

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Stents
- Healthy Holidays
- Sweet Potato Casserole
- Pradaxa Reversal

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## Why Can't a Stent be Placed?

Why can't a stent be placed? This question comes up very often so it is worth discussing. This question is surrounding heart disease or coronary artery disease (CAD). CAD is the leading cause of death in men and women in the United States. Treatment of CAD is multifaceted. Sometimes a stent needs to be placed to open up an artery. In many cases, the stent restores blood flow to that artery and to that part of the heart and life is good. However, sometimes a stent cannot or should not be placed. This occurs for various reasons. First, a stent should only be placed for a "significant" blockage which is a stenosis greater than 70



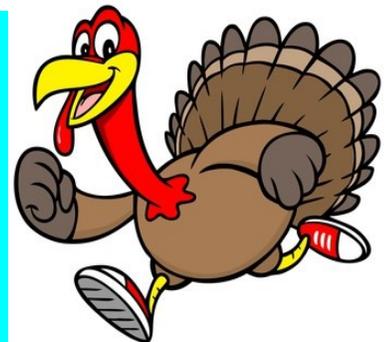
percent for most arteries. The second reason for not placing a stent would be other health problems that make the procedure too risky. This could be kidney failure, bleeding disorder, or cancer to name a few. A third reason would be medical noncompliance. Once a stent is placed, especially a drug eluting stent, aspirin and an antiplatelet drug such as Plavix, Effient, or Brilinta must be given in most cases for 12 months. Not taking the

medication can cause the stent close which will cause a heart attack. A fourth reason for not placing a stent would be if the diameter of the artery is too small. Sometimes, arteries are so small that a stent cannot even fit. The fifth reason would be if placing a stent would hurt another artery. Sometimes a blockage is right at the bend or crook of another artery and placing a stent would possible block off the other artery. If the other artery is a bigger artery, this could make things worse. Another reason would be if multiple arteries are blocked and open heart surgery is needed. The last reason for not placing a stent would be if an artery is already closed or occluded. So now what? Luckily, as stated before, CAD treatment is multifaceted. If a stent cannot be placed, it is not the end of the world. (3,4,5,6,7). To be continued...page 3.

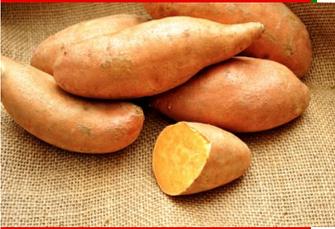
### Tip of the Month

#### Keeping the Weight off during the Holidays:

1. Do not snack or graze at parties. If you do, eat fruits or vegetables. Make your plate and sit down and eat. The other option is to eat before you go to a party.
2. Exercise. The current recommendation is 150 minutes of aerobic exercise per week.
3. Get a good night sleep.
4. Limit the alcohol intake.
5. If you make desserts or sweets, give them away.
6. Drink plenty of water, especially before you eat.
7. Help others by finding healthy recipes to make for gatherings.



# Honey Covered Sweet Potatoes



Recipe from  
"Breaking the Salt  
Habit" by Erik  
Williams.

## Ingredients:

-2 lbs Sweet Potatoes (cut into  
1\2 inch cubes)  
-1\4 cup Olive Oil  
-1\4 cup Honey  
1\2 tsp. Cinnamon

## Directions:

-Spread out sweet potatoes in a  
small casserole dish.  
  
-In a small bowl, combine the  
rest of the ingredients.  
  
-Mix well.  
  
-Pour over sweet potatoes.  
  
-Bake for 1 hour, stirring every  
15 minutes.

## Nutrition Info

Yields 5 servings  
1 Serving = 6 oz.  
  
Calories: 230  
Total Fat: 11 g  
Sat Fat: 2g  
Cholesterol: 0 mg  
Potassium: 169 mg  
Carbohydrates: 33 g  
Protein: 21 g  
Fiber: 3g  
Sugar: 14 g  
Sodium: 11 mg

**Quote of the Month:** "I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions." Stephen Covey

## Did you Know?

Did you know that on October 16, 2015, the FDA approved Praxbind (idarucizumab), which is the reversal agent for the blood thinner Pradaxa (dabigatran). This is the first reversal agent of its kind. Pradaxa came to the market in 2010 as the first novel anticoagulant since Coumadin (warfarin). Since then, there are three other ones on the market: Xarelto, Eliquis, and Sayvasa. However, Praxbind will only work to reverse the drug Pradaxa. It is approved for individuals who are taking Pradaxa who need emergent surgeries or who have life threatening bleeding. It must be given in an intravenous (IV) form so it should be administered in a hospital setting. (1,2).

The dose of Praxbind is 5 grams. It binds to the molecule of Pradaxa, making it inactive. This process happens within minutes after the drug is administered. The most common side effect reported was a headache. While the exact cost of Praxbind could not be found for the purpose of this article, it is not going to be cheap. It will be reserved for individuals who truly need a reversal and who are in a life threatening situation. It will not be given for the routine nosebleed. In individuals who have received Praxbind, it will be important for them to resume their blood thinner (Pradaxa or another agent if it is changed) when it is medically safe to do so in order to reduce the risk of blood clot and stroke. (1,2).



The other treatments for CAD are just as important and are very effective. Smoking cessation is vital. Based on the current guidelines, most individuals should keep their blood pressures less than 140/90 mmHg. However, there are certain situations where the blood pressure may need to be lower or higher than this goal. Maintaining a healthy weight is very important as well. The body mass index or BMI needs to be between 18.5-24.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>. The cholesterol guidelines have changed and basically anybody who has heart disease should be on a statin drug regardless of the cholesterol level. Once exercise clearance is obtained, the goal to work towards is 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise a week. An easy way to remember that is 30 minutes of walking or bike riding 5 days a week. Cardiac rehab is a great way to get started and build confidence with exercise. If diabetes is present, keeping the blood glucose levels down is vital in keeping arteries healthy. The goal is to have the HbA1c less than 7 percent.



In order to obtain these goals, especially with blood pressure and diabetes, medications may be needed. Aside from those, other medications may be needed to further treat CAD. These drugs may include aspirin along with other antiplatelet drugs (Plavix, Effient, Brilinta). The statin drugs have already been discussed and should be used unless there is a contraindication. Beta blockers are very helpful especially in the setting of a heart attack and/ or heart failure. These drugs may include metoprolol and carvedilol to name a few. ACE Inhibitors are very important after big heart attacks and when there is heart failure. These drugs may include lisinopril, ramipril, and enalapril to name a few. As a whole, these medications help reduce the risk of death and future cardiac events. They are very important. (3,4,5,6,7).

So, even if a stent cannot be placed, it doesn't mean the disease is not being treated. Each of these measures goes a long way in keeping that heart healthy!