

If you receive this letter, you have been identified as someone who might benefit from tips to help you understand how to stay healthy, and topics to discuss with your doctor.

Do you have heart disease or other disease of the blood vessels?

If so, there are things you can do to prevent further disease and complications. Discuss these tips with your doctor to see if they will help you.

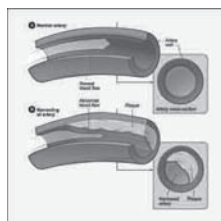


Know your important numbers to control your disease and prevent complications:

Blood Pressure—the blood pressure number to look for is **less than 140/90**. If you have diabetes or kidney disease, that number should be **less than 130/80**. Many people need to be on two or more blood pressure medications to get below these goal numbers. Your doctor may also recommend other things such as exercise and diet to bring down your blood pressure.



LDL Cholesterol—LDL is the “bad” cholesterol and in most people should be **less than 100**. If you are at high risk for cardiac problems, this number may need to be **less than 70**. Most people with heart or blood vessel disease should be on a cholesterol lowering medication. The most commonly used medications are called Statins. **Ask your doctor if you should be on one of these medications.**



Other things you can do:



If you smoke, **stop!!!!** It may take many tries to quit, but it is worth it to slow down the progress of cardiac and breathing problems.



Exercise

Talk with your doctor about exercise. **You should have aerobic exercise every day for 60 minutes**, but at least five times a week. Start slowly at first and work your way up to this level. **Make sure you get your doctor's approval before starting any exercise program.**



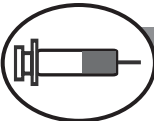
Weight loss

Even a small amount of weight loss may lower your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. It is important to get as close to your ideal weight as possible. **If you are overweight or obese, you are at risk for further disease and complications.**



Control diabetes

If you have diabetes, control your blood sugar to decrease your risk of further progression and complications of heart and vascular disease. **Your hemoglobin A1c is a measure of diabetes control and your number should be less than 7.** Ask your doctor what your number is, and how you can decrease it to less than 7.



Vaccines

Get your flu shot every year and ask your doctor if you need the Pneumonia vaccine.

Ask your doctor about these medications:

- Antiplatelet agents**, such as Aspirin or Plavix, may be appropriate for people with heart or vascular disease. Check with your doctor to see if you should be on an antiplatelet drug.
- Angiotensin Converting Enzyme (ACE) inhibitors or Angiotensin Receptor Blockers (ARBs)** are often recommended for people who have diabetes, kidney disease or congestive heart failure. If you have one of these conditions, discuss this with your doctor.
- Beta-Blockers** are medications that may be prescribed after a heart attack or for some people with heart failure.

