Prevention Guideline

Hypertension Screening

Adult Guideline

Recommendation:

- The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPTF) strongly recommends that clinicians screen adults aged 18 and older for hypertension.

- Frequency: BP screening every two years is recommended.

The definition of hypertension is a blood pressure at or above 140/90 mm Hg. The guidelines pertain to uncomplicated hypertension, which is defined as hypertension in nonpregnant adults who do not have diabetes, heart failure, renal insufficiency, or unknown coronary heart disease.

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The Pharmacist’s Role in Heart Health

By Robert Jackson, Pharm.D., BCPS, CDE

Most people tend to think of their pharmacist only when they need medications, but they actually have a wide array of skills and knowledge that you can rely upon. The pharmacist’s role in heart health is sometimes overlooked, but you can rest assured knowing that KP pharmacists are looking out for our members. In the arena of heart health, that role encompasses disease state management, ensuring appropriateness of therapy, and wellness promotion.

There are several heart related programs managed by pharmacists in collaboration with Kaiser physicians including: diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidemia (cholesterol), heart failure, anticoagulation (Coumadin®), and chronic kidney disease. All of these disease states can affect the well being of the heart. In the management of these conditions, the clinical pharmacist will review past and present medical and medication history, monitor lab values, and start or adjust heart related medications in conjunction with the physician based on the needs of the individual.

Pharmacists make medication related recommendations to improve disease states or prevent them from occurring. Recommendations are as benign as recommending daily aspirin therapy or as intense as using life saving medications in an emergency situation.

Patient safety is a critical aspect of your pharmacists duties. His or her chief concern is to ensure the medications prescribed are appropriate and that the desired effect is achieved. The pharmacist will review all medications, both prescribed as well as over the counter for potential: drug disease state interaction, drug-drug interaction, duplicate types of medications, additional medication needed, too much or too little medication prescribed, right medication for the condition, and patient adherence. Another important thing a pharmacist does for heart health is counseling on how medications work, what they are for, how to take them, and inform members of what they may expect.

Get to know our pharmacists. They are important team members for heart health.
Women & Heart Disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death of American Women. Approximately 267,000 women die each year from heart attacks, which kill six times as many women as breast cancer. Coronary heart disease, congenital heart disease and heart failure are examples of heart disease.

Coronary heart disease is a disease of the blood vessels of the heart. Coronary blood vessels deliver oxygen and nutrients to the heart muscle, thereby enabling the heart to pump blood throughout the body. Heart attacks result when there is not enough blood feeds to the heart muscle and the heart can not continue to beat. The first noticable sign may be angina, which is periodic pain or discomfort in the chest caused by reduced blood flow to the heart. Pain localized behind the breastbone may travel down the left arm or up the throat, or may be a squeezing sensation that does not stop with breathing. Chest discomfort may last two to five minutes, and may be eased by rest. Woman may experience symptoms differently than men, including dizziness, palpitations, shortness of breath or indigestion, which may be experienced in the absence of chest discomfort. **Without treatment, these symptoms may lead to a heart attack.**

Annually, over 435,000 American women have heart attacks each year. There are certain risk factors that place women at increased risk for heart disease. The three most common are:

1. Tobacco Use—Smoking causes more deaths from heart disease than lung cancer. Smokers are two to six times more likely to have a heart attack than nonsmokers. The risk to an individual drops dramatically when one quits smoking.

2. Lack of physical activity—Physical inactivity doubles a woman’s risk of heart disease. Yet more than half of U.S. adults do not achieve recommended levels of physical activity. Physical activity also helps to improve control of diabetes, obesity, blood pressure, and cholesterol.

3. Poor nutrition—Improving food choices and changing eating patterns is critical for both preventing and controlling heart disease. Similar to exercise, good nutrition helps to improve control of diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, and cholesterol.

Kaiser Permanente Georgia Region 2008 Quality Targets

- **Mammography Screening Rate 84%**  
  % of Women age 50+ receiving annual mammogram

- **Cervical Cancer Screening Rate 94%**  
  % of Women age 21+ receiving a pap tests within the last 3 years

- **Colorectal Cancer Screening Rate 65%**  
  % of members age 50+ receiving recommended screening

- **Diabetes Control Rate 26%**  
  % of members with Diabetes with both A1C less than 7.0 % & LDL less than 100