



Mended Hearts®  
of Huntsville, AL



# *The Beat Goes On*

Volume 11, Issue 8  
P. O. Box 18912, Huntsville, AL 35804-8912

August 2021  
Dr. Fredonia B. Williams, Editor

## From the President...



Due to the rise in covid cases we are still unable to meet in person. This month instead of our regular meeting, we will be having a Zoom meeting on Thursday, August 19, 2021, at 6:30 pm. I hope that you will be able to join us. I have missed seeing all of you and the encouragement that we get from each other.

We have been in touch with the hospital and they are anxious for us to be able to get back into visiting with the heart patients. We will be checking with them early in September to get a status update.

If you have not looked at the Mended Hearts, Inc. web site, I think you would like to see it.

There is a wealth of information there about Mended Hearts and about the different aspects of heart disease. The Heart Guide can also be found online. The web address is <http://mendedhearts.org>.



### **Huntsville Hospital Visitation Guidelines—Effective August 6, 2021**

#### **To enter the facilities you must:**

- ◆ Be 16 years of age or older with a valid ID
  - ◆ Be free of any of the following symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell
  - ◆ Have not been diagnosed with COVID-19 or been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 7 days
- ◆ Check in and out at facility entrances. If visiting a COVID-19 positive patient, also check-in with the nurses station before entering the patient room.
  - ◆ Wear a mask/face covering at all times while inside the hospital, observe social distancing and sanitize hands frequently

#### **To keep you informed**

- ◆ When a patient is admitted, a point of contact and communication plan will be set with a family member or support person (16 years of age or older).
- ◆ Daily updates will be provided to the point of contact, if requested.
- ◆ Virtual visitation is available.
- ◆ The patient will provide a password for identification so communication can take place between hospital staff and family members.

**(For additional visitation restrictions, check the Huntsville Hospital website.)**

*Lindell Smith, Chapter 260 President*

## **Covid-19 remains a concern for heart patients**

If you have heart disease or high blood pressure, be sure to keep taking your medicine during the coronavirus crisis. According to the Harvard Heart Letter, doctors know that Covid-19 is especially dangerous for older people with heart disease and high blood pressure. What they don't know is why. It could be older people are just more vulnerable, or maybe the cardiovascular disease itself is to blame.

High blood pressure seems to double the risk for bad outcomes in people with Covid-19. Researchers have been trying to find out why. One thing is known: Two classes of blood pressure drugs have something in common with Covid. They both use the same pathways to enter the heart and lungs. The question has been whether ACE inhibitors and angiotensin-receptor blockers (ARBs) help or harm people infected with the virus.

Three studies have found no evidence of harm for people infected with Covid-19 who take these drugs, according to the Harvard Health Letter. The studies are informative but not considered conclusive because they weren't placebo-controlled research. Doctors recommend people already using the drugs should keep taking them.

Another crucial concern is that heart patients who already take low-dose aspirin should continue taking them. In people who died of Covid-19, doctors have found clots in small vessels and capillaries of the heart. These small clots can cause heart attacks and low-dose aspirin helps to prevent the clots. Covid-19 is suspected to directly damage the heart muscle, causing cardiomyopathy, a form of heart failure. Even Covid patients without heart disease can experience this.

For anyone experiencing symptoms of a heart attack, the most important thing is to call 911 immediately. The hospital is the safest place you can be if you are having a heart attack. There was a dramatic drop in people coming to emergency rooms with heart attack symptoms during Covid last spring. The usual number fell by 40 percent. Some have speculated that this was because of fear of being infected with Covid at the hospital. Others suggest the dramatic drop in air pollution may have helped to prevent symptoms.

(Info from *Pages*)



During this time of fast moving COVID pandemic, we are again dealing with the fast-paced changes and taking time to unwind is as important as ever. It is very important to find tools we need to erase stress and find relaxation. From breathing techniques to yoga to finding an enjoyable hobby, there are many different ways you can give your mind a break.

It's important to remember that our minds can sometimes get the better of us, especially if we aren't finding ways to lower stress. Prolonged stress can increase stress hormones and chemicals that promote inflammation in the body.

Exercise is a good way to counteract this and give your body a surge of the mood-enhancing chemicals called endorphins. Deep breathing and mindfulness-based meditation can also ease tension, helping to train your mind to focus on the present and turn your thoughts inward to what matters most to you.

Whether it's through exercise, meditation, deep breathing, yoga, or other activities that help you unplug, it's important to relieve stress and stay positive.

