



Heart Murmurs

May 2021

Cardiac Athletic Society Edmonton - Contacts

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Heart Murmurs is the newsletter of CASE published in February, March, April, May, September, October, November, and December each year. Suggested articles can be submitted to Barry Clark at kbclark1@telus.net. Back issues of the newsletter are posted on the CASE website at: <http://www.edmontoncase.ca>

If you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please e-mail stuart_e@telus.net with a subject line 'unsubscribe'.

Cardiac Athletic Society Edmonton Board

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
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Support for CASE

As a recognized charitable institution, CASE makes a significant difference to people interested in maintaining their heart health. If you make a financial gift, either as a direct contribution, or in the memory of a member who has passed, we will issue a tax receipt.

LIFE WITH COVID... CONTINUING.

For us, the good news is that in Alberta vaccinations are well under way, and most, if not all our members are qualified for the shot! The not so good news is that the actual roll out has not been as fast as hoped and that the wait for the second shot may extend out to 4 months. The bad news is that new virus variants have emerged and are taking hold. The impact of new strains on the effectiveness of vaccines is not really known with any scientific certainty. Also, confusion, rumor, and actual (apparently intentional) disinformation about the virus and the vaccination continues to spread.

Adding to the confusion is the fact that every province faces different situations and is following differing policies. The traditional media and the internet focus on exceptional and controversial issues and often meaningless debate. What is relevant and important?

For us, living in Alberta, if you want to know what you can, or cannot, do the one reliable source is the official release of Alberta Health. You can find this information at: <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx> The warning about depending on this site is that it changes frequently as do the policies that it documents. The rules change fast as new information is obtained regarding the virus and treatments. What they are doing in BC, Ontario or Nova Scotia is of interest but of little relevance to our day-to-day situation.

On the wider scale National policy does have an impact in terms of the approval, acquisition, and distribution of vaccines. Control of the border into Canada is a significant role of the Government of Canada in attempting to manage the spread of the pandemic and variants whether it comes from visitors or residents returning to Canada.

If we want to leave Canada (which is strongly discouraged) we will face mandatory restrictions on constraints to get back into Canada. These policies are the same as will be faced by any international traveller who wants to come to Canada. For information on restrictions and processes for travel into Canada refer to: <https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid>

Interprovincial travel may be restricted by the different provinces. For example, in BC intra-provincial travel may be restricted at this time. The Maritime provinces have imposed differing restrictions on travellers coming from outside their boundaries. Again, the best source of information on any of these controls would be by accessing the relevant provincial health department websites.

In you are making any plans to travel or to entertain visitors the best sources are not 'hearsay' or 'agents' or 'experts'. You need to go to the original sources of these policies to find out what they are saying when you make your plans and do not be surprised if policies change!

GOLF ANYONE?

CASE has a standing Tee time each Wednesday (11:00 AM) at Twin Willows Golf Course, Edmonton. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Wayne Saunders, CASE golf coordinator at: Sharway@telusplanet.net. or by phoning 780-886-1802

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING?

The Board discussed the scheduling of the Annual General Meeting at its April meeting. We had postponed the AGM originally scheduled for March due to the pandemic and hoped to reschedule it for the summer possibly in coordination with an outdoor event. The conclusion was that it still is not possible to set a date since covid 19 regulations remain in force for the foreseeable future. It was agreed we should reconsider this matter as the results of vaccination proceed and hopefully limits are redefined during the summer.

REGULAR WALKS STARTING!

Our leader, Wayne Jackson is resuming the program on Friday, April 30th and will try for a walk every 3 weeks depending on the weather, member interest and his other commitments. He will let everyone know by e-mail about a week before the walk indicating the time and place for meeting for the walk.

WARNING FOR THOSE WITH AN IMPLANTED HEART DEVICE

People who have an implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (ICD) or pacemaker should avoid the iPhone 12 as well as wearable tech products such as the Fitbit and Apple Watch that use magnetic chargers. The magnets in these gadgets can interfere with implanted cardiac devices, possibly rendering them useless, say two recent reports.

A 55-year-old woman wearing an Apple Watch while sleeping was awakened by several beeps from her ICD. A next-day check showed the watch's magnet had deactivated her device, as noted Dec. 12, 2020, in HeartRhythm Case Reports. In the Jan. 4, 2021 HeartRhythm, doctors described how bringing an iPhone 12 near the chest of a person with an ICD immediately disabled the device.

