

Heart TALK

Heart-healthy and Stroke-free Living with Dr. Amy L. Doneen, DNP, ARNP

May 2023

Thoughts from Dr. Amy



An exciting update on our book: Healthy Heart, Healthy Brain

Our book, *Healthy Heart, Healthy Brain: The Personalized Path to Protect Your Memory, Prevent Heart Attacks, and Strokes, and Avoid Chronic Illness* received the **2023 Nautilus Book Award**.

For more than 24 years, [Nautilus Book Awards](#) has been honoring "Better Books for a Better World," shining light on a diverse range of visionary books that endeavor to co-create a more resilient, positive future.

Nautilus recognizes four main values: Conscious Living & Sustainability, Health & Wellness, Spiritual Growth, and Social Change & Social Justice. *Healthy Heart, Healthy Brain* was given the gold award in the Health & Wellness Category. This category celebrates "empowerment, learning and exploring programs that restore and sustain a high level of individual, family and group wellness and vitality."

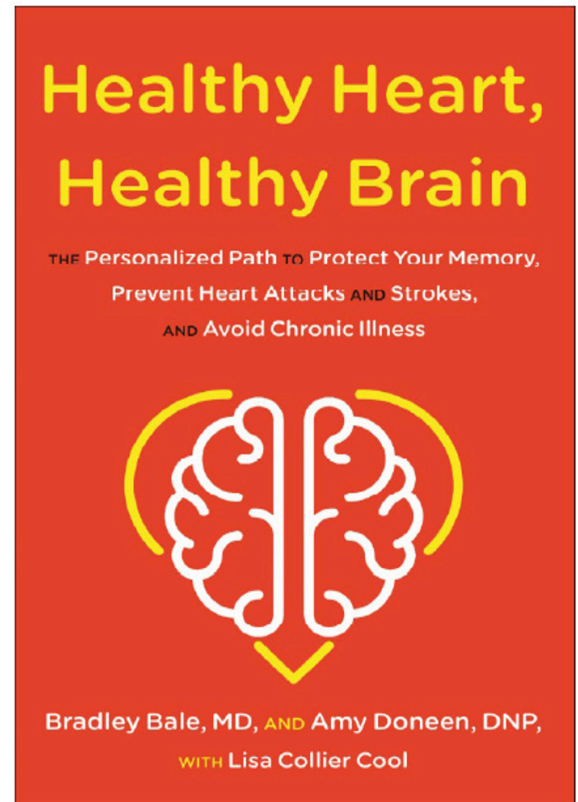
ABOUT HEALTHY HEART, HEALTHY BRAIN

Did you know that every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. suffers a heart attack or stroke, and every 65 seconds someone develops dementia? The culprit is cardiovascular disease — and rates are soaring in younger, seemingly healthy people. Busting every myth we have about cardiovascular health,

including that women are less likely to suffer from heart attacks and strokes, world-renowned cardiovascular specialists Bradley Bale, MD, and Amy Doneen, DNP, have pioneered a lifesaving method

to prevent these devastating events — and reverse the disease that causes them.

The BaleDoneen Method transcends the medical silos of cardiology, neurology, endocrinology, and others with a holistic approach designed to protect and optimize the health of the heart, brain, and other vital organs, as well as the blood vessels that supply them. With laser-sharp focus, Bale and Doneen provide the latest research on how your oral health is contributing to the decline of your heart. Captivating and revolutionary, *Healthy Heart, Healthy Brain* is a unique and comprehensive program to prevent chronic diseases and memory loss in people of all ages regardless of their body type, medical history, or genes.



Offering a roadmap to lifelong arterial wellness, it includes:

- Precision medical methods to prevent diseases of aging.
- The best and worst supplements and foods for heart health
- Ten lifestyle changes that lower dementia risk by 35 percent
- Information about genes that raise cardiovascular risk as much as smoking
- The top ten heart attack prevention tips for women

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Obstructive Sleep Apnea:

Obnoxious Sleep Disorder or Dangerous Risk Factor for Cardiovascular Disease?



Obstructive Sleep Apnea, or OSA, is a common sleep disorder that affects millions of people worldwide. It occurs when the muscles at the back of the throat fail to keep the airway open during sleep, causing repeated pauses in breathing that result in drops in blood oxygen levels. OSA can lead to daytime fatigue, reduced productivity and higher risk of accidents. However, the consequences of OSA extend far beyond these seemingly annoying immediate effects, and research has shown that untreated OSA can have serious long-term health implications.

One of the most glaring and concerning connections is between untreated sleep apnea and insulin resistance or Type 2 Diabetes (T2DM). Studies have found that individuals with OSA are at a higher risk for developing Type 2 Diabetes, and that those who already have insulin resistance or Diabetes are more likely to have uncontrolled blood sugar levels if they have a co-morbidity of OSA. The repeated drops in oxygen levels overnight, as well as sleep disruption, leads to worsening insulin resistance, which we know is the driver of Type 2 Diabetes development.

Another concerning link exists between untreated OSA and cardiovascular disease. Sleep Apnea has been shown to increase risk of hypertension, heart rate variability, atherosclerosis and stroke. The repeated surges of adrenaline and other stress hormones during interrupted sleep due to sleep apnea places strain on the cardiovascular system and increases inflammation and oxidative stress (OS), leading to the development of atherosclerotic plaque buildup in the arteries. This relationship is highlighted

even further by demonstration of reduced inflammatory markers in patients with diagnosed sleep apnea after treatment with an oral appliance.

