protection they need. We have made amazing strides in heart rhythm devices and I am proud that I am able to offer the most advanced technology available to save the lives of cardiac patients right here in our own community.

If you need treatment with an implantable cardiac device, your physician would prescribe it. This treatment is not for everyone. Please talk to your physician to see if it is right for you. Your physician should discuss the potential benefits and risks with you.

Although many patients benefit from the use of these products, results may vary. Not everyone responds to treatment in the same way. For more information on cardiac device therapy, talk to your primary care physician or ask for a consultation with a cardiologist.

Simple Ways To A Better Night's Sleep

MSN — Few things are more enjoyable and valuable than a good night's sleep. In addition to making us feel better, a good night's sleep also enables us to be more productive and handle all that a day can throw at us.

While nearly everyone is aware of the value of sleep, a 2008 poll conducted by the National Sleep Foundation indicated that many Americans simply aren't getting enough sleep. That problem was illustrated when comparing the typical sleep schedules on workdays and non-workdays. On workdays, respondents typically went to bed at 10:53 p.m. and awoke at 5:35 a.m., for an average of 6 hours, 42 minutes of sleep on a worknight. On non-workdays, however, respondents typically went to bed at 11:24 p.m. and awoke at 7:12 a.m., an average of 7 hours, 48 minutes of sleep. That's telling, as many people, inten-

tionally or not, attempting to make up for lost workday sleep on non-workdays.

But sleep is just as important on workdays as it is on non-workdays, and Americans must place the same emphasis on getting a good night's sleep each and every night of the week, regardless of whether or not they're getting up to go to work the next day. To ensure a better night's sleep, consider the following tips.

- * Create a better sleep environment. The ideal sleeping environment is a cool room with no light. Rather than cranking the heat before going to bed, turn the heat down a little bit. Also, don't fall asleep with the television on. The television not only lights up a bedroom, but it's also a distraction and can be an interruption after you've fallen asleep.
- * Don't work in the bedroom. A bedroom

should be for sleeping. Spending time in bed working or reading can make it difficult to fall asleep when you want to.

- * Stick to a sleep schedule. As noticed in the National Sleep Foundation poll mentioned above, sleep schedules vary on workdays and non-workdays. However, the body runs best when it's on a regular sleep schedule, so try to stick to a regular schedule as much as possible. On non-workdays, for example, try to wake up no more than an hour later than you would on a typical workday.

- * Watch what you eat or drink before going to bed. It's ideal to avoid eating within three hours of going to bed. With respect to beverages, avoid stimulants such as coffees and soft drinks, replacing them with something more mild such as skim milk.

Easy Ways To Center Your Diet On Foods That Help Keep You Healthy

(ARA) - Americans could learn a lot about healthy eating habits from the ordinary people of the Mediterranean nations. Eating healthy foods is a mindset, and while it may take some practice to change your habits, it's not difficult.

Your body needs vitamins and nutrients to operate effectively and keep you healthy. Developing healthy eating habits is a simple way to ensure your body is receiving the necessary amount of nutrients. Here are some basic, healthy eating habits that apply for everyone:

- Eat more fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Shop local farmers markets where the food is grown within a four-hour drive.
- Eat more turkey and less beef.
- Eat more whole grains.
- Saute or grill rather than fry.
- Use olive oil rather than shortening.
- Eat slowly and enjoy each bite.

- Practice moderation in everything you eat.

"Sure, we have overweight people in Israel. But I had never seen an obese person until I came to the United States in 2002," says chef Nathan "Tany" Hashmonay, a native of Israel who studied in Israel and France before coming to the U.S. to complete his education. He is an instructor in The International Culinary School at The Art Institute of Charlotte.

"It was weird, when I first came here, to see how expensive fresh fruit and vegetables were in the U.S. as compared to the Mediterranean, and how relatively inexpensive beef was here compared to there," Hashmonay



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says. "Everyone in Europe buys from the farmers markets — only they're much larger there. And we buy in abundance. Instead of buying five tomatoes, we buy five kilos of tomatoes and use them all."

"We are lucky to live in Portland with a thriving farmers market and a food system supported by the city, which ensures healthy foods and local produce are available for residents," says chef Dave McIntyre, an instructor at The International Culinary School at The Art Institute of Portland and board member on the Portland/Multnomah Food Policy Council. "With fresh produce available year round, it is pivotal our students learn to take advantage of the local bounty available. And with a curriculum focusing on international cuisine, students are able to use local bounty in interesting and exciting new ways," says McIntyre.

U.S. and Mediterranean shopping habits also differ in the purchase of bread. Hashmonay does-

not even like to walk down the aisle past processed breads because he doesn't get that fresh-baked bread aroma.

Processed breads are filled with air to expand their shelf life. Mediterranean and European bakers bake and deliver breads twice a day. Shoppers buy for their immediate use, but Americans are not used to going to a baker twice a day.

Know what's in your food. Like processed breads, many items available at your local grocery store contain preservatives, hormones or high amounts of corn syrup, which your body has a difficult time digesting. If you are trying to eat healthy, purchase foods labeled "organic" or "all natural" which are likely to have less fat, sugar, sodium and calories.

Another tip for healthy eating is to not overcook vegetables. "They lose their nutrients when they're overcooked," says Hashmonay. "So a saute or grill is better than frying or baking. With shorter cook times, the vitamins are not reduced by the heat, and you're getting good fiber. Better yet, eat them raw: Toss them with salt, pepper and olive oil. One exception is the tomato. They're great fresh, but you also can use them for sauces and the longer cooking time brings out their antioxidants."

And take a tip from the French: Eat regular meals and take time to eat slowly, savoring your food. "Like the French, look at your meals as a pleasure, not just something you have to do. Eating smaller portions of healthy foods is more filling because each bite is satisfying," says Hashmonay.

Healthy eating is a way of life, according to Hashmonay. "Just eat a lot of fruit and vegetables. Don't worry about one serving of this and two of that. Just look for a lot of different kinds of fruits and vegetables because each brings something new to the table — each has its own vitamins and nutrients." To learn more about The Art Institutes schools, visit www.artinstitutes.edu/nz.

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