

Running for a cause
A survivor's road to recovery

Act now!
The dangers of heart disease

Triglyceride levels
What you need to know

**MEDIA
PLANET**

October 2011

CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH



FEEL THE BEAT

Elizabeth Maiuolo shares her empowering story of survivorship, and shows readers why it's important to keep your finger on the pulse

PHOTO: COURTESY OF NEW YORK ROAD RUNNERS

I HEART NEW YORK

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CHALLENGES

TIP

1

EAT A
HEALTHY DIET

WE RECOMMEND



PAGE 4

Q&A with New York Road Runner & heart attack survivor, Elizabeth Maiuolo

"She defied the odds, and against doctors' orders, signed up for the 2008 ING New York City Marathon."

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Publisher: Catherine Marengo
catherine.marengo@mediaplanet.com
Business Developer: Paul Herron
paul.herron@mediaplanet.com
Senior Designer: Missy Kayko
missy.kayko@mediaplanet.com
Designer: Ariela Anelli
ariela.anelli@mediaplanet.com
Managing Director: Eric Alexander
eric.alexander@mediaplanet.com
Editorial Manager: Luciana Colapinto
luciana.colapinto@mediaplanet.com

Contributors: Dr. Purushotham Kotha, Elizabeth Maiuolo, Dr. Mary Ann McLaughlin, Dr. James A. Underberg

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MARY ANN MCLAUGHLIN, MD, MPH

editorial@mediaplanet.com

A LIFETIME OF HEALTH
Take the proper steps to ensure a lifetime of cardiovascular health, from childhood to adulthood.

PHOTO: AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

Dr. Mary Ann McLaughlin instructs readers on **the good, the bad, and the harmful** when it comes to your heart.

Know your enemy

Cholesterol, from the Greek chole (bile) and stereos (solid), was first identified in gallstones in 1769, by Francois Poulletier de la Salle, and has been the subject of 14 Nobel Prize awards. In their 1985 Nobel Prize Lecture, Michael S. Brown and Joseph L. Goldstein described cholesterol as the "most highly decorated small molecule in biology." Cholesterol, a waxy substance produced in the liver, is present in all cells. High levels of cholesterol, however, are strongly associated with progression of atherosclerosis, or "hardening of the arteries."

Cholesterol is transported through the blood by lipoproteins: low density lipoproteins (LDL), and high density lipoproteins (HDL). Since the higher blood levels of LDL contribute more to the process of atherosclerosis, the particles are often termed "lousy cholesterol." High levels of HDL,

however, can remove cholesterol from cells and offer protection from heart disease. HDL is often referred to as "happy cholesterol."

Too much cholesterol can lead to heart attacks and stroke, and half of American adults have levels that are too high. Starting at age 20, all adults should have a blood test to check cholesterol levels. Some families are affected by a genetic disorder, "Familial Hyperlipidemia (FH)," which is associated with very high levels of cholesterol and increased risk of heart disease. In these families, adolescents and teenagers may require treatment to prevent the development of heart disease.

Fortunately, scientists have discovered ways to reduce cholesterol and subsequently reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke. You can reduce your cholesterol levels by eating the right foods, keeping your weight controlled and being physi-



Mary Ann McLaughlin, MD, MPH
President of the American Heart Association, NYC Board of Directors, Associate Professor of Medicine, Mount Sinai School of Medicine

"Too much cholesterol can lead to heart attacks and stroke, and half of American adults have levels that are too high."

cally active. The American Heart Association offers this advice:

■ Cut down on foods high in saturated fat and cholesterol, including fatty meats, butter, cheese, egg yolks, organ meats, shellfish and whole-milk dairy products.

■ Eat more foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol and high in fiber, including fruits and vegetables, whole grains and grain products, beans and lean meats.

■ Ask your doctor about medicines that can reduce cholesterol.

■ Keep active and always know your numbers (visit americanheart.org).

New Yorkers are financially savvy and always on the go. The following pages will focus on steps to a healthy heart. Keep on moving!

INSPIRATION

Our lifestyle determines our energy levels & overall health. Stay on the path to wellness with your entire family!