## Fight Stress with Healthy Habits

**Slow down**  
**Snooze more**

Plan ahead and allow enough time to get the most important things done without having to rush. Try to get six to eight hours of sleep each night. To fight insomnia, add mindfulness and activity.

**Let worry go**

The world won't end if a few things fall off of your plate. Give yourself a break and just breathe.

**Laugh it up**  
**Get connected**

Laughter makes us feel good. Don't be afraid to laugh out loud, even when you're alone. A daily dose of friendship in great medicine. Make time to call friends and family so you can catch up.

**Get organized**

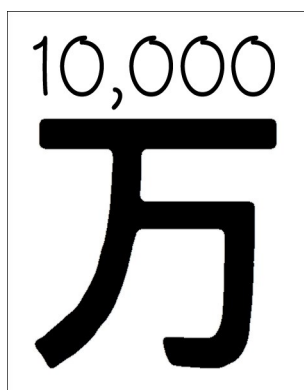
Use "to do" lists to help you focus on your most important tasks, and take big projects one step at a time.

**Be active every day**

Exercise can relieve mental and physical tension. Find something you think is fun and stick with it.

**Give up bad habits**

Too much tobacco, or caffeine can increase blood pressure. Cut back or quit to decrease anxiety.



Why is **10,000** steps the goal for our daily walking ? You'll be surprised.

Fitness trackers all urge wearers to strive for 10,000 steps per day. Have you ever wondered why that specific number?

One doctor did, too and he found out.

Dr. Edward Phillips, assistant professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation at Harvard Medical School, says that number didn't come from a scientific study. Instead it was a marketing tool.

It seems that in 1965 a Japanese company sold a pedometer with the name "10,000 steps meter" (or Manpo-kei). The company chose that number because the Japanese character for 10,000 looks like a person walking.

In fact, according to a study published in Journal of the American Medical Association, just 8,000 steps lowers your risk of dying during the next 10 years, especially from heart disease.

Most people get from 3,000 to 4,000 steps per day just going about their normal day. But if they add another 4,000 steps, they dramatically increase their lifespan. The study found that walking speed didn't make a difference in mortality.

You want to know how to estimate your walking speed? If you left your pedometer at home, you can still estimate how fast you are walking. Divide the number of steps you take in one minute by 30. For example, if you take 90 steps in a minute, your speed is 3 miles per hour. If you have very long legs or take huge strides, you are probably going a little faster, say training experts writing in Men's Fitness.

Bottom line: The more you walk, the better the results.

It is how far you walk, not how fast.

So, how far are you walking?



Your life. Your journey. Your choice.



# Ventricular Tachycardia

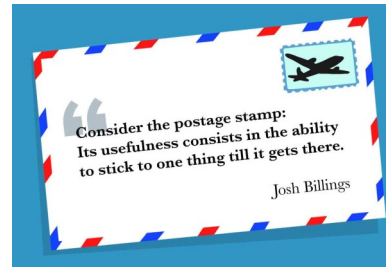
Did you know your heart beats 40 million times each year? That's a lot. The heart's electrical system helps regulate these beats. Usually, the heart beats between 60 and 80 times per minute. But if you have ventricular tachycardia, your heart beats much faster—between 120 and 300 times per minute! This can be very dangerous and needs to be treated.

The problem starts in the ventricles—the lower pumping chambers of your heart. As the heart races, these chambers may not completely fill with blood. If this happens, the heart can't pump enough blood to the brain and the rest of the body.

Because of this, you may not be able to maintain a normal blood pressure. That's why some people with this condition will faint without warning. It can even lead to sudden cardiac death. Some people have palpitations, chest pain, shortness of breath or sweat. Others have no symptoms at all.

There are many reasons why this heart rhythm disorder can develop, but you don't have to have heart disease to have it. Treatment will depend on your symptoms.

## Health Briefs



### Fitness trackers may help with weight loss goals

If you're trying to drop some weight, a fitness tracker might boost your chances of success. According to a new study published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, fitness trackers -- such as smart watches or other bracelet-style devices -- helped overweight or obese people with chronic conditions reduce their body weight and lower their body mass index (BMI). Researchers found that weight loss programs lasting at least 12 weeks were the most effective, and individuals who wore commercially available trackers, such as a FitBit, lost an average of six pounds. According to the study, the devices helped remind participants to stay on track with health-related goals and participate in daily activity. But there's a catch -- according to the Mayo Clinic, while fitness trackers are a great way to keep yourself moving, there's no substitute for keeping your diet on track.

