

**Points to  
Remember**

Preventive Health is the key.

Respect your symptoms.

Take your medications as  
prescribed.

Stop smoking and drinking  
excessive alcohol.

Eat low salt and low fat foods.

Exercise.

**The Economy and Your Health**

Americans nationwide are jeopardizing their own health as the recession continues. As more jobs are lost, more Americans are finding themselves without health insurance. Across all sectors of medical practices, physicians are seeing sicker patients in urgent care situations. Many of these patients either cancelled their regular check ups or skipped taking their medications in order to save money. The cost of treating patients in the hospital or under emergent situations is far greater than the cost of preventive care. Here are a few reminders about how to stay healthy in this troubled economy.

- COBRA stands for Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985. In effect, COBRA acts as your health insurance in case you lose your job. This health insurance remains in effect for at least 18 months after your job is terminated. If you lose your job, ask your human resources department about COBRA.
- Respect your symptoms. Do not wait until your condition deteriorates before you see a doctor. The cost of an emergency room visit or a hospitalization is far greater than an office visit.
- Take your prescribed medications as directed. A few weeks ago, one of my patients whose blood pressure had been well-controlled for several months, came to my office with severe dizziness and a significantly elevated blood pressure. She admitted to taking her medicines every other day, for the past month, instead of twice daily, as prescribed, in order to stretch out her medicine supply. She subsequently had to be admitted to the hospital with a stroke. Do not change or stop your medicines without discussing this with your physician. Talk to your physician about different or generic drugs to reduce the cost of your medicines.
- Remember to live a heart, healthy life. Preventive health is the key. Stop smoking and drinking excessive alcohol. Exercise. Eat a low salt, low fat diet.

**Contact Us**

Cardiology of Virginia

804-560-8782

[www.cardiovirginia.com](http://www.cardiovirginia.com)

For more information about preventive health, visit:  
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs172/en/index.html>