**Title:** Study: Unless Diets Change, Heart Disease Will Increase

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A cross-sectional study of adult Grenadians revealed that there is a great shift in unhealthy food choices being preferred by our younger generation. The study published in 2012 entitled, *An Epidemiologic Transition of Cardiovascular Disease Risk in Carriacou and Petite Martinique, Grenada: The Grenada Heart Project, 2005-2007*, also reported that unless there is a change in diet, the number of locals that will develop cardiovascular disease (CVD) will increase.

The study concluded that, “A dramatic increase in CVD in the next 10 to 20 years is expected, particularly given the dietary patterns among younger Grenadians, who are consuming less fish and more red meat, poultry, fried meats, and other fried foods than their older counterparts. Additionally, these dietary patterns are more pronounced among women than among men.”

Unhealthy diets, lack of physical activity, tobacco use and harmful use of alcohol are cited by the World Health Organization sites as causes of heart disease. “Behavioural risk factors are responsible for about 80% of coronary heart disease and cerebrovascular disease,” the organization’s website states.

The St. George’s Adult Cardiology Clinic located in Grand Anse, St. George’s, continues to treat patients with heart complaints and related diseases. It is also the base location for Grenada’s Visiting Cardiology Program. Through a referral only policy, the cardiology clinic offers its services - free of charge. Sophisticated heart tests and screenings that are available to Grenadians through the program, include but not limited to: angiography, electrocardiogram, transthoracic echocardiography and pacemaking interrogation. Patients may be referred to the clinic by their doctor when they exhibit persistent symptoms that are consistent with cardiac distress such as: chest pain often described as heavy, pressing or sometimes tight. “The most common symptom for any referral through a cardiologist would be chest pain. Chest pain of cardiac nature usually is one that is described as heavy or pressing or sometimes tight,” said Dr. Johansen A. Sylvester, B.Sc. MD – Director and Coordinator of St. George’s University’s Visiting Cardiology Program. He added, “There may be some other symptoms, some form of leg swelling or shortness of breath at rest or shortness of breath at minimal exertion that warrants further investigation.”

Although the cardiology clinic is available in Grenada, it must be emphasized that anyone showing signs or symptoms of a heart attack should seek immediate medical assistance by going to the nearest medical facility or hospital for treatment. The five major symptoms of a heart attack are: pain or discomfort in the jaw, neck, or back; feeling weak, light-headed, or faint; chest pain or discomfort; pain or discomfort in arms or shoulder and/or shortness of breath.