

# Preventative Health for Men and Women – Q&A

- **Q: On the gender specific screenings slide you mentioned abdominal aortic aneurysm. What is that?**
- A: An abdominal aortic aneurysm is an enlarged area in the lower part of the aorta, the major blood vessel that supplies blood to the body. The aorta, about the thickness of a garden hose, runs from your heart through the center of your chest and abdomen. A ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm can cause life-threatening bleeding. Abdominal aortic aneurysms often grow slowly and usually without symptoms. High blood pressure, tobacco use, and hardening of the arteries (atherosclerosis) are just a few factors that may increase your risk of an aneurysm.
- **Q: What are some dietary recommendations for keeping triglycerides low?**
- A: Avoid trans fat and limit saturated fat. Trans fat is listed on food labels and is found in some baked goods. Remember that if the trans fat amount per serving is less than ½ g, then it will say zero on the food label, but still say partially hydrogenated oils in the ingredient list. Watch out for this and strive to keep your trans fat intake at zero g daily. If you're watching your triglycerides, you should also limit saturated fat, which is also on food labels. It's most often found in animal products like full fat milk and fatty meats. It's also important to watch your intake of refined carbohydrates if you have high triglycerides. These would include things like regular soda, white bread, and sugary foods. And finally, on this question, remember it's not good enough just to eat well, you still need to visit your doctor periodically to get your triglycerides measured. That's the only way to really know where you stand with your triglycerides.
- **Q: I am thinking about getting more active. Where should I start?**
- A: If you haven't been active in a while, I'd suggest consulting your doctor to get the green light on either starting an exercise program or increasing your intensity. After getting the green light from your doctor, brisk walking is a great place to start. It's easy, convenient and an inexpensive way to get some exercise into your day. Also, if you currently are not doing any formal exercise, you can slowly build up to the recommended time, which is 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity per week.