PHOTO: AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION



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INSPIRATION

Running for her life

TIP

2

CONSULT
YOUR DOCTOR

Born in Argentina, Elizabeth Maiuolo has lived in Manhattan for the past six years. She began running in 2004 after suffering a heart attack at the young age of 28, despite feeling healthy and fit.



Marathon runner, Elizabeth Maiuolo didn't let an unexpected heart attack, at the early age of 28, deter her from an active life.

Elizabeth's heart attack left her feeling weak, scared, and confused; she didn't want to face heart surgery, or succumb to taking pills for the rest of her life. Running was the answer for her. It helped her regain the confidence to not fear suffering another heart attack. She defied the odds, and against doctors' orders, signed up for the 2008 ING New York City Marathon. Since then, she's

run marathons and even ultra marathons. Most importantly, she has made a full recovery and is in great health—and she attributes it all to running! This year, Elizabeth is running the New York marathon as part of the Foot Locker 5 Borough Challenge, a special start of the marathon for one person from each borough.

■ Did you experience any warning signs prior to your heart attack at age 28?

I had always felt healthy so

there was no indication that something like this could happen to me. I was completely caught off guard. I didn't think it was anything serious. It felt like indigestion, until I felt like I couldn't breathe and then knew something was very wrong.

■ What was your lifestyle like leading up to your heart disease?

I have always felt great though I wasn't into any sort of exercise. I don't drink or smoke, though there is a lot of sugar in my diet.

■ Did you change anything else about your lifestyle, such as food intake or quitting smoking?

I didn't change much as I was pretty healthy. My food intake

was the only issue. I am not the best example: I have a sweet tooth and could live on cupcakes, but because I now run, I actually can eat these foods.

■ What made you decide to participate in the New York ING Marathon especially against your doctor's orders?

I embarked on the training & I never looked back. Although I contemplated the fact doctors told me running a marathon was suicidal, I couldn't see it that way. I didn't want to be a heart patient for the rest of my life. Running through NYC is the most exhilarating thing in the world. The NYC Marathon not only brings people together to run these amazing streets, but it pushes spectators out of their apartments. They inspire

us with their smiles, their signs, and I know we inspire them.

■ If you could send one message to readers who do not pay enough attention to their heart health, what would it be?

I want people to consider that without heart health, they have nothing. It sounds obvious, but most people don't worry about it until it's too late. It's your biggest and only asset. We live in a fast-paced and stressful city. People need to enjoy every single day and make sure that they're having fun with whatever they're doing & that they're doing it with passion.

ELIZABETH MAIUOLO
editorial@mediaplanet.com

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INSIGHT



CELEBRATING LIFE
Love your heart and it will
love you back.

PHOTO: AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

One in four New Yorkers have high cholesterol. Preventative steps are key to ensuring that these staggering statistics do not keep growing.

HEALTHY LIVING: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Heart disease is the #1 killer in men and women of all ages in the USA and also on a global scale. Nature (the genes you received from your parents) and nurture (what you eat and how much you exercise) are the key players.

LDL is the bad cholesterol that you get from your diet and is also produced by your liver. The higher the LDL levels, the higher the risk of developing heart disease over short term (next ten years) and long



Purushotham Kotha, M.D., FACC
Creator of iPhone app 'Heartsmart iglobal'

term (over lifetime). Other important risk factors that lead to heart disease are family history, smoking, diabetes, low HDL (good cholesterol), high triglycerides, high blood pressure and a sedentary lifestyle.

Heart disease literally starts in the womb and ends in the tomb. Fatty streaks, the hallmarks of heart dis-

ease have been observed in the blood vessels of second trimester fetuses! One in three 11 month-old infants are overweight and one in three five year-old children is obese in the U.S. due to overfeeding and overeating. These ultimately lead to heart disease, diabetes and stroke. Prevention is the key and it's never too early to start.

