

Better Conversations With Your Doctor May Lead To Improved Heart Health

(NAPSA)—Many people may not realize that a simple conversation could help improve their lives. In today's busy world, it can be difficult to find the time to see your doctor, so making the most of each visit is important. If you have ever left your doctor's office without getting answers to all your questions or understanding your treatment plan, you are not alone. Some people leave their medical visit without all of the information they want to help manage their health.

This is a troubling trend for the many Americans who may suffer from heart disease, the leading cause of death in the United States. However, one way to help you be more successful in managing your heart health is by building a strong and active partnership with your doctor and the other members of your health care team.

A new program, Time to Talk CARDIO—Creating A Real Dialogue In the Office, was created to help build better conversations between patients and their doctors, physician assistants and nurses. Visit the program's Web site, www.timetotalkcardio.com, to watch customized videos that show you helpful ways to talk to your health care team.

It's important to be on the same page with your doctor when it comes to your overall health



care, and treatment plans for your heart health are especially important. Ask your doctor to explain medical information to you in plain language and be sure to ask

any questions you may have.

Time to Talk CARDIO is an educational program underwritten by Merck & Co., Inc. and developed in partnership with the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) Foundation, Canyon Ranch Institute and RIASWorks.

To learn more about how you can make the most of your conversations with your health care team, prepare for your next visit and help improve your heart health, visit www.timetotalkcardio.com for free information, tools and resources.

5 Steps For Making The Most Of Your Medical Visit

- Prepare a plan for your visit. This helps make sure that you cover what is important to you during the visit.
- Talk about your health concerns. Tell your doctor how you are feeling and about any health changes since your last visit.
- Ask questions during your visit to help you understand, and be sure to check with your provider to make sure that he or she understands you.
- Problem-solve with your doctor and other members of your health care team.
- End your visit by going over what you have talked about and what you will do.

Ways To Improve Your Heart Health

- Get 30 minutes of aerobic exercise, such as jogging, swimming or walking, most days of the week.
- Talk with your doctor about setting healthy heart goals for LDL cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar, and before beginning any exercise program.
- Limit foods high in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol.
- Eat more: fruits and vegetables; whole grains; fat-free or low-fat milk products; and skinless chicken and fish.
- Eat less: high fat milk products; egg yolks; and fatty meats.

For more information, visit www.timetotalkcardio.com.

