

## Surprising Ways That You May be Hurting Your Heart

Heart attacks and strokes are the two most prevalent types of cardiovascular disease (CVD) that kill more than 800,000 Americans every year. Even if your lifestyle is healthy—you eat right and exercise—you may be at risk for heart disease if you make one or more of these all-too-common (but surprising) mistakes.

**You Don't Floss.** *WebMD* says that “[p]eople with gum disease are more likely to have heart disease, too. The connection isn't clear, but some experts think bacteria from your gums may move into your bloodstream, leading to inflammation of the blood vessels and other heart problems. See your dentist every six months for checkups. Make an appointment right away if you spot

redness or soreness on your gums or changes in your teeth.”

**You Retreat into Your Shell.** People with robust connections to family, friends, and society in general are not only more likely to live longer and avoid a CVD, but enjoy better health throughout their lives. “It's no secret that on some days, other human beings can seem annoying, irritating, and just plain difficult to get along with...but you should still reach out to others and keep in touch whenever you can,” according to *health.com*. *WebMD* suggest that “if you're not near family or close friends, get connected by helping someone in need, or adopt a dog or cat. Volunteers and dog owners might enjoy better heart health and live longer, too.”

**You Get Stuck in Traffic.** Research shows a clear link to spending time—even as little as one hour a day—in bumper-to-bumper traffic to an increased chance of having a heart attack. The stress of heavy traffic almost certainly contributes to damaging your heart, but high noise levels like that on a freeway also may be a factor, medical experts say.

**You Drink Diet Sodas.** We think that a diet drink is healthier than the high octane sugared version. It is healthier but not without its own risks. Studies cited by *AARP Magazine* “found that people who drank diet sodas daily had a 36 percent greater risk of developing metabolic syndrome [a cluster of



Habitual coffee drinking has been linked to a lower risk of coronary heart disease in women, but adding cream or sugar negates the positive effects.

conditions that increase your risk of heart disease, and stroke] and a 67 percent greater risk of diabetes. Both of these conditions significantly raise the odds of having a stroke or heart attack.” If you want bubbles in your beverage try sparkling water with a wedge of lemon or lime.

**You Miss Your Flu Shot.** Understandably we have all been focused on the COVID-19 vaccine over the past several months. While it may be easy to overlook your annual flu shot, you shouldn't forget it. Medical experts say that if you get the flu you are six times more likely to suffer a heart attack or other cardiovascular disease event.

**You Add Cream or Sugar to Your Coffee.** Recent medical studies have brought good news to coffee drinkers. The American Heart Association says that “habitual coffee drinking has been linked to a lower risk of coronary heart disease in women.” However, that only



## Surprising Ways That You May be Hurting Your Heart

### IN THIS *Issue*

- 1 Surprising Ways That You May be Hurting Your Heart
- 2 Free Videos Offer Insider Advice
- 2 Comfort Food: Chocolate Pops
- 3 Unlocking the Mysteries of TDIU
- 3 Game Zone: Brain Teaser

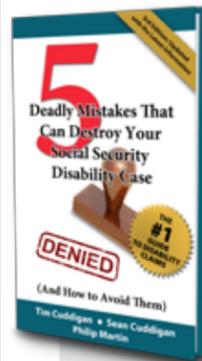
Your Heart ...cont.

applies to black coffee. Adding cream or sugar negates the positive effects of coffee. "That warning goes double for even fancier coffee drinks [where] [v]ery quickly, calories can add up, and weight gain will create negative effects on cardiac risk."

A few simple tweaks to your everyday habits could pay big dividends with a healthier heart, but lifestyle changes are not easy nor do they happen quickly. "In fact, according to a study that appeared in the *British Journal of General Practice* in 2012, it takes about 66 days for a practiced behavior to become a habit," reports *Everydayhealth.com*. This website advises, "practice patience and follow these steps to make your heart-healthy changes stick:

- **Write out a list of the changes you want to make.** Putting goals down on paper makes them tangible and creates a guide you can follow. Just be sure you're as realistic and specific as possible.
- **Break down your goals into manageable milestones.** Don't try to make all the changes at once.
- **Gradually add new changes.** When a change starts to become second nature, add another goal. Keep doing this until you reach the end of your list."

The information contained in this article is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, it is provided for informational purposes only.