Many consider obesity to be a risk factor for OSA, but in fact, the link between sleep apnea and obesity is bidirectional, with OSA also contributing to weight gain. While excess weight can lead to increased fat deposits around the airway, the connection between OSA and insulin resistance also contributes to weight gain and weight that is challenging to lose.

Obstructive sleep apnea is also closely linked to the common condition hypertension (or high blood pressure), which itself is another major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. The repeated drops in oxygen levels due to pauses in breathing can lead to repeated surges in blood pressure, causing further oxidative stress and risk for atherosclerotic disease.

In looking at the connections between OSA and insulin resistance, Type 2 Diabetes, cardiovascular disease and hypertension, it is clear that OSA represents a major root cause for arterial disease.

Fortunately, OSA is treatable, and effective management can have a significant impact on reducing the risk of these known drivers of cardiovascular disease. Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (or CPAP) therapy is generally the most common treatment for OSA, but in many cases individuals can work with their dental team to fashion an oral appliance that may be equally as effective.

Of note, this article has focused on the causes and effects of Obstructive Sleep Apnea, but this is not the only type of sleep apnea. Central Sleep Apnea (CSA) is a distinct disease process that can co-occur with OSA or present on its own. While OSA is caused by a physical obstruction of airflow during sleep, CSA is a more heterogeneous condition, often resulting from underlying disease processes or even use of medications (such as opioids) that decrease respiratory drive. CSA requires a sleep study for diagnosis as well, but treatment modalities may be different based on etiology.

If you, or someone you love, have symptoms of OSA, including pauses in breathing during sleep, loud snoring, daytime fatigue or drowsiness, it is vital that you seek medical care to be tested for OSA and determine an optimal treatment regimen. While the immediate effects of OSA can be obnoxious, the long-term effects can have a serious and negative impact on cardiovascular health. Stay healthy, and sleep well my friends!



We get asked often about smoothies. Do we recommend them? Is protein powder ok? What brand or type is best? What else should go in a healthy smoothie? Does it HAVE to contain kale?

For this month's newsletter, we thought it might be helpful to dig into the basics of building a **BALANCED** smoothie: one that will keep you full, keep your blood sugar from spiking and provide your amazing body with the nutrients it needs.

For starters, we all know smoothies can be a total sugar bomb. Try a smoothie from a popular smoothie or health food joint and you may end up with 2 cups of fruit mixed with sweetened yogurt and orange juice. While there is nothing inherently bad about fruit, this smoothie is lacking protein and healthy fat, and may or may not have a significant amount of fiber. While delicious, this smoothie will likely send blood sugars skyrocketing and leave you hungry and crashing again in an hour or two.

A note on fresh fruit: Try to limit the fruit content in your smoothie to 1/3 cup or less, while veggies are limitless!

Blueberry Muffin Protein Smoothie

Serves 1

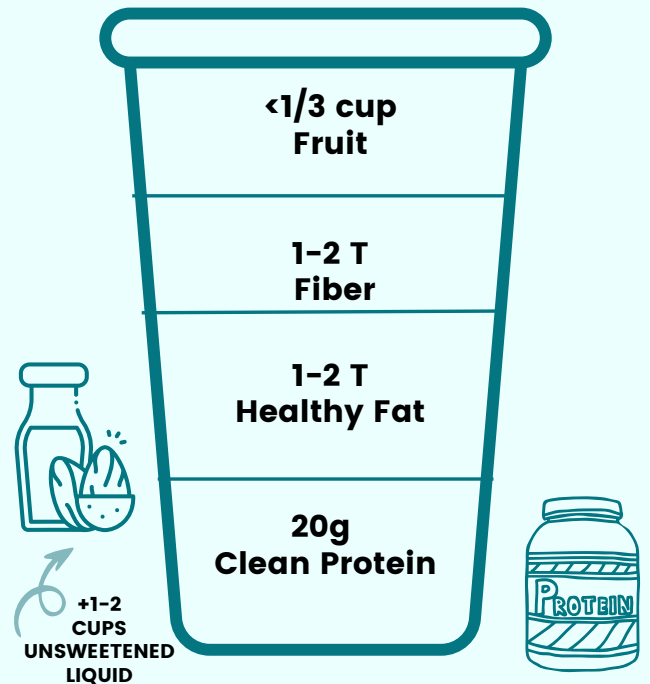
Ingredients






- 1 serving vanilla protein powder (see above for recommendations)
- 2 tbsp. any nut butter
- 2 tbsp. chia seeds
- ¼ cup frozen blueberries
- 1-2 cups almond milk (start with 1 and add more to get smoothie to desired consistency)

Directions

Add all ingredients to high-powered blender and blend well to combine! Enjoy!

Building A Balanced Smoothie



HEALTHY FAT	FIBER	FRUIT
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yogurt • Avocado • Coconut Milk • Chia Seeds • Hemp Seeds • Nut Butter 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kale • Spinach • Chia Seeds • Nuts • Chard • Berries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to stick with berries: Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, etc. 

A note on protein powders:

Aim for a simple formulation with ingredient lists you understand, no or very little added sugar. Monkfruit or stevia are preferred sweeteners. Aim for 20-30g of protein/serving.

Be Well By Kelly and Vega Protein are reputable brands