



September 2020

### Cholesterol Education Month

What's the right age for a first cholesterol test?



The National Cholesterol Education Program as well as cardiologists recommend that all adults should know their cholesterol readings by at least age 20.

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance found in all body cells. The body uses it for cell and tissue formation, but too much cholesterol is linked with increased risk of heart attack and stroke.

If the reading is high, life-style changes may be required to stop progression. There is overwhelming evidence that coronary heart disease can be prevented with aggressive reduction of cholesterol levels, cessation of smoking, and controlling weight and diabetes.

Early testing gives physicians the chance to follow patients and monitor cholesterol levels.

Cholesterol-cutting tips (cutting fat is essential):

- ◆ Eat frozen yogurt or low-fat ice cream or sherbet instead of ice cream.
- ◆ Broil, poach, grill, or bake meat and fish.
- ◆ Snack on apples and pears.
- ◆ Trim the fat from meat before cooking.
- ◆ Include in your diet salmon, mackerel and herring to increase Omega 3 fatty acids.
- ◆ Whey protein, found in dairy products, can be added as a supplement to lower LDL cholesterol and total cholesterol.



### September 15 - October 15

A time to celebrate and honor Hispanic Americans and their many contributions.



### Check Your Trees

Before severe fall and winter weather, it is important to check your trees for potential hazards.

In July of this year, 19 people ended up in a hospital after a large tree fell onto a detached garage.

The group, celebrating a birthday party, had sought refuge in the garage when a storm blew in.

The tree splintered the garage, trapping six inside. Firefighters were able to extract the trapped people within 45 minutes.

Nothing is more charming than a big tree shading a sunny yard. The problem is even healthy trees fall and, just like power wires, they can come down in a storm.

Trees near a house, garage, or driveway, need to be inspected frequently.



- ◆ Watch for trees that are leaning, buckling, or heaving up in the soil at the base.
- ◆ Check the canopy of trees for unbalanced or sparse leafing and dead branches.
- ◆ Check for decaying trunks and large branches.
- ◆ Make sure you never sever large roots of a tree, and that any nearby construction has not damaged the root area.

Although some damage can be repaired by a tree expert (an arborist), don't let weak, dying trees remain on your property.

## Feeling Lonely?

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. "There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it."
2. "I have close relationships that provide me with a sense of emotional security and well-being."
3. "There is a trustworthy person I could turn to for advice if I were having problems."
4. "There are people who enjoy the same social activities I do."

According to a January 2020 study by Cigna, the more statements you disagree with, the lonelier you are.



People age 65 or over were among the 77 percent of respondents who were most likely to say they had a sense of emotional security and well-being.

Another finding in the Cigna report, "Boomers (and older) are most likely to feel there are sometimes/always people they can talk to, turn to and who really understand them. On the other hand, more than seven in 10 Gen Z (those 25 and younger) respondents sometimes or always feel alone, shy, or that no one really understands them well."

For older generations that are still employed, a similar pattern emerges regarding workplace sentiments: Baby Boomers are less isolated and more fulfilled by their work than Gen Z and Millennial respondents.

What to do? If you are feeling lonely and/or isolated invest some time and energy into establishing or strengthening a few close friendships. Consider joining a group or association of people that share similar interests. Some ideas:

- ◆ A fraternal group such as the Elks or Grange.
- ◆ A civic organization involved with improving your city or community.
- ◆ A book club or photography group.
- ◆ A group based on a hobby that you enjoy or are interested in trying out such as gardening, crafts, woodworking, or fishing.



## Time for Furnace Inspections

A little frost on the pumpkin will call for some heat in the house. So before the chill hits, inspect your furnace, especially if it burns fossil fuel.

All appliances that burn propane, natural gas, wood or heating oil, are potential sources of carbon monoxide (CO) leaks. CO, a colorless, odorless gas, is produced by incomplete combustion of fuel.

A qualified technician can check your heating system for these problems: A cracked heat exchanger, inadequate fresh air, blocked chimneys or flues, or blocked appliance vents.

Carbon monoxide poisoning is a form of slow suffocation. The gas attaches itself to hemoglobin, the oxygen-carrying protein in blood. The blood carries less oxygen and the body suffocates. CO poisoning symptoms begin with sluggishness and headache. Later there is dizziness and loss of consciousness.

Although CO poisoning has been getting a lot of publicity lately, the fact is that CO poisoning leading to death is unusual. In fact, in the U.S. (with a population of more than 250 million), there are only 800 to 1,000 people who die from it each year, according to the Mayo Clinic Health Letter.



Nonetheless, if you use any appliance that burns fossil fuel, a CO detector is a good idea. Be sure to buy an Underwriter Laboratories approved detector that has some of the following features:

- ◆ An audible alarm
- ◆ Power-on light
- ◆ A manual reset button to silence alarm briefly
- ◆ Test button to verify that it works