

HEART

Health for a Lifetime

Prevention, lifestyle, and cardiology care are key to wellness

By Diana Dunne

Photos by Sandy Adams

The statistics are heartbreaking: Cardiovascular disease continues to be the number one killer in the U.S., causing about 2200 deaths each day in this country. The direct and indirect costs of cardiovascular disease and stroke are skyrocketing—about \$300 billion annually. These numbers are far too great at a time when our nation's leading killers—heart disease and stroke—are preventable and manageable.

Mohamed Shalaby, MD, believes in a proactive approach to maintaining a healthy lifestyle and discovering heart disease at its earliest stages, when treatment is minimal and outcomes are most successful. Dr. Shalaby is a board certified cardiologist with extensive experience. In addition to caring for his patients with cardiovascular and related medical conditions at his state-of-the-art cardiac center (www.txheartcenter.com), Dr. Shalaby has created a breakthrough cardiovascular wellness program, Healthy Start MD (www.healthystartmd.com) that offers health risk screenings and assessments, pre-disease management, disease monitoring, health education and diet, exercise, and behavioral coaching.

“The good news is that early diagnosis, risk factor modifications, improved nutrition, and exercise are effective treatments for many diseases affecting people today, including heart disease and stroke,” Dr. Shalaby says. “By providing our patients with practical tools to live a healthy lifestyle, we educate and train them, address the entire spectrum of risk factors, and screen for early intervention and disease prevention.”

Learn your risk factors, take preventive action, and avoid becoming a heart disease statistic. →



Dr. Shalaby and his team care about your health! They offer compassionate support, essential screening, and extraordinary cardiovascular care. Visit them at The Heart Center, 290 E. Medical Center Blvd. in Webster.

Weight Loss Uncovers Pacemaker Need

Henry Duke, age 73, began seeing Dr. Shalaby for management of high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Henry knew that his weight was a risk factor, and he joined one of Healthy Start MD's multiple medically supervised weight loss programs with very impressive results.

Henry arrived for one of his follow up weight loss visits and his heart rate was very low. Dr. Shalaby realized that Henry needed a pacemaker.

"My experience with Dr. Shalaby and his staff has been very positive," Henry says. "Dr. Shalaby is an excellent doctor. He is very compassionate, puts patient interests first, and he creates very good relationships with his patients."



Dr. Shalaby offers screening packages—including treadmill cardiac stress testing (pictured right) and cardiac imaging—tailored to the needs of each patient's individual health condition. Assess and identify your specific risk factors and potential for developing leading diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and vascular disease with an affordable screening. Cardiovascular screening packages start at \$99.

SEVEN RISK FACTORS

Dr. Shalaby says that his number one goal is to reduce the number of cardiac patients he treats. "When patients come to us early, we can help them avoid disease," he says. "We provide an individualized, comprehensive approach that combines the latest medical knowledge and state-of-the-art technology, advanced screening, and a compassionate, professional team that partners with each patient to coach them toward improved health."

Dr. Shalaby believes that early diagnosis and education are the most important initial steps toward staying healthy and preventing all disease. Learn your risk factors and remove these from your life. Dr. Shalaby and his team offer programs to assist you in eliminating unhealthy habits.

Risk factor #1: Smoking

Smoking cigarettes tops the list as the most important preventable major risk factor of cardiovascular disease. According to the American Heart Association, there are nearly 440,000 smoking-related deaths every year. Get involved in a smoking cessation program like the one offered at Healthy Start MD.

Risk factor #2: Inactivity

Research has shown that achieving just a moderate level of fitness can reduce

your risk of heart disease and extend your life. Getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week can help lower blood pressure and cholesterol, and keep your weight at a healthy level.

Risk factor #3: Diet

Adapt a healthier diet and maintain a healthy weight. Healthy Start MD's weight loss programs are successful because they are based on the latest developments in the field of nutrition and identify and treat the hidden causes of obesity such as slow metabolism, hormonal and nutritional imbalances, genetics, and other factors.

Risk factor #4: Stress

Stress is a daily part of life. The way you handle stress, however, makes a significant difference in how it affects your health and your risk for heart disease. If you deal with stress through overeating, smoking, or drinking in excess, you are putting yourself at risk for heart attack or stroke. Learn to manage your stress. Dr. Shalaby's team can help you do this with behavioral therapies and other treatments.

Family History of Stroke

Glenda Laird, 58 has been a cardiology patient of Dr. Shalaby's for many years, and participates in a Healthy Start MD weight loss program.

