



September 13, 2010 – Grand Rapids, MI

## Men's Hearts

I had an email conversation with a reader this past week who asked how he could increase blood flow to his lungs so he could run faster and farther. He sent me some research on nutrients that are supposed to dilate blood vessels. Of course, I needed more information. What's his age? How long has he been running? When was his last stress test? There's a difference between someone who has been running for years and someone who has been running a few weeks.

I suggested that he get a stress test. He said that he had one about four years ago—did he have to do it again? The rest of the story is that he was over 60, had only been running since the summer after taking the winter off, and he had tightness in his chest sometimes. He went to the ER and they found nothing. This is a no brainer: he must have a stress test with either an echocardiogram or dye to see if there is restricted blood flow to his heart. He emailed me and told me he would. But it was an effort to convince him it was a good idea. That's just the way we men seem to think, and that's why we die before we should.

One more time, folks: man or woman, no matter what age, never ignore chest pain, discomfort, or inability to breathe deeply. When in doubt, check it out. Now.

What are you prepared to do today?

*Dr. Chet*

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