



# Recommended Practices for Reducing Cardiac Disease and Cardiac Events for Firefighters

Sudden Cardiac Events are responsible for approximately 50% of annual Line of Duty Deaths among fire fighters. The median age of a first heart attack in the general population is 66 years of age, whereas this occurs at 49 years of age for fire fighters. Clearly, as a subset of the general population, fire fighters are experiencing a greater incidence of cardiac complications that increase mortality and morbidity. It is critically important that FFs utilize the following recommendations to reduce these risks.

- 1. Participate in an annual fire department medical exam and visit your PCP for your yearly Wellness Exam 6 months later utilizing the *4 STEP PROCESS and FF Wellness Exam Reference Sheets***
- 2. Monitor and Control your Cholesterol and Fasting Glucose to ensure they stay in the healthy range**
- 3. Participate in a regular Fitness Program that focuses on healthy weight management**
- 4. Limit your Alcohol intake, Energy Drink consumption, and abstain from use of any form of tobacco**
- 5. Focus your nutrition to include natural whole foods and away from processed carbohydrates and sugar**
- 6. Routinely monitor your blood pressure for signs of hypertension**
- 7. Hydrate before and throughout your shift**
- 8. Ensure you have had the appropriate amount of sleep and rest**
- 9. Know your limitations, both mentally and physically (On and Off Duty), and ask for help early, if needed. Over Exhaustion and Stress are 2 key factors in FF LODDs**
- 10. Make rehab a priority during the shift to decrease your risk of dehydration and heat stress**