



## Employee Spotlight



Kathleen K., CCS,

Twenty-five years ago I wouldn't have guessed that I'd be living in a New Mexican high desert community (and working as a remote coder for On Assignment HIM). I spent my youth back east in Patriot/Red Sox land, living through the four seasons and thoroughly enjoying the Atlantic Ocean. Now, I've discovered New Mexico truly is the Land of Enchantment, showcasing spectacular terrain and sunsets.

Early on I wanted to be in the military, and that's where I saw the world with combined active/reserve service of twenty-one-plus years, retiring as a United States Navy Chief Hospital Corpsman.

I worked as an LPN for a number of years, and grew to realize I needed continued growth and change. Health Information Management piqued my interest, so I worked in a Medical Records Department in long-term care. This was my *(Continued on page 2)*

## February is American Heart Month: Are You Doing Enough?

Published by: CBS News

February is American Heart Month and that means it's a good moment to think about a disease that kills more than 600,000 Americans each year. Heart disease is the leading killer amongst both men and women.

But there's lots we can do to stay heart healthy. According to the CDC, making these healthy lifestyle choices can help:

- Choose lean meats and poultry without skin and prepare them without added saturated and trans fat.
- Select fat-free, 1 percent fat, and low-fat dairy products.
- Cut back on foods containing partially hydrogenated vegetable oils to reduce trans fat in your diet.
- Cut back on foods high in dietary cholesterol. Aim to eat less than 300 mg of cholesterol each day.
- Cut back on beverages and foods with added sugars.
- Select and purchase foods lower in salt/sodium.

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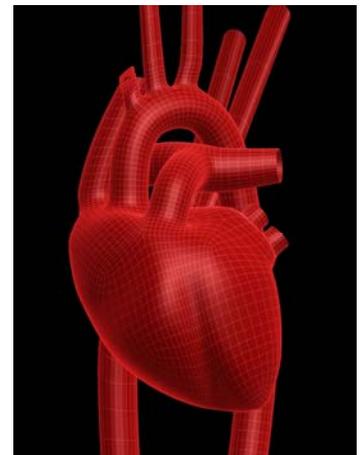
## Ask The Expert

### Suffering from a Broken Heart?

Poets write about it, musicians sing about it, but the literal heart can actually be broken. The human heart, when healthy, should do the job of 'pumping' blood throughout the body. However, there are two distinct circulation systems—the pulmonary and systemic circulatory systems—controlled by two distinct pumps in the heart—the ventricles. The right ventricle sends blood a short distance to the lungs for oxygen loading and carbon dioxide unloading. The left ventricle does the massive job of sending blood throughout the body for oxygen unloading and carbon dioxide loading.

Congestive heart failure results from a weakness of that pumping power resulting in increased pressure to the heart. To function at peak performance, the muscles of the ventricle have to (1) relax sufficiently to allow optimal blood amounts into the chamber—*diastolic heart failure* results if the ventricle walls become thickened or stiff and the heart cannot pump enough oxygen and nutrients to meet the body's needs, and (2) contract with enough force to pump blood out of the heart—*systolic heart failure* results if the ventricle walls are weak. The result? Fluid builds up in the arms, legs, lungs, other organs, hence the 'congestive' nature of the heart failure.

*(Continued on page 2)*





## Ask The Expert *(Continued from page 1)*

### Systolic Heart Failure

#### Common symptoms:

- Ejection fraction less than 40%
- Physician documents left heart failure
- Shortness of breath, fatigue, diaphoresis, confusion, and pulmonary edema

#### Common Associated Medical Conditions:

- Arrhythmias
- CAD
- Dilated cardiomyopathy
- Hypertension
- Previous Myocardial Infarction (MI)
- Usually younger patients

### Diastolic Heart Failure

#### Common Symptoms:

- Ejection fraction is preserved and is  $\geq 50\%$
- Physician documents diastolic dysfunction
- Patient has pulmonary hypertension
- JVD, peripheral edema, anasarca, ascites, and hepatomegaly
- Stiff, thick heart muscle unable to relax and fill

#### Common Associated Medical Conditions:

- Alcoholic cardiomyopathy or Alcoholism
- COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)
- Hypertension (especially uncontrolled)
- Pulmonary hypertension
- Renal Disease
- Elderly

### ICD-10-CM Coding

Coding guidelines for congestive heart failure in ICD-10 will not vary from the current ones that we've come to know so well. Let's not forget to code pleural effusion when this condition requires interventional treatment beyond medicine, such as drainage. There's a new code to use for patients with this specific type of pleural effusion: J91.8 Pleural effusion in other conditions classified elsewhere.

### Employee Spotlight *(Continued from page 1)*

introduction to the ICD-9-CM, transcription, chart audits, and Joint Commission from a different perspective. Great experience, but I needed more. I was fortunate to move into acute care and have never looked back. Education has always been a priority. I was able to take classes while on active duty, and continued my efforts over the years to earn a B.S. degree.

Ok, full circle back to the high desert. A few weeks ago we had a cold night. My husband had opened the door to go outside and step into his shop for something. Upon opening the door, the unmistakable meow of a cold and hungry kitten broke the silence. Now we are a family of three. "Kitten" is a seven-month-old American Shorthair with more than her fair share of attention-seeking behavior. I was considering a name change to "keyboard," thankfully she has found other amusement.

## Employee Of The Month



Lisa Pelegrin

Hello! My name is Lisa Pelegrin and I'm honored to be in this month's newsletter. I started working with On Assignment HIM in May 2013 and I'm excited to be working with a fantastic organization. I was born and raised in Fairfax, Virginia, a county about 20 minutes west of Washington DC.

In 2007, I graduated from James Madison University with a BA in Health Communication. After graduating, I started a job with a national car rental company and I ended up working there for five years. During that time, I felt the need to do something more significant, so I joined the Army National Guard. Being a citizen soldier has its rewards and challenges, but it's an experience I'm grateful for. I served as a Blackhawk mechanic with one of the last battalions in Iraq in 2011.

In 2012, my better half and I decided that we needed a change of pace and scene. We decided to move to California and after visiting San Diego, we knew that we found our new home. We've been here for almost a year now and I've never regretted our decision to move. I spend as much time as I can outdoors playing with the dog, playing beach volleyball, or working out to get ready for my next Army physical fitness test.



## Main Article *(Continued from page 1)*

- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. That means no more than one drink per day if you're a woman and two drinks per day if you're a man.
- Keep an eye on your portion sizes.

It's also important to know the signs of an impending heart attack, because they can start slowly and symptoms may seem mild. According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, these are the signs that may mean a heart attack is in progress:

- Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- Shortness of breath. May occur with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or light-headedness.

For more information, check out the CDC and the American Heart Association.

Read more:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/february-is-american-heart-month-are-you-doing-enough/>

## Who Knows?

What is the 'translucent' layer of dead skin cells of the epidermis?

January 2013 WHO KNOWS?  
And the winner is...

**Lisa B!**

Answer: Leaky Gut

Send your answers to:

[kristin.walsh@onassignment.com](mailto:kristin.walsh@onassignment.com)

All correct answers will be put into a raffle for a chance to win a \$25 gift card from On Assignment HIM!

