

## New Providence Internal Medicine Associates

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*In this newsletter, we'll discuss how to live longer and better.*

### *Other things to do to live longer and better:*

- Get at 7-8 hours of sleep. People who are sleep deprived tend to have higher blood pressure, higher body fat, and don't have the energy to exercise.
- Don't smoke! Smoking takes years off of your life by increasing the risk of heart attack, stroke, many cancers, erectile dysfunction and emphysema.

### *More:*

- Relax! Have fun! If all you do is work, then your mood will often be worse, and you'll have less energy to take care of yourself
- Seek or create a support network in the community.
- Have a pet.
- Practice a religion and pray.
- Schedule visits for routine care with your doctor.

### *Use Premium Fuel*

Just as an engine will run more efficiently with better quality fuel, the fuel (i.e. food) that we put into our engines (i.e. our bodies) has a major impact on how well our engine runs. Too much of the wrong kind of food can clog our arteries, cause us to gain weight, and may cause certain cancers. Food that contains saturated fat will often cause heart disease and strokes. Examples of this type of food includes red meat, anything deep fried, and full fat dairy products.

Excess carbohydrates will often cause weight gain, high blood sugars, and high triglycerides. Foods that contain large amounts of carbohydrates include sweets, breads, pasta, white rice and white potatoes. Sugary drinks (soda, fruit juice) also have a high carbohydrate content. Carbohydrates with more fiber (such as whole grain breads and brown rice) are digested more slowly, so are less likely to cause high

blood sugars (and eventually diabetes).

We should fuel our bodies with plenty of vegetables and fruit. A "colorful plate" of vegetables and fruit will provide a good balance of natural nutrients. Fish (especially tuna, salmon, mackerel and sardines) have more of the "good fats" (omega-3). It has been shown that people who eat 3 or more servings of fish per week have a lower rate of heart disease.

It may also be helpful to have small servings of nuts, such as almonds and walnuts, small amounts of dark chocolate, and a moderate amount of alcohol (up to 7-10 drinks per week).

Use premium fuel to keep your engine running well for many years!

### *Exercise your engine*

If you leave your car in the driveway, and don't drive it for a very long time, or only take it for very short local trips, it may not run as well as it could. The same holds true for your body. The person who is mostly sedentary is more likely to have problems related to inactivity, including diabetes, high blood pressure, vascular disease, obesity, and osteoporosis.

Almost any regular exercise is good. One type of exercise is called aerobic (think: take your car onto the highway). This type of exercise will get the heart rate up and keep it up. Examples of aerobic exercise include walking, jogging, active sports like basketball or soccer, using equipment such as a treadmill or stationary bike.

Another type of exercise involves strength

training (think: low speed, high torque, off road driving). Examples include weight lifting, push ups, or sit ups. The goal is not to build bulging muscles, but to improve muscle tone. This will also help to reduce osteoporosis.

If you are not in good shape now, and would like to begin an exercise program it's best to meet with your doctor first, and confirm that it is safe to exercise. Ideally, you should slowly work up to 30 to 40 minutes of aerobic exercise 4 to 5 times a week. Even if you can't reach this ultimate goal, any increase in activity is good. It will help to prevent (or treat) high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol. Exercise may help to improve your mood and sleep as well.