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Dr. Matthew Budoff, a cardiologist at the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, recommends measures employees at Central City Division 1 can take to prevent heart disease.



## Operator's Death Raises Concerns About Heart Disease Risks

By SHANTAY IOSIA

- [Learn the ABCs of Preventing Heart Disease](#)

(Nov. 24, 2004) Almost two months after Central City Division 1 Operator Jorge Sanchez died of a heart attack on the job, division employees were voicing concerns about heart disease risks and other health issues.

To better educate the employees about heart disease, hypertension, healthy dieting and other health risk factors, Division 1 managers sought professional advise.

PHOTOS BY SHANTAY IOSIA



Division 1 Service Attendant Carl Velasquez was among many who asked Dr. Budoff about

Dr. Matthew Budoff, a member of the American Heart Association's speakers bureau, held a seminar, Nov. 17, to give Division 1 employees the ABCs of preventing heart disease.

"Statistics say two-thirds of us in this room will die of a heart attack or stroke," he said to an audience of about 50. "That's what kills Americans. That doesn't mean we can stop all of that, but we can reduce that by treating ourselves better."

## Aspirin prevents clots

concerns or symptoms following his lecture. "A is for aspirin," said Budoff, an associate professor at Harbor-UCLA Medical School. He explained how aspirin thins the blood preventing blood clots from blocking passageways. The physician recommends that most men over 45 and women after menopause take a baby aspirin, about 81 milligrams, a day.

"B is for blood pressure," he continued. Budoff described blood pressure as the pillar of cardiovascular diseases. High blood pressure, which tends to target African-Americans, is treatable and reversible through diet, exercise or medication.

"If you lower [your blood pressure], you lower your risk of having problems," he said. "You will live longer if you check your blood pressure regularly; we know that to be true."

Cholesterol, the C of the ABCs, is another factor to be conscious of, he advised. "The higher the number, the higher the risks."

### **No fad diets**

Diet, Budoff said, could not be personalized for his attentive audience but he would not advocate fad diets. Instead, he warned his listeners about eating fried foods and foods high in salt.

He recommended substituting a potassium supplement for salt and suggested daily portions of fibers, fruits and vegetables.

Exercise, his final precaution, "is probably the most important, but probably the hardest for any of us to do."

A twenty-minute walk each day increases a person's metabolism and helps reduce weight. "Everything else gets better when your weight goes down."

### **Heart scan raffle**

After Budoff's talk to the employees, The American Heart Association raffled two heart scans. The scans photograph the chest cavity to check for any plaque build-up.

The organization estimates more than 64 million Americans have been diagnosed with one or more forms of cardiovascular disease.

Budoff encouraged his audience to live healthy lives and not to ignore signs of heart disease.

"Heart disease is a silent killer," he warned. "You don't feel bad until the day it hits you."

About 40 operators, mechanics, staff and management gathered to hear Dr. Matthew Budoff, a speaker from the American Heart Association give advice about living a healthy life and reducing the risks of heart disease.



### Learn the ABCs of Preventing Heart Disease

- **Aspirin.** About 81 milligrams a day thins the blood and prevents heart attack and stroke.
- **Blood pressure.** Keeping blood pressure down reduces stress to the heart and brain.
- **Cholesterol.** The lower the number, the lower the risk.
- **Diet.** Daily portions of fiber, fruits and vegetables reduce risk of heart disease.
- **Exercise.** Most important to healthy living. Experts recommend a 20-minute walk each day.