Modify your diet

You cannot change your genes but can modify your lifestyle. Heart disease is by far silent until late stages, but

a large waist line is a telltale sign, so pay attention to it. The IDEA, International Day for the Evaluation of Abdominal Obesity, conducted a study that examined 168,000 patients in 67 countries all around the world. The study confirmed that abdominal obesity is convincingly the most important, independent and universal predictor of cardio metabolic risk in men and women of all ages, nationality and ethnicity.

Steps you can take

Quit smoking, consult a doctor, maintain a healthy

weight, follow a healthy diet and try not to overeat. A healthy diet includes a variety of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. It also includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans and fat-free or low-fat milk or milk products. A healthy diet is low in saturated fat, trans fats, cholesterol, sodium and added sugar.

Act now! It starts with you. Help prevent 50,000 unnecessary deaths from heart attacks every year.

PURUSHOTHAM KOTHA, M.D., FACC

editorial@mediaplanet.com

INSIGHT

Triglycerides: What they are, who they affect & what you need to know

TIP

3

BE ACTIVE!

■ What are triglycerides?

Triglycerides are a combination of long chain fatty acids linked together by a glycerol molecule. They serve as a way for the body to transport and store fat. Triglycerides are primarily made by the body, but their components can either be absorbed through the intestine from dietary sources or stored in fat cells called adipocytes.

■ What are the main causes of high triglycerides?

Common medical conditions such as obesity, diabetes and kidney disease can all be associated with elevated triglyceride levels. Medications such as oral contraceptives, beta blockers and diuretics can add to high levels. In addition, several genetic conditions can also cause high triglycerides.

■ At what age should a person get tested to determine their levels?

Current guidelines suggest a fasting cholesterol screen for

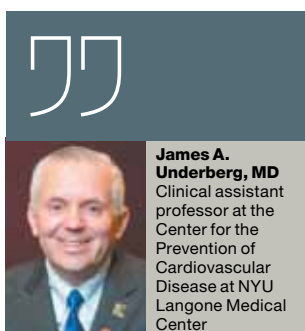
triglyceride levels by age 20. However, children and adolescents at risk for elevated triglyceride levels can be screened earlier. For patients at risk of genetic cholesterol elevations the National Lipid Association recommends screening children by age 9-11 and in children at high-risk as early as age 2.

■ What are the causes of high triglycerides that I can & cannot control?

Elevated triglycerides caused by factors such as obesity, diet, and alcohol can be controlled by avoiding these lifestyle choices. With treatment, medical conditions such as diabetes or hypothyroidism often show improvement in triglyceride levels. In addition, changing or stopping medications that can cause elevated triglycerides also helps.

■ What can I do to lower my triglycerides?

When lifestyle changes such as diet, exercise, and decreased alcohol intake, or treating



James A. Underberg, MD
Clinical assistant professor at the Center for the Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease at NYU Langone Medical Center

“Current guidelines suggest a fasting cholesterol screen for triglyceride levels by age 20. However, children and adolescents at risk for elevated triglyceride levels can be screened earlier.”

underlying conditions fails to normalize triglyceride levels, the next step is pharmacologic therapy. Many classes of medications can lower triglycerides. Such therapy should be managed by a physician.

■ What are the obstacles facing a person who suffers from genetic high cholesterol levels vs. one who suffers from poor diet/exercise?

Inherited high cholesterol is a condition seen in 1/500 individuals in the US. While diet can help lower cholesterol in some of these patients, it will not correct the problem, and all of these patients will require drug therapy. Often, despite medical therapy, patients still have high cholesterol levels. These patients are at significantly increased risk for early heart disease and need to be treated early and aggressively.

JAMES A. UNDERBERG, MD

editorial@mediaplanet.com

↓ DON'T MISS

The road to a healthy heart

■ **Get tested:** This is the first step to ensure you can take action as quickly as possible.

■ **Talk to your doctor:** Let them educate you on all the different treatment options.

■ **Follow your life line:** Family history is a main contributing factor to high triglyceride levels.

■ **Make use of the outdoors:** NYC is especially known for its beautiful parks and great bike paths.

■ **Choose healthy food options:** Invest in a few cookbooks that outline delicious meals & learn how to cook heart-healthy for your family.

■ **Test your blood:** Learn how to do so at home to ensure you maintain healthy levels in between doctor visits.

