

Seven minutes online could save your life

St. Luke's HEARTaware may be a lifesaver. Just ask Becky Quinby, 39, who took the seven-minute, online test last fall, and already is making heart healthy changes to her lifestyle.

"A friend sent me the link to the heart risk assessment, and I clicked on it right away," she said.

With her results showing an expected high risk status for heart disease, it proved to be a springboard for action.

"My mother died in 1995 of a heart attack at the age of 57, and my father died at the age of 68 due to complications from diabetes that led to heart failure," said

lifestyle to help reduce her risk for heart disease," said Stoll. "But what stood out for me about Becky is that she was very, very motivated."

Indeed. After starting an exercise program at her local 'Y' last October, she's already lost 20 pounds and plans to keep going.

"Derrick was super nice," said Quinby, who had her blood pressure checked, as well as blood drawn to check her cholesterol. "Everyone was so pleasant and thoughtful. I told Derrick that I had already started an exercise program to take off weight so he gave me some ideas about good eating habits and how to stay on track exercising."

levels, blood sugar and includes a personal consultation with a St. Luke's heart care expert.

Among risk factors for heart disease are high blood pressure, smoking, high cholesterol, diabetes, being overweight, family history and physical inactivity.

"This is a very important service that St. Luke's is providing," said Richard Kettlekamp, DO, a cardiologist with Cardiologists, P.C. "This is something people can do for themselves, without visiting a doctor or taking an expensive test. We all know early detection leads to prevention of heart disease and heart attacks – so HEARTaware gives patients a way to be proactive about their health by becoming aware of their own risk factors."

As for Quinby she couldn't be more proactive about becoming HEARTaware.

"For me, it's not about my appearance," she said. "It all goes back to taking care of my heart, taking care of my health. The St. Luke's program is very good about getting you to a starting point where you know your risk factors, and then can develop a game plan. The staff is so nice, so discrete. They help you come to your own conclusions. And the program is free. So it's an excellent, excellent tool."

According to the HEARTaware staff, the goal of the program is to educate, increase awareness and give people useful guidelines so they can make changes in their lives.

My mom was like that. She took care of everybody else, but never took time to take care of herself ... until it was too late. She waited too long."

HEARTaware takes about seven minutes to complete and is easy to print off and give to your family doctor.

"All they have to do is go online and take the assessment," said Quinby.

■ To access the HEARTaware health risk assessment, go to stlukesheartaware.com, or call 319/369-8909 to request an assessment form.

"This doesn't take the place of their doctor," said Julie Peterson, St. Luke's Cardiac Rehab manager. "We want to raise people's awareness so that, with the help of their doctor, they can be more proactive in preventing and reducing their risk for heart disease."

"Sometimes we don't take time to do things for ourselves," said Quinby. "I know because my life is really busy too. Before I took the assessment, everything else came first. But I think it's really important people take care of themselves."



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Richard Kettlekamp, DO, MHA
medical director, St. Luke's Cardiac Cath Lab
Interventional and invasive cardiologist, Cardiologists, P.C.

Quinby. "And even though I quit smoking in 2002, I had gained weight and knew I had to do something about it."

She encouraged her husband to take the same test, and after discovering his tendency for high cholesterol, the two made a follow-up appointment with Derrick Stoll, St. Luke's Cardiac Rehab specialist.

Personal consultation

"We went over her risk factors and identified some things she could change in her

Quinby's story is not unlike many of the 3,000 people from the Cedar Rapids area who have clicked on the HEARTaware Website since it went live in 2007 to take the simple seven minute assessment that tells them if they are at risk for heart disease.

Free screening

If the assessment finds they are at an increased risk, a St. Luke's clinician will contact them to set up a free screening that checks blood pressure, cholesterol



Quinby worked exercise into her routine after taking a free online health screening.