

# Achieve

A Newsletter  
for AvMed  
Members

## ▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE

### 5 foods that might interfere with your heart medicines

**F**ood matters when it comes to your health. It provides critical nutrients and calories to keep your body and brain working. But some foods can interact with certain medications and affect how well they work. Even healthy foods can cause delayed, decreased, or enhanced absorption of a medication, according to the American Heart Association (AHA).

Being aware of these interactions can help you make sure you stay safe and get all the benefits of your medications.

Let's talk about some common foods that may interact with your heart medications.



- 1. Grapefruit** can raise the level of some medicines in your blood, increasing the risk of negative side effects.
- 2. Dairy products** can reduce the absorption of certain medications.
- 3. Leafy greens** can make blood thinners less effective, raising the risk of blood clots.
- 4. Alcohol** can change the way the liver filters medication from the body.
- 5. Cured meats and cheeses and fermented foods** contain tyramine, an amino acid. Some drugs prevent the breakdown of tyramine and could lead to high blood pressure.  
  
Before taking a drug, the AHA recommends asking your doctor or pharmacist about potential interactions with foods, beverages, other medications, and other substances.



## Myths and facts about getting a stent

**L**ifestyle changes and medication are often the first steps to treat coronary artery disease. If that doesn't ease your symptoms, your next step may be angioplasty with a stent (also known as percutaneous coronary intervention, or PCI). This minimally invasive procedure has been around for years, but there are still misperceptions about it. We're here to separate fact from fiction.

### **MYTH GETTING A STENT WILL CURE MY HEART DISEASE.**

**Fact:** PCI may treat your

chest pain, but it doesn't fix what's causing your arteries to get blocked and harden in the first place.

### **MYTH I'LL FACE A LONG, TOUGH RECOVERY.**

**Fact:** "With most of these interventions, patients can go home the same day," says Hiram Bezerra, M.D., medical director of the

Interventional Cardiology Center at Tampa General Hospital in Florida.

### **MYTH THE CONTRAST DYE USED IN THE PROCEDURE CAN HARM MY KIDNEYS.**

**Fact:** That's a rare complication affecting just 2% of patients, according to the National Kidney Foundation. For most people, the benefits of PCI outweigh the risks.

### **MYTH ONCE I GET THIS PROCEDURE, I CAN SAY GOODBYE TO MY MEDICATIONS.**

**Fact:** You still need to take your medication. It's crucial for controlling your cholesterol and blood pressure, says Dr. Bezerra. "This will prevent the disease from progressing."

### **Case Manager Spotlight**

**Marybel Rios** has been a Disease Management Case Manager with AvMed for two years.

"My favorite thing about being a Case Manager is filling gaps in health care that make a big difference in members' lives."



**To reach us, please call 1-833-609-0735.**



## Healthy Eating Made Simple

Elizabeth Ferrer, R.D., AvMed's Registered Dietitian, shares her favorite tips for happier, healthier meals — without feeling deprived.

### Fresh vs. canned vs. frozen

**S**ome people may think “fresh is best” when it comes to fruits and vegetables. But frozen and canned foods can be nutritious options, too. Because they have a longer shelf life than fresh produce, they're ready to use when you need them. (Just be sure to take note of the expiration dates.)

Here, we're busting some common myths about the canned and frozen food aisles.

#### **MYTH FROZEN AND CANNED FOOD ISN'T AS HEALTHY AS FRESH FOOD.**

**Fact:** Some frozen and canned foods have more vitamins and minerals than their fresh-food counterparts. That's because freezing and canning locks in nutrition at peak freshness. You can



search fresh food nutrient content on the USDA website (<https://fdc.nal.usda.gov>) and compare to the nutrition facts on your canned or frozen food items. Focus on iron, potassium, vitamin D, and calcium.

#### **MYTH FROZEN AND CANNED FOOD DOESN'T TASTE AS GOOD.**

**Fact:** Certain canned and frozen foods can lose flavor and texture. But they're

perfect for soups, stews, and more. Take canned chickpeas, for example. They aren't designed to be eaten by the handful. But when you mash them up with olive oil, tahini, and lemon juice, you've got a tasty hummus.

#### **MYTH ALL FROZEN AND CANNED FOODS ARE ULTRA-PROCESSED.**

**Fact:** Some canned and frozen foods contain added sodium, sugar, and saturated fat. You can shop smarter by reading the labels. Look for options that have fewer than five ingredients. Choose fruit that's canned in water or its own juice instead of syrup. Look for low- or no-sodium versions. Rinsing canned food before eating it is an easy way to reduce sodium.

#### **Unencrypted email makes it easier to communicate with your case manager!**

To opt in, scan the QR code with your phone. Log in or register to the member portal and select “Set My Preferences.”



## The right care at the right time

When you need quick care, these AvMed services will be on standby.

### Access your account 24/7

Register or log in at [AvMed.org](https://www.avmed.org).

### Call Member Engagement Center

1-800-782-8633 (TTY/TDD: 711)

Hours: 7 days a week, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

#### Nurse On Call

**1-888-866-5432**  
Speak to a registered nurse at any time of day or night about a non-life-threatening illness or injury.

#### MDLive Virtual Visits

**1-800-400-MDLIVE** or **MDLive.com/AvMed**  
Speak with a licensed doctor virtually or by phone from your own home 24/7/365 for non-emergency symptoms. Prescriptions will be sent to your local pharmacy.

#### Dispatch Health

**786-791-8697** or **DispatchHealth.com**  
Licensed medical professionals come to you ready to treat urgent issues such as cuts and infections. Call 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily to determine if they are available in your area.

#### Urgent Care Center

If you think you have bronchitis, an infection, an allergic reaction, or need wound care, visit an urgent care center if your physician is unavailable. To find an in-network care center, go to **AvMed.org**.

#### Emergency Department

If you suspect you are having a heart attack or stroke, or you have uncontrollable bleeding, don't wait: Call **911** or go to the emergency room.