**"5 Deadly Mistakes That Can Destroy Your Social Security Disability Case" is the #1 guide to improving the odds of winning a disability case.**

For a FREE copy for you or someone you care about call Cuddigan Law at 402.933.5318 or email us at [lawteam@cuddiganlaw.com](mailto:lawteam@cuddiganlaw.com)

## Free Videos Offer Insider Advice for Winning Social Security and VA Disability

Winning your rightfully earned benefits for Social Security and VA disability can be a complex and confusing process. But there is expert help for discovering the secrets of these disability programs—the Cuddigan Law video library. Best of all it is FREE and available to everyone whether you are a client or not!

The library of more than 200 videos covers a full range of qualifying medical disorders, how-to tips on navigating the system and insider advice on winning your claim. We have recently added new videos to the library and will be adding more each week for the next several months.

You can access the video library at [cuddiganlaw.com/videos](http://cuddiganlaw.com/videos) or on our YouTube channel.

If you want a free evaluation of your VA or Social Security claim call our office at 402.933.5318 or email us at [lawteam@cuddiganlaw.com](mailto:lawteam@cuddiganlaw.com).



## Comfort Food

From the kitchen of Janet Cuddigan

It's April and we each have our reasons to have a little party. My reasons are: spring is here and the IRS has given everyone an extra month to file their taxes.

Whatever your reasons are to have a good time this month here is a quick and delicious party treat for your kids and the kid in you.

### Homemade Chocolate Pops

1 (3.9 ounce) package instant chocolate pudding mix  
½ cup white sugar  
3 cups milk

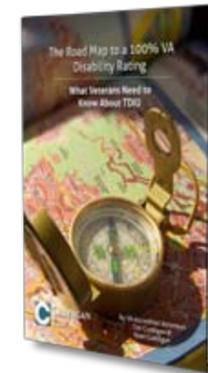


In a mixing bowl, combine pudding, sugar, and milk. Pour mixture into small plastic cups (if you do not have ice pop molds) and freeze.

When the pudding sets, place a wooden craft sticks into them if you are using plastic cups. Serve when frozen.

Adapted from [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com)

## Unlocking the Mysteries of the VA's TDIU Benefits



Total Disability Individual Unemployability—with the acronym TDIU—is part of the VA's disability compensation program. If a veteran's disabilities prevent them from being able to get and keep a job, TDIU allows them to have their disability rating raised to 100 percent even though the rating on their service-connected disabilities do not equal 100 percent. Unemployability is the VA's way of acknowledging that some veterans with disability ratings below 100 are unable to work due to their impairments.

Frustratingly, the VA's rules and processes for TDIU compensation are among the hardest and most confusing to understand. Too many veterans are denied TDIU benefits because of simple mistakes they make during the process. But, we can offer you

some help in understanding TDIU and how to avoid mistakes that may sabotage your chances to obtain the benefits you have rightfully earned.

In fact, we wrote the book on it: *"The Road Map to a 100 percent VA Rating—What Veterans Need to Know About TDIU"*.

Because we want you have the best opportunities to win your TDIU case we are offering you our book for free. We are confident you will find this to be an invaluable book. It is a straightforward guide without the mumbo-jumbo of legal talk and terms.

This book will improve the odds of you winning your TDIU benefits. You can download your free copy of *"The Road Map to a 100 percent VA Rating—What Veterans Need to Know About TDIU"* from our website, [cuddiganlaw.com](http://cuddiganlaw.com). Do it today. You'll be glad you did.

## Brain Teaser



What can run but never walks, has a mouth but never talks, has a head but never weeps, has a bed but never sleeps".



For the solution go to [cuddiganlaw.com/library/newsletter](http://cuddiganlaw.com/library/newsletter)

## We're in your corner.

We value the confidence and trust you have placed with us in the past.

If you or a family member or a friend could use our help now or in the future, please pass along our name.

Disability law is all we do.

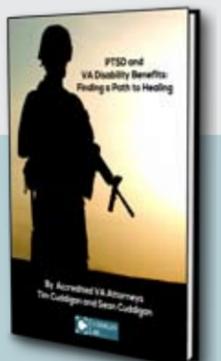


Sean Cuddigan Tim Cuddigan Kim Schram

Subscribe to the Cuddigan Law YouTube channel to view our free library of videos about Social Security and



VA disability. You will find a full range of information about qualifying medical disorders, how-to tips on navigating the system, and insider advice on winning your claim.



Are you a veteran coping with PTSD?

Get this FREE book, *PTSD and VA Disability Benefits: Finding a Path to Healing*. Packed with helpful information for veterans including insider tips to maximize your VA disability benefits, you can download this book at [cuddiganlaw.com](http://cuddiganlaw.com). Or call Cuddigan Law at 402.933.5318 and we'll email you a copy.