

Atrium Health Navicent Offers Tips to Help Improve Women's Health *National Women's Health Week is observed May 14-20*

MACON, Ga., May 16, 2023 – The community is invited to join Atrium Health Navicent in recognizing May 14-20 as National Women's Health Week. Beginning on Mother's Day each year, this week serves as a reminder for women to take care of themselves and to make their health a priority.

Doctors at Atrium Health Navicent encourage women to use this week to reflect on their individual health needs and take steps to improve their overall health. Whether you continue current activities or find new ones, now is a great time to focus on better health, especially for individuals with underlying health conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular and respiratory conditions. Women are urged to ensure they're current on well-woman visits and recommended screenings such as mammograms.

For middle-aged women in particular, Atrium Health Navicent offers the following eight tips to decrease the risk of cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, obesity and more.

- 1. Know your numbers.** Knowledge is power. That's why knowing your numbers – blood pressure, BMI, triglycerides and cholesterol, just to name a few – is a valuable insight into the current state of your health. If it's been a while since you've had these tests, reach out to your doctor to get started.
- 2. Brush up on family health history.** Family health history is important in helping your doctor to determine your own health needs, especially as you enter midlife. If a first-degree relative has battled breast cancer, for example, your risk doubles. Other health problems including cardiovascular disease, thyroid problems and issues with the colon may be genetic, so now is a good time to reassess your family history and share it with your doctor.
- 3. Kick bad habits to the curb.** If you haven't already, take steps to let go of poor habits that can be detrimental to your health as you age. This includes smoking, excessive alcohol use, recreational drug use and a sedentary lifestyle. Drinking even small amounts of alcohol is linked to an increased risk of breast cancer in women. Stuck in a habit of a nightly glass of wine to unwind? Try replacing it with a cup of herbal tea.
- 4. Fine-tune your diet.** While the right diet for you may depend on your specific restrictions or health needs, most people benefit from a Mediterranean diet rich in fruits and vegetables, plant-based or lean animal protein, heart-healthy fats and fiber-rich grains. Moderation is key when it comes to a balanced diet. Your doctor will be able to recommend a plan that is right for you based on your current health status.
- 5. Take a vitamin.** Nothing replaces a healthy, well-balanced diet. But a daily multivitamin can help fill in the gaps in the areas where your diet may be lacking. Note that many supplements you see advertised today with seemingly magical health claims are simply passing trends. Talk to your doctor about vitamins or supplements that may be right for you and ask for blood work if you have specific concerns about deficiencies.
- 6. Get moving.** A body in motion stays in motion. If you've led a fairly sedentary lifestyle, now is a great time to find an activity that you enjoy. Taking small steps toward a more active lifestyle, like taking the stairs instead of the elevator or parking further from an entrance to get in more steps in the parking lot will benefit your body. Aim for at least 30 minutes per day and work your way up. Even those who have health- or age-related limitations, such as arthritis or osteoporosis, can benefit from modified, low-impact exercise—so talk to your doctor about activities that are appropriate for you.
- 7. Have regular checkups and get screened.** Prior to midlife, you should attend annual checkups during which routine blood work and a pelvic exam are standard procedure. As you enter midlife, additional health screenings like mammograms, colonoscopies and bone density screenings might be on your radar. Your doctor can recommend when and how often you'll need them based on your personal medical and family history.
- 8. Manage stress levels.** Chronic stress wreaks havoc on a person's physical and emotional well-being. Take time for yourself to relax and unwind, whether that means indulging in a good book, enjoying a workout or meditating.

A good night's rest is important for stress management, and sleep disturbances are a common complaint in midlife, so be sure to mention this to your doctor to discuss management options. If you are experiencing stress not managed with lifestyle changes don't be afraid to reach out for professional help if you need it.

"Prioritizing your health should be at the top of every woman's to-do list. Many women are the hearts of their families, and taking preventative care steps can ensure not only that they're able to live their best lives, but also serve as an example for the next generation," said Dr. Siping "Sherry" He, an Atrium Health Navicent OB-GYN.

In addition to Atrium Health Navicent's primary care physicians, [Atrium Health Navicent Women's Care OB/GYN](#) provides services in Forsyth and Macon. To schedule an appointment, call 478-633-1821. To find a doctor, visit www.NavicentHealth.org and click "Find A Doctor."

About Atrium Health Navicent

Atrium Health Navicent is the leading provider of health care in central and south Georgia and is committed to its mission of elevating health and well-being through compassionate care. Atrium Health Navicent is part of [Advocate Health](#), which is headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, and is the fifth-largest nonprofit health system in the United States, created from the combination of Atrium Health and Advocate Aurora Health. Atrium Health Navicent provides high-quality, personalized care in 53 specialties at more than 50 facilities throughout the region. As part of the largest, integrated, nonprofit health system in the Southeast, it is also able to tap into some of the nation's leading medical experts and specialists with Atrium Health, allowing it to provide the best care close to home – including advanced innovations in virtual medicine and care. Throughout its 125-year history in the community, Atrium Health Navicent has remained dedicated to enhancing health and wellness for individuals throughout the region through nationally recognized quality care, community health initiatives and collaborative partnerships. It is also one of the leading teaching hospitals in the region, helping to ensure viability for rural health care for the next generation. For more information, please visit www.NavicentHealth.org.

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