### Good sleep may stave off dementia

According to a recent study published in the journal Aging, sufficient sleep may be protective against dementia. The study surveyed 2,600 adults ages 65 and older, and found that those who slept less than five hours per night faced nearly double the risk of dementia over five years than those who got seven to nine hours of shut-eye, as is recommended.

According to another study published in Nature Communications, people in their 50s and 60s who slept less than six hours per night were about 30 percent more likely to develop dementia.

While the research isn't yet conclusive about the link between sleeplessness and dementia, there are still lots of good reasons to try to get at least seven hours of quality sleep per night, including better brain health, mood and overall physical health.

## The Beat Goes On—Huntsville AL Mended Hearts Chapter 260

# Recognition

Celebrate!

We recognize member birthdays and surgery dates referred to as Mendiversaries. Congratulations to everyone who is celebrating a heart procedure anniversary this month.

If we have your month listed incorrectly or you would prefer not to be listed, please notify the chapter president. If we are missing your celebration, let me know at 256.837.7354.

### August Birthday

Betty Johnson  
Donald Elyea  
Eric Lundquis

### August Mendiversary

Sherrill Altice  
Randy Boyette  
James Carter  
Chris Green  
Kathy McFarland  
Maureen Nix  
Melissa Roebuck



*Hope you're  
feeling better!*

### Senior jokes: Sometimes you just gotta laugh

I must be getting older . . . All the names in my phone book end with M.D.

Nail salons, hair salons, waxing centers and tanning places are closed. It's about to get ugly out there.

I am not old. I am chronologically gifted.

At my age, flowers scare me.

I am so old that . . . When I eat out, they ask for my money up front.

All my friends in heaven will think I didn't make it.

Laura Chalk  
Chris Green  
Harriett Littlepage-eye surgery  
Barbara Morris  
Laura Mickler Walker  
Carl Walker

**About Mended Hearts:** “Mended Hearts is a national and community-based non-profit organization that has been offering the gift of hope to heart disease patients, their families and caregivers. To offer this hope Mended Hearts provides a variety of programs.”

**Mended Hearts Mission Statement:** “To inspire hope and improve the quality of life of heart patients and their families through on-going peer-to-peer support, education, and advocacy.”

**Vision Statement:** “To be the premier nationwide resource and peer-to-peer support network for all heart patients and families affected by Heart Disease across the life span.”





**Renew Your Mended Hearts Membership or join us  
National dues individual \$20; family \$40  
No local dues as chapter receives 25% of national  
dues paid**

Membership in Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts now is about how you can help improve the lives of heart patients and their families, beginning with your own. We are now offering a free membership level. This was created so that money will not be a barrier to engaging with Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts and receiving access to resources and information.

When you join at this level, you become part of something bigger, and you help us give voice to the many issues heart patients face throughout their lifespan. You also learn about the many educational opportunities Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts provide. Finally, you join the nation's largest cardiovascular disease peer-to-peer support network and help us support even more people. Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts provide educational programs, peer-to-peer support programs, heart disease awareness campaigns, and we advocate for heart patients big and small every opportunity we can. We need your support to do this. To join Mended Hearts or Mended Little Hearts or renew your membership is easy and can be done online or through the mail.

To renew over the phone, please call 888-432-7899 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET. To renew through the mail, print off and fill out the membership form found in this newsletter. It can be mailed to the address for the Mended Hearts Resource Center found on the form.

We have a variety of levels of membership for both individuals and families. Please review the attached membership for the membership levels. We appreciate the response from last month's request for joining and/or renewing your membership, so we are including the information in the rest of the 2020 newsletter issues. We really would like to see an increase in both our local chapter as well as the national chapter. An increase in membership is an increase in the number of individuals made aware of the benefits of being involved with Mended Hearts.

Mended Hearts is a national and community-based non-profit organization that has been offering the gift of hope to heart disease patients, their families and caregivers. To offer this hope Mended Hearts provides a variety of programs.

