Most Common Cardiac and Blood Pressure Medications

This month we are going to look at some of the most popular cardiac and blood pressure medications that a lot of people are on daily.

**Statins** – Some common brand names are Zocor, Lipitor, and Mevacor. Statins lower the LDL (bad) cholesterol. These drugs make the liver remove more cholesterol from the blood than it would normally.

It is rare that Statins cause liver damage, but most physicians will order periodic blood tests to check on the function of the liver. It is also rare that Statins cause muscle damage. However, mild muscle discomfort is more common, but usually can be decreased by switching the time you take the medication or switching to a different Statin.

**Plavix** – This is a kind of “super aspirin” especially when it is combined with aspirin. Plavix is about 3% more potent than aspirin, so bleeding is a bigger problem.

**Warfarin (Called Coumadin)** – This drug is used to prevent and treat blood clots. It restricts clotting by blocking Vitamin K+, a nutrient used by the liver to produce proteins that cause blood to clot.

Warfarin is very challenging to regulate as it interacts with many different medicines and the Vitamin K+ in green leafy vegetables, and anyone taking this medication requires frequent blood tests to monitor your bleeding time.

**Pradaxa** – This is a brand new medication to keep blood from clotting and it does not require the frequent blood tests that Warfarin does.

**Beta Blockers** – Coreg, Toprol, Atenolol, and many other Beta Blockers decrease your heart rate and the strength of the heart muscles contractions. These drugs are used for treating chest pain, stabilizing uneven heart beats, and maintaining heart health after a heart attack or being diagnosed with congestive heart failure.

These drugs were used to control high blood pressure, but are now rather passé’.

Beta Blockers can really lower heart rate and cause dizziness or low blood pressure. The use of these drugs can occasionally cause nightmares and depression. Also, individuals with asthma and chronic lung disease cannot take Beta Blockers because it causes constriction of the lung airways.

**ACE Inhibitors** – Common trade names are Prinivil, Accupril, and Lisinopril.

These medications prevent the body from producing a hormone (angiotensin) that causes arteries to constrict.
These drugs help to lower blood pressure and prevent further heart damage after a heart attack or congestive heart failure. Also, these medications produce moderate low blood pressure and when combined with a “water pill” requires the need for the physician to keep check on kidney function and increased blood potassium.

These are the most popular types of medications for heart and blood pressure and any combination.

**IMPORTANT NOTE**

If your doctor has ordered medications for you to take, you must continue to take the drugs, until your doctor tells you to stop. Take your medications at regular daily intervals. Stopping some of these drugs abruptly can cause a heart attack or cause you to have a stroke.

**RECIPE**

**Seed – Crusted Tuna**

Prep Time: 10 minutes  Total Time: 15 minutes  Servings 4

Ingredients:

1 lb. frozen sweet peas
2½ oz. baby arugula (2 ½ c)
¾ c reduced-sodium chicken broth or water
3 – 4 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice + 8 lemon wedges
¼ c grated Parmesan
3 Tbsp. olive oil
1 lg egg white, beaten
¼ c whole flaxseed
4 tuna fillets (6 oz. each)

1. **COMBINE** peas, arugula, broth, lemon juice, Parmesan, and 1½ Tbsp. of the oil in blender. Puree until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to saucepan and warm thoroughly over medium – low heat. (Makes 3 cups.)
2. **PUT** egg white and flaxseed in 2 shallow bowls. Dip 1 side of tuna fillets in egg white and then in flaxseed. Heat remaining 1½ Tbsp. oil in medium nonstick skillet over medium – high heat. Cook tuna seed side down turning with spatula, about 5 minutes for medium-rare.

3. **SPOON** pea puree onto plates and top with fish. Serve with lemon wedges.

**NUTRITION** (per serving) 456 cal, 51 g pro, 21 g carb, 8 g fiber, 16.5 g fat, 2.5 g sat fat, 389 mg sodium.