

HealthyBy Choice

...One Day at a Time

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February is American Heart Month

During the month of February, Americans see the human heart as the symbol of love. February is American Heart Month, a time to show yourself the love. Learn about your risks for heart disease and stroke, and stay “heart healthy” for yourself and your loved ones.

- **Eat a healthy diet.** Choosing healthful meal and snack options can help you avoid heart disease and its complications. Be sure to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables—adults should have at least 5 servings each day. Eating foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol and high in fiber can help prevent high cholesterol. Limiting salt or sodium in your diet also can lower your blood pressure.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Being overweight or obese can increase your risk for heart disease. To determine whether your weight is in a healthy range, doctors often calculate a number called the body mass index (BMI). Doctors sometimes also use waist and hip measurements to measure a person's body fat.
- **Exercise regularly.** Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower cholesterol and blood pressure. The Surgeon General recommends that adults should engage in moderate-intensity exercise for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.
- **Monitor your blood pressure.** High blood pressure often has no symptoms, so be sure to have it checked on a regular basis. You can check your blood pressure at home, at a pharmacy, or at a doctor's office..
- **Don't smoke.** Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease. If you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, quit as soon as possible. Your doctor can suggest ways to help you quit.
- **Limit alcohol use.** Avoid drinking too much alcohol, which can increase your blood pressure. Men should stick to no more than two drinks per day, and women to no more than one.
- **Have your cholesterol checked.** Your health care provider should test your cholesterol levels at least once every 5 years. Talk with your doctor about this simple blood test.
- **Manage your diabetes.** If you have diabetes, monitor your blood sugar levels closely, and talk with your doctor about treatment options.
- **Take your medicine.** If you're taking medication to treat high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes, follow your doctor's instructions carefully. Always ask questions if you don't understand something.

National Wear Red Day is February 6th!

**It's not just a man's
disease.**

Heart disease and stroke
kill 1 in 3 women, yet it's
80% preventable.

Help us raise awareness to
end the #1 killer of women.

Go Red and help yourself
and the women in your life
prevent stroke and heart
disease.



Together to end stroke and heart disease!



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National Cancer Prevention Month

Cancer Prevention Recommendations:

Do not smoke or chew tobacco – The most important thing you can do to decrease your risk of cancer.

Get to and maintain a healthy weight - Body fat doesn't just sit there on our waists – it acts like a 'hormone pump' releasing insulin, estrogen and other hormones into the bloodstream, which can spur cancer growth.

Be physically active - Physical activity in any form helps to lower cancer risk. Get 30 minutes a day, every day of moderate intensity physical activity.

As well as helping us avoid weight gain, activity itself can help to prevent cancer. Studies show that regular activity can help to keep hormone levels in check, which is important because having high levels of some hormones can increase your cancer risk.

Emerging research is showing that extended periods of inactivity – sitting at a computer, watching tv, etc. – increase many indicators for cancer risk. Break up your day by getting up and walking around a few minutes every hour.

Avoid sugary drinks - regularly consuming sugary drinks contributes to weight gain. These drinks are easy to drink in large quantities but don't make us feel full, even though they are quite high in calories.

Water, unsweetened tea and coffee are good alternatives.

Eat a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans - basing our diets around plant foods, which contain fiber and other nutrients, can reduce our risk of cancer.

When preparing a meal, aim to fill at least two-thirds of your plate with vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans.

As well as containing vitamins and minerals, plant foods are good sources of substances called phytochemicals. These are biologically active compounds, which can help to protect cells in the body from damage that can lead to cancer.

Limit red meat and avoid processed meats - The evidence that red meat (beef, pork and lamb) is a cause of colorectal cancer is convincing. Studies show, however, that we can consume modest amounts -- up to 18 ounces (cooked) per week -- without a measurable increase in colorectal cancer risk.

But when it comes to processed meat (ham, bacon, salami, hot dogs, sausages) the evidence is just as convincing, and cancer risk begins to increase with even very low consumption.

Limit alcohol consumption – 2 drinks for men and 1 for women per day. While there is evidence for moderate consumption of alcohol to have a protective coronary effect, for cancer prevention, the evidence is clear: alcohol in any form is a potent carcinogen. The best advice for those concerned about cancer is not to drink.



Your Life is Why!

