

Getting to the Heart of the Matter

- **Seminar and screening program measures vascular health.**



(Feb 12) Are you at risk for a stroke or heart disease? One way to find out is at the free “Good News” seminar scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 15, in the Windsor Room, 15th floor, during the lunch hour from noon to 1 p.m.

Instructors from Longevity, Inc., will review the symptoms of stroke and heart disease, highlight preventive measures you can take to reduce the risk, and discuss new cures and treatments for vascular disease.

Longevity Inc, in conjunction with the American Heart Association, will provide free seminars to MTA employees and follow-up with a day of low-cost vascular, carotid and body composition screenings, said Kimberlee Vandenakker, Human Resources Work/Life Program coordinator. Two free vascular screenings will be given way at the seminar on Thursday.

To reserve a space for the free seminar, call Vandenakker at 922-4867.

The “good news” is that 80 percent of strokes and heart attacks can be prevented, said Gail O’Connell, a Longevity, Inc., administrator.

Using data from the National Stroke Association and the American Heart Association, Longevity aims to encourage participants to know their risk for vascular disease. “By knowing stroke and heart attack risk factors, people can take charge of their lives,” said O’Connell.

Vascular screenings will be offered to MTA employees and family members on the following Thursday, Feb. 22., in the Board Overflow Room. To schedule an appointment for the screenings, which take one hour for all three, call Longevity, Inc., at 1-888-287-5662.

Three types of screening tests are offered:

- **Peripheral Vascular Screening:** Utilizes near infrared technology to detect blockage in the arteries coming from the heart to the upper and lower extremities.
- **Carotid Ultrasound:** Takes images of your arteries to discover any build-up of plaque inside the main arteries of the neck, and
- **Body Composition:** The first FDA-approved Doppler technology test measures the percentages of lean mass, fat and water.

Participants are advised not to consume anything containing caffeine after 7:30 a.m. that day and to wear short sleeves. All three tests are performed for a fee of \$125 or separately for \$15 for the body composition and \$55 for either of the vascular screenings.

The screenings are non-invasive, painless tests performed by a licensed sonographer and technologists, said O’Connell. The technologists will review the results with the patient, who, ultimately, will receive a packet containing a letter to their physician, their test results and a photo of their ultrasound. The tests also will be interpreted by a radiologist.

O’Connell said the screenings are a lifeline to making changes that can save your life. “Doctors won’t give these screenings unless you’re already

symptomatic," she said. "A lot of people want to know the condition of their arteries. A moderate build-up (of plaque) can be reduced with changes in lifestyle, that doesn't always require surgery," she said.

The seminar and screening program will be offered at Division 5 on April 19 and 26 and at Division 8 on April 28 and May 4.

Longevity, Inc., based in Dana Point for the last 8 years, provides education and low-cost vascular screening to Southern California businesses, government bodies, municipalities and community organizations.

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