■ **Study up on statins:** If you are genetically-affected by high cholesterol and require medication, make sure you consult your doctor on which drug is right for you.

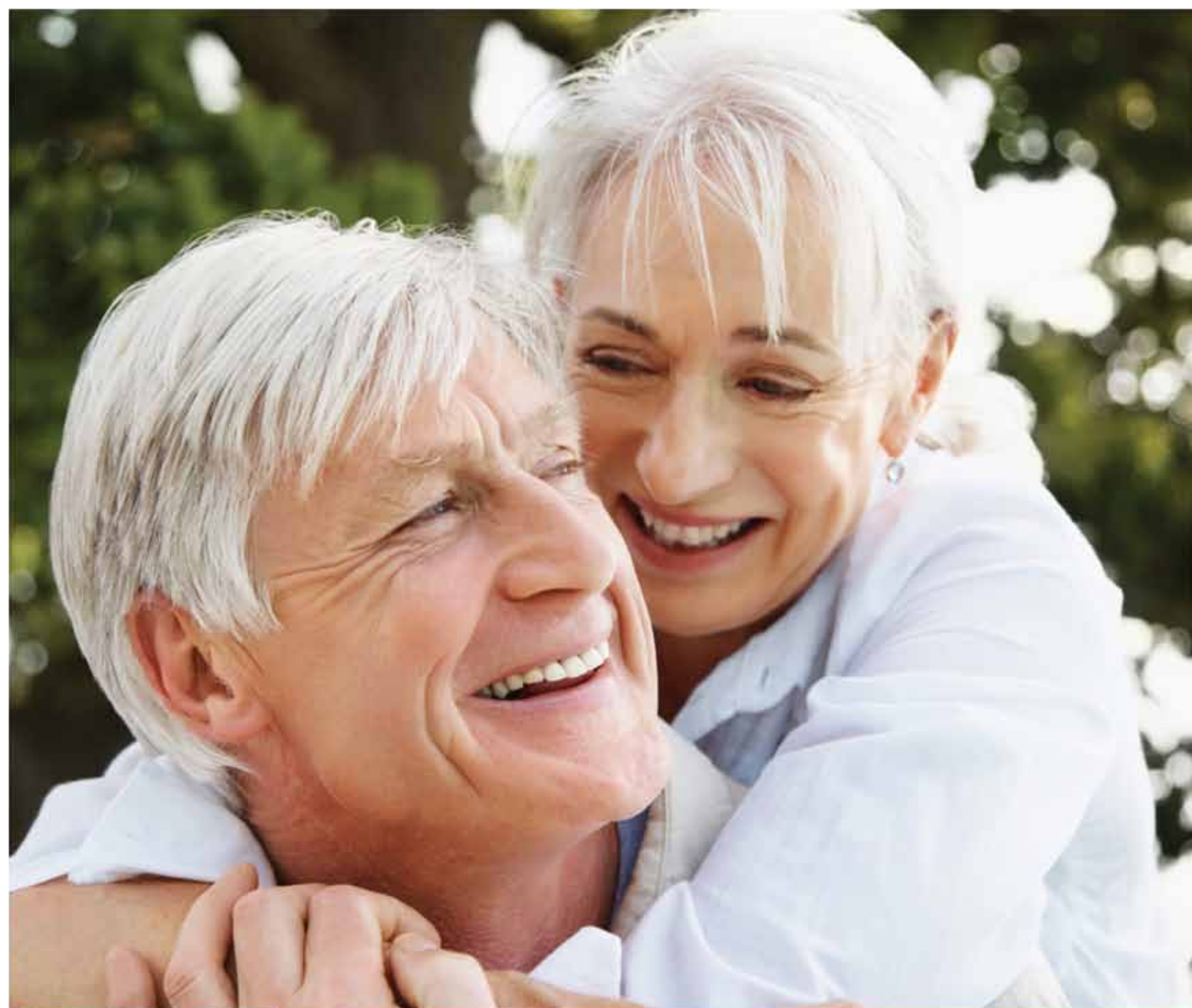
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