

Take As Good Care Of Your Heart As You Do Of Your Gun

Hunting season is here again, but with a little bit of forethought, it need not be open season on hunters.

Among the hazards of hunting is accidental death from a gunshot — one's own gun, or that of another hunter. Not so dramatic, but at least three times as prevalent, is the tragedy of heart attack deaths.

Unlike the deer, who can only try to outrun their stalkers, hunters can take certain precautions to avoid falling prey to the risks of the hunt. Here are some recommendations from (Your) Heart Association of Lancaster County to help bring hunters back alive.

First off, ask yourself this question: Do I have the heart to hunt? It's not sentiment or ethics we're concerned about here, but the condition of your heart.

Deer hunting often demands a level of energy output which may be triple or quadruple the level at which most part-time hunters operate during the rest of the year. Extremes of weather, change of altitude, rough terrain and the stress of the chase can levy a heavy tax on the heart's capacity.

In a unique series of experiment, the Minnesota Heart Association recently measured the heart stress on a deer hunter "who not only gets his deer but who drags it out of snowy woods single-handed." It was too much, they found, for 11 per cent of a pre-screened group of men over 40 who had no evidence of heart trouble. The men who underwent the tests had previously been examined and found to have apparently normal hearts. It's obvious, therefore, that the hazards to an unexamined cross-section of hunters over 40 would be higher.

Accordingly, the most important word from (Your) Heart Association of Lancaster County is

Have a complete physical examination before you plan your hunting trip. Then your doctor can, if necessary, suggest ways in which you can pace yourself, get your deer and at the same time minimize the strains on your heart.

Number one on his list would be "Don't drag the bag! When you've downed your deer, let him lie until you can get a couple of able-bodied men to

help move the carcass. And if you have a heart condition, let them do this job without you. Make your contribution to the hunting party in a less strenuous way.

Number two: If you have a heart condition, take at least one member of your party into your confidence. Tell him what medicine you take, how it is given and the symptoms which indicate the need for medication. He should know which pocket you keep it in, and the container should carry clearly typed instructions.

Number three: The heart may be a lonely hunter, but you

shouldn't be. Never hunt alone.

Number four: Get a good rest — preferably a full night's sleep — before you set out to hunt.

Five: If you're hunting at a higher altitude, go a few days early. This will give your heart time to adjust to the lower oxygen content of the thin air before the stresses and strains of hunting are added.

Six: Rest as often and as long as you have to, before you get too tired; take your stand near camp and let the others flush.

And for all hunters, (Your) Heart Association of Lancaster County has this advice:

Condition yourself as for any unusual physical exertion, with an increasing schedule of exercise in preparation for the big event;

Choose lightweight but warm clothing, to lighten the load on your heart;

Know simple first-aid rules; Be moderate in eating and drinking; Observe the standard safety rules for handling firearms. Remember: the biggest game is getting back in good shape. If you take as good care of yourself as you do of your gear, you can enjoy hunting for many seasons to come.

For a pamphlet concerning Safety Rules, How to Help in Case of a Heart Attack, write the Heart Association of Lancaster County, 246 W. Orange Street, Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17603. Hunt happy and come home healthy.

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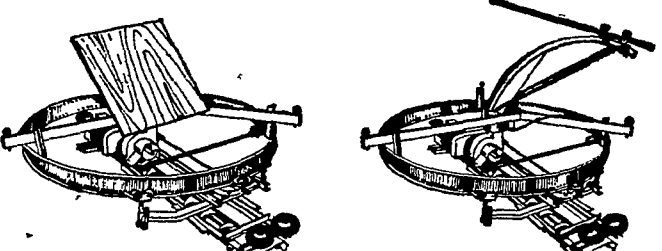
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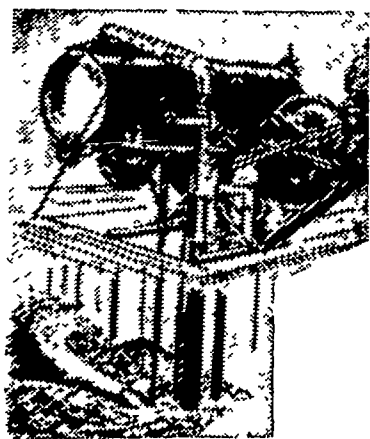


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