"I have atrial fibrillation, and at one point everyone thought I'd had a stroke. My mom, dad, and sister all died of strokes," Glenda shares. "Dr. Shalaby has kept a very close watch on me and I see him regularly. I feel really good."

Glenda calls herself a "big girl," but says that Dr. Shalaby has never been judgmental or criticized her about her weight. "He is so compassionate and patient," she says. "He wants me to lose weight and be healthy and happy. Which is different than yelling!" Glenda is working toward her weight loss goals, and says that the support she receives is key to her success.

"Dr. Shalaby and his team are just a great bunch of people and very proactive in your care," Glenda says. "Plus Dr. Shalaby is always smiling and has a great, positive attitude—and the whole office does as well. The doctor leads the way, and the people working for him follow his lead."



Risk factor #5: Alcohol consumption

Though one glass of wine a day has been associated with heart-health, overdoing it can actually raise your risk of a heart attack or stroke. Drinking too much alcohol raises blood pressure, adds empty calories to your diet, can contribute to obesity, and makes losing weight more difficult. If you drink, limit yourself to one drink a day.

Risk factor #6: Blood pressure

High blood pressure is the single largest risk factor for stroke. Lower your blood pressure by decreasing salt and alcohol intake, exercising, quitting smoking, and managing stress. Talk to Dr. Shalaby about other ways to lower your blood pressure and, if needed, medications that may help.

Risk factor #7: Cholesterol

High blood cholesterol can be lowered with a nutritious diet that reduces your intake of saturated fat, trans fat, and dietary cholesterol. Visit Dr. Shalaby for a simple blood test to determine your cholesterol levels and to create an action plan to help you lower it.

Simple Screening Saves Lives

If you have any of these seven risk factors, a family member with cardiovascular disease, symptoms such as tightness in your chest or shortness of breath, or just choose to know the condition of your heart's health, call Dr. Shalaby's office for your health screening appointment and learn how you can manage and improve your heart health.

Screening packages start at just \$99 and save thousands of lives through simple, non-invasive, painless testing. Dr. Shalaby uses scientifically proven testing to diagnose multiple serious health conditions and detect potential disease threats. With early detection, you can reduce your risk immediately with lifestyle changes and, when called for, medication or medical intervention. Early screening can prevent serious medical conditions from developing and it prolongs lives.

Learn more about Healthy Screening Packages at www.healthystartmd.com.

Health Start MD Screening Saved My Life!

Eddie Espinoza, age 51, had a long list of family members with heart disease. His father and several uncles died in their 60s from heart attacks and heart failure. "I knew I should get my heart checked," Eddie says. "Over the years I gained weight, my blood pressure was high, and I noticed a sluggish feeling and shortness of breath going up and down the stairs."

Eddie says that he was under a lot of stress at home and at work. "My insurance changed and my primary care doctor was no longer in my network. I thought I'd have to find a new doctor. I just never found the time."

Then he received an offer from Dr. Shalaby's office for discounted health screening. "The screenings were so simple, and revealed that I had some issues Dr. Shalaby wanted to investigate further," Eddie says.

Dr. Shalaby learned that Eddie had several blockages that, left untreated, could have resulted in a heart attack. He promptly took Eddie to the hospital, where angiogram and stenting was done. Eddie is now enjoying a normal, active life with minimal risk of a heart attack.

"I thanked Dr. Shalaby for putting that cardiac screening program out there," Eddie says. "He and his staff were just what I needed. They were polite, professional, and made me feel really comfortable in their office. Dr. Shalaby was so confident, knowledgeable and easy going. He helped me stay calm, and reassured me that everything would be okay and I had nothing to worry about. I've already referred some of my family to see Dr. Shalaby to have their health screenings."

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE MANAGEMENT AND CARE

When your health requires cardiology care, consult with Dr. Shalaby. With his extensive educational background and specialized training in comprehensive cardiovascular care, Dr. Shalaby offers a wealth of knowledge and expertise to patients seeking exemplary heart and vascular health care in Southeast Houston.

Dr. Shalaby is board certified in Cardiovascular Disease, Nuclear Cardiology, and Cardiac Echocardiography. He is a member of most cardiology and scientific associations, and is a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology.

Dr. Shalaby is dedicated to his patients, a consummate professional, and is a staff cardiologist at the Texas Heart Institute, St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital, Clear Lake Regional Medical Center, Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital, CHRISTUS St. John Hospital, and Mainland Medical Center. ●

Learn how you can protect yourself and your loved ones from heart disease. Call Dr. Shalaby's office 281.956.7070, or schedule your visit online at www.dr.shalaby.com.