



# HEALTH LETTER

Winter  
2013

Board Certified  
Internal Medicine

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## Obamacare

Many patients have recently expressed concerns as to how the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, will affect access to medical services and delivery. Please be reassured that our practice will do everything possible to maintain the highest quality medical care in the future as you have received in the past. For Independence Blue Cross patients, our practice and the Abington Health Physician Network of primary care physicians are in Tier 1, the tier which offers the lowest patient responsibility.

## BP Meds

A recent study conducted by the national committee on hypertension recommended that people over the age of 60 no longer have to treat blood pressures that are less than 150/90 -which is a change from the prior recommendations of 140/85 in the past. These recommendations were made on the basis of studies which revealed no significant improvement in outcomes with greater control of blood pressure for people over the age of 60 and also due to the additional side effects that aggressive blood pressure management can take on patients in this age group.

For people between the ages of 30 and 59, however, the recommendation remains to control blood pressures to 140/90 or less. In addition, patients with high blood pressure and diabetes, or high blood pressure and chronic kidney disease, are also advised to have blood pressures less than 140/90 regardless of age. Exercise is advised as a benefit in conjunction with a healthy diet and weight loss in order to improve blood pressure control and even reduce the need for some blood pressure medications.

If you have high blood pressure and are over the age of 60 you may be able to have a reduction in medications if your blood pressure is substantially lower than present recommendations, especially if you are having side effects due to low blood pressure. If you have not been tested for high blood pressure or wish to discuss the management of your blood pressure especially if you are over 60 year old, please make an appointment with your doctor.

OFFICE HOURS	M	T	W	Th	F	
Morning hours	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12	
PM hours	1-5	1-6	1-5	1-5	1-4	
Evening hours	6-8			6-7		

## Statin Update

The American Heart Association and American College of Cardiology recently released new guidelines to reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes. Key to these recommendations are the increased use of statins in certain age groups depending on a risk assessment evaluation. Also dietary modifications and exercise recommendations are to be a part of the overall program to reduce heart disease and stroke risk along with the widened use of statins.

Statins, or cholesterol reducing medications, will be recommended for people between the ages of 40-75 years old who have a 7.5% or higher risk for heart attack or stroke within the next 10 years. People with a history of heart attack, stroke, angina, peripheral vascular disease, mini-strokes, or prior heart surgery or procedures are being urged to take statins. People who are 21 years old and over with a very high level of bad cholesterol ( a LDL level above 190) are generally also advised to start taking statins. Finally patients with diabetes who are 40 to 75 years old should be using these cholesterol-lowering medications as well. You may want to discuss your ten-year risk of heart disease or stroke at the time of your next office visit to determine whether statins may be of benefit to you.

## Happy Holidays

On behalf of the entire staff, we would like to take this time to extend our wishes for happy holidays and a healthy new year to you and your family. We appreciate the confidence that you shown in our practice over the years, and we look forward to providing for your comprehensive health care in the future. As guidelines for ongoing medical care continue to evolve, you can be assured that we will keep you informed on the most up-to-date recommendations to maintain and promote your health.

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