

Get Heart Smart!



3 simple screening tests every heart should have

Hearth disease is the most common cause of death in America.

While it's important to know the symptoms of heart disease so you can seek treatment quickly, it's equally important to understand your risk factors and take advantage of simple screening tests that can help identify a problem before symptoms ever show up.

"Unfortunately, many people's first sign of a heart problem is a heart attack," explains **Dan Peterson, MD, FACP, Internal Medicine Specialist and Cardiologist at Dean's Riverview Clinic** in Janesville. "The good news is we now have many potent tools to help assess your risk and create personal goals to significantly reduce your likelihood of a cardiac event."

Knowledge = Power

"Thirty years ago, people had no thought for their heart health until they showed up in the E.R.," shares Dr. Peterson. "Now, you hear people talk about their cholesterol in social situations. That awareness is huge."

A historic piece of research known as the Framingham Study details the risk factors for heart disease. By charting every person who lived in Framingham, Massachusetts, for several decades, researchers were able to conclusively prove which risk factors contribute to heart disease, how much each risk factor contributes, and how altering and improving these risk factors directly affects your heart health. Those risk factors include:

- ♥ Cholesterol
- ♥ Diabetes
- ♥ Smoking
- ♥ Obesity
- ♥ Nutrition
- ♥ Exercise
- ♥ Family History



Dr. Peterson recommends every adult get **3 Simple Cardiac Screening Tests** to evaluate your heart health. These recommended screening tests are aimed at identifying and assessing known risk factors so they can be reduced or eliminated before problems get out of hand. All can and should be performed as part of a routine thorough physical examination.

1. Blood Pressure Screening. Your blood pressure should be monitored and tracked throughout your life, beginning in childhood. The updated blood pressure guidelines recommend individual goal numbers be set

based on your whole health picture. Generally speaking, however, the goal is to stay below 140/90 for a relatively healthy person. Your doctor may establish higher or lower limits based on your personal risk factors.

2. Lipid Screening. A lipid screening is another name for getting your cholesterol checked. High cholesterol – in and of itself – produces no known symptoms. **The only way to know you have high cholesterol is to be tested, so regular screening tests are incredibly important.** The age recommendations for when to start checking cholesterol depend largely on other risk factors, so ask your doctor when and how often you should be tested. Like blood pressure, cholesterol goals are now highly personal and vary greatly based on a collection of health factors.

3. Blood Sugar Screening. "Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among diabetics," states Dr. Peterson. "So it's very important to diagnose and treat diabetes early." Blood sugar can be tested easily during your routine physical.

These tests are particularly important because all three of these conditions can be controlled with lifestyle changes and/or medication.

More In-Depth Testing

In addition to the required screening tests above, your doctor may suggest some supplementary testing. The following tests are usually ordered to help sort out symptoms or determine the degree of blockage you may have. Dr. Peterson gives a quick explanation of each below.

♥ **Cardiac Stress Test.** This test uses exercise to stimulate increased blood flow. During the test, your doctor may use EKG, ultrasound, or nuclear testing of your heart function as well. If you are unable to perform the required exercise, medication can be used to create the same effect.

♥ **Echocardiogram.** An echocardiogram is another name for an ultrasound of your heart. This test may be used alone or in conjunction with another test.

♥ **Ankle-Brachial Index (ABI).** An ABI test screens for Peripheral Arterial Disease, or PAD. During this test, your doctor will measure your blood pressure in your arm and ankle at rest and after walking 5 minutes.

♥ **Carotid Ultrasound.** This test uses ultrasound to determine if there is any

blockage or other abnormality in the major arteries that run up your neck to your brain.

♥ **Ejection Fraction.** Ejection Fraction measures the percentage of blood pumped out of the heart with each beat. This can be done in a variety of ways, including echocardiogram (ultrasound), cardiac catheterization, MRI, cardiac CT, or a nuclear medicine scan.

Based on the results of these tests, your doctor can likely give a better diagnosis, get a better idea of how aggressively to treat your condition, or possibly even rule out a heart problem altogether.

Take Control of Your Heart Health

"Everyone should get their risks evaluated and make life changes to improve their heart health," urges Dr. Peterson. "The screening tests are easy and inexpensive. We have the science, the data, and the technology to truly affect and improve outcomes."

To learn more about improving your heart health or to get information about Dean's cardiologists, visit

deancare.com

Let's Talk Health

The ABC's of Vitamins

Wednesday March 18th, 6 -7 pm
Dean Riverview Clinic
580 N. Washington St., Janesville, WI

Are you interested in learning more about what vitamins can do to improve your health? Join **Kathy Lilley, MD** and **Stephanie Schlueter Nurse Practitioner** for an informative presentation which will help clarify this important, but often confusing topic.

This free presentation is open to all
Pre-registration is encouraged: call **(608) 755-3500**

Living with Incontinence

Wednesday, March 25, 6 -7 pm
Dean Northview Clinic
2540 Humes Rd. - Shopko Plaza, Janesville, WI

If you are dealing with urinary incontinence this informative presentation is just for you. Join **Noreen King, MD, Marisa Bartels, PT** and **Dawn Schliem, PTA** to find out about the different types of incontinence; surgical and non-surgical options available; and learn about physical therapy management.

This free presentation is open to all
Pre-registration is encouraged: call **(608) 755-3500**