- Mended Hearts is the largest peer-to-peer heart patient support network in the world
- Mended Hearts has been offering hope and support for 69 years, providing more than 230,000 visits each year
- Mended Hearts provides education, support and hope to all types of heart patients and their families
- Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts has 265 chapters in North America, serving 460+ hospitals

***It's great to be alive and to help others.***

***\*Please note, as of January 1, 2021, no local dues for chapters. For more information, call me at 256.837.7354.***



Mended Hearts™



little  
mended hearts

Mended Hearts, Inc. Resource Center  
1500 Dawson Road  
Albany, GA 31707  
Phone: 1-888-HEART99 Email: info@mendedhearts.org

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

☐ NEW MENDED HEARTS ☐ NEW MENDED LITTLE HEARTS ☐ RENEWAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Mr. /Mrs./Ms.) \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter/Group \_\_\_\_\_ Member-at-large \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City / ST / Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I want to be a MH support volunteer: Yes ☐ No ☐

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in CHD Parent Matching: Yes ☐ No ☐

(Please check all that apply) I am a Heart Patient ☐ Caregiver ☐ CHD Parent ☐ Physician ☐ RN ☐ Healthcare Employee ☐

OPTIONAL INFO: Race: ☐ Caucasian ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ Am. Indian ☐ Hispanic ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

**Membership Levels:** All membership levels are for ONE YEAR, renewed annually, except for Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsorship.

Please choose your membership level and complete any appropriate payment information below.

## INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

### Associate Member --- FREE

- \* Can attend any chapter meeting for MH or MLH
- \* Can join online communities
- \* Can access Member Portal
- \* Receives the National e-newsletter

### Individual Member --- \$20 annual donation per person

- \* All of the benefits of an Associate Member, PLUS
- \* Membership Card
- \* Car Decal - Select \_\_\_ MH or \_\_\_ MLH
- \* One-time 5% off coupon for purchase from the MH store
- \* One year annual subscription to Heartbeat magazine (\$30 value)

### Bronze Member --- \$45 annual donation per person

- \* All the benefits of a Full Individual Member, PLUS
- \* Membership Pin
- \* Choice of \_\_\_ Drawstring Backpack or \_\_\_ MH/MLH Notecards (10 pk)
- \* 5% off registration of any National (not regional) MH/MLH Conference or Symposia

### Silver Member --- \$100 annual donation per person

- \* All the benefits of a Bronze Member, PLUS
- \* A Stainless Steel Mended Hearts Travel Mug

### Gold Member --- \$250 annual donation per person

- \* All the benefits of a Silver Member, PLUS
- \* A Red Fleece Blanket
- \* 10% off registration of any National Conference or CHD Symposium

### Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsor --- \$1500 donation

#### A one-time donation per individual

- \* All the benefits of a Gold member FOR LIFE, PLUS
- \* 15% off registration fees at National MH/MLH Conferences / Symposia
- \* Recognition in the next Heartbeat magazine after enrolling in the Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsorship, in all special Heartbeat issues, and on our website's list of Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsors

## FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

For members of one household with one mailing address only

### Family Membership --- \$40 annual donation

- \* All of the benefits of an Associate Membership, PLUS
- \* One year annual subscription to Heartbeat magazine (\$30 value)
- \* Membership Cards for all members of the family
- \* 2 Car Decals - Select \_\_\_ MH or \_\_\_ MLH
- \* Each family member receives a one-time 5% off coupon for purchase from the MH store. Use only one coupon per order.

### Bronze Family Membership --- \$75 annual donation

- \* All the benefits of a Family Membership, PLUS
- \* One Membership Pin per member
- \* Choice of \_\_\_ Drawstring Backpack or \_\_\_ MH/MLH Notecards (10 pk)
- \* 5% off registration of any National (not regional) MH/MLH Conference or Symposia

Family Members:

Spouse \_\_\_ Child \_\_\_ Heart Patient \_\_\_

Spouse \_\_\_ Child \_\_\_ Heart Patient \_\_\_

Spouse \_\_\_ Child \_\_\_ Heart Patient \_\_\_

Spouse \_\_\_ Child \_\_\_ Heart Patient \_\_\_

Note: National memberships are tax deductible less \$10.  
Lifetime sponsorships are 100% tax deductible.

## PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Membership Level \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional tax-deductible Donation to  
☐ Mended Hearts ☐ Mended Little Hearts \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to **Mended Hearts, Inc.**  
1500 Dawson Road  
Albany, GA 31707

For Credit Card payments, call 1-888-432-7899 (1-888-HEART99)

**Effective January 1, 2021, the Resource Center will process all new memberships (all levels) and all membership renewals.**

**All chapters will be reimbursed 25% of all paid national dues or renewals of dues.**