Such problems are not apparent with earlier phones and products without magnets. But to be on the safe side, do not put your smartphone in a shirt pocket. Hold the phone to the ear opposite the side of your pacemaker or ICD when making calls. You could also ask your cardiologist to test your smartphone to make sure it does not interact with your implanted device.

Source: Harvard Heart Letter Published: May 2021

CAN MEDITATION HELP YOUR HEART?

People who practice this mind-calming technique may be less likely to have risk factors linked to heart disease. Millions of Americans are using modern technology via apps on their smartphones to practice meditation, an ancient tradition that helps promote a sense of calm and relaxation. Last year's deluge of stress-inducing news was a boon for the meditation app business, which has evolved into a billion-dollar industry. Growing evidence suggests that meditation may also improve factors linked to cardiovascular health.

The latest comes from a Sept. 15, 2020, article in the American Journal of Cardiology. Researchers studied more than 61,000 people who took part in the two most recent National Health Interview Surveys (done in 2012 and 2017). Nearly 10% of the participants said they practiced some form of meditation. After adjusting for age, sex, sleep, depression, and other possible confounding factors, researchers found people who meditated had a lower prevalence of high cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, and coronary artery disease compared with people who did not meditate.

Breathe and relax: As the study authors note, there are many forms of meditation, and it is not clear whether certain types offer specific advantages. But the heart-related benefits likely stem from a common underlying mechanism, says Dr. Darshan Mehta, medical director of the Benson-Henry Institute (BHI) for Mind Body Medicine at Harvard-affiliated Massachusetts General Hospital.

"Many forms of meditation slow down your breathing, which leads to the downstream physiological effects, such as lowered blood pressure," he says. In fact, meditation allows one to evoke the relaxation response, which refers to the physiologic changes that are the opposite of the body's "fight or flight" stress response. The relaxation response slows down your heart and breathing and reduces your oxygen consumption. Other meditative techniques such as guided imagery, tai chi, yoga, prayer, or even knitting can also induce those changes. Initial studies of the phenomenon were done on Transcendental Meditation practitioners in the late 1960s, but it was later recognized that the relaxation response changes were not unique to that type of meditation.

Better blood pressure: Perhaps the best evidence for meditation's role in heart health has to do with its ability to lower blood pressure, although the effects vary quite a bit from study to study. A BHI-led study from 2018 suggests a mechanism: in some people, regularly evoking the relaxation response appears to turn on genes involved in dilating the blood vessels and turn off genes associated with inflammation and blood vessel constriction. Regular meditation also may help raise heart rate variability, according to one small study. Finally, it is possible that meditation may encourage other behaviors that foster heart health, such as sleeping more soundly and feeling less stressed. High stress levels can lead some people to develop unhealthy habits, such as eating too much junk food and drinking too much alcohol.

Getting started with meditation: Using a meditation app can be a convenient way to learn the practice. Some people find that practicing with a group helps, although the COVID-19 pandemic has made that option impractical. You can also try one of the free guided meditations from the BHI (online at <https://bensonhenryinstitute.org/guided-relaxation-exercises/>).

Source: Harvard Heart Letter Published: February 2021

THE CALENDAR AND FUTURE EVENTS

This is the last scheduled newsletter until September. Calendars for July and August have not been included since, except for Golf every Wednesday, events have not yet been finalized for these months. When they are e-mails and/or new calendars will be circulated.

CASE Events Calendar - May 2021

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-------------------|--------------------|---|---|---|--------|----------|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 5 Golf Twin Willows 11 AM Weather permitting | 6 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 7 | 8 |
| 9 Mother's Day | 10 | 11 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 12 Golf Twin Willows 11 AM Weather permitting | 13 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 19 Golf Twin Willows 11 AM Weather permitting | 20 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 Victoria Day | 25 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 26 Golf Twin Willows 11 AM Weather permitting | 27 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |

Note: Watch email for more detail on activities and events.

CASE Events Calendar - June 2021

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------------------|--------|---|---|---|--------|----------|
| | | 1 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 2 Golf Twin Willows 11 AM Weather permitting | 3 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 9 Golf Twin Willows 11 AM Weather permitting | 10 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 11 | 12 |
| 13 Father's Day | 14 | 15 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 16 Golf Twin Willows 11 AM Weather permitting | 17 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 23 Golf Twin Willows 11 AM Weather permitting | 24 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 Essentrics and Cardio 11:30 to 12:45 Zoom with Lynn | 30 | | | |

Note: Watch email for more detail on activities and events.