

# PRESSURE POINTS

June 2011

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE NEWS YOU CAN USE

## *Under Pressure is now Pressure Points*

Our newsletter about hypertension has a new name but the same great information about preventing heart problems and ensuring optimal heart health. It will continue to offer more about how to use good foods and exercise to contribute to a healthy lifestyle. As always, we appreciate your feedback. Let us know what you think by emailing [marcom@umassmemorial.org](mailto:marcom@umassmemorial.org).

## Get Out On The Water



Paddling a canoe or kayak is not only fun – its great exercise too!

Whether you're looking for a peaceful experience enjoying nature or you're ready to tackle white water rafting, you can be certain that you're getting an awesome workout that can help prevent heart problems.

There are numerous places in Massachusetts that offer lessons and tours as well as kayak and canoe rentals. Remember to paddle safe and wear a life jacket.

Check out this website for rentals and tours along the Nashua River in Groton, Massachusetts:

[www.nashobapaddler.com/pages/welcome.html](http://www.nashobapaddler.com/pages/welcome.html)

Additional information about canoeing can be found at [www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/canoe.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/canoe.htm).

## Blood Pressure and Stroke Risk: *What Does it Mean For You?*



It's important to understand that high blood pressure is a major risk factor for the development of cardiovascular disease, including stroke. Natural ways to lower your blood pressure (which helps reduce your risk of heart disease) include limiting your salt or sodium intake, increasing the amount of whole grains, vegetables and fruits you eat, and getting plenty of exercise.

Finding foods labeled reduced sodium or lower sodium is becoming easier and easier, so if you opt for frozen or canned items, just make sure the label says lower or reduced sodium. Always check the label because reduced can still be too much – let the percentages on the label be your guide to know how much is too much.

If your doctor still feels that your blood pressure could be lower, he/she may choose to add medication to help. If you don't know what your blood pressure is or you would like more information on ways to reduce blood pressure and risk of stroke, talk to your doctor and make a plan that works for you.

### Questions for Your Health Care Team

- If a family member has had a stroke, am I at an increased risk?
- What is the right amount of salt I should have each day?

## What is a stroke?

The brain needs a constant supply of oxygen so that brain cells and surrounding tissue can function and survive. The blood that supplies this oxygen gets to the various regions of the brain through blood vessels. If a blood vessel becomes damaged or blocked, blood can't reach areas beyond the damage or blockage, and the area becomes starved for oxygen and may begin to die if blood flow is not regained.

Call your doctor or 9-1-1 immediately if you experience any of the F.A.S.T. early warning signs of stroke at right.

For more information on lowering blood pressure, stroke risk or reading nutrition labels, check out the following websites:

Stroke Care at UMass Memorial:  
[www.umassmemorial.org/stroke](http://www.umassmemorial.org/stroke)

Stroke Awareness Foundation:  
[www.strokeinfo.org](http://www.strokeinfo.org)

Mayo Clinic:  
[www.mayoclinic.com/health/dash-diet/HI00047](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/dash-diet/HI00047)  
[www.mayoclinic.com/health/nutrition-facts/NU00293](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/nutrition-facts/NU00293)

## Identifying a Stroke *Think FAST.*

During a stroke, every second counts.  
Think FAST to identify warning signs of a stroke.

**F**ace – Can the person smile evenly, or does one side of the face droop?



**A**rm – Is the person able to raise his arms above his head?



**S**peech – Ask the person to repeat a sentence. Is his speech slurred?



**T**ime – If someone is experiencing one or more of these symptoms, call 911 *immediately*.



*Think FAST, then dial 911.*

## Recipes for Heart Health: *Apple and Walnut Salad with Field Greens*

Courtesy of the Diabetic Skillet ([www.thediabeticskillet.com](http://www.thediabeticskillet.com))

1 apple(s), fuji or other, cut into small cubes	1 tablespoons olive oil, extra virgin
6 cups lettuce, mixed greens	1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/4 cup nuts, walnuts, roughly chopped	2 teaspoons vinegar, cider
1 stalk celery, diced	1 teaspoon honey
2 green onion(s), chopped	

**Serves 4 as a side salad.**

Place first five ingredients in a salad bowl. Mix remaining ingredients in a small bowl. Pour dressing over salad and toss gently just before serving.

**Nutritional information:** (approximate) Calories Per Serving: 130; Total Fat: 8g; Saturated Fat: 1g; Trans Fat: 0g; Protein: 2g; Carbohydrates: 14g; Fiber: 3g; Sodium: 60mg. Exchanges: Fruit: 0.5; Vegetable: 1; Fats: 1.5; Carb Choices: 1



For information about our partner, the Heart and Vascular Center of Excellence, please visit [www.umassmemorial.org/heart](http://www.umassmemorial.org/heart).

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