

HealthyBy Choice

...One Day at a Time

Volume 13, Issue 2 • February 2018



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 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.



Friday, February 2, 2018

1 in 3 women die of heart disease and stroke each year.

The #1 cause of death for women.

Don’t be the 1.

Happy Valentine's Day



You can't beat a healthy heart!



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Heart Healthy Fitness Tips

1. **Start with activities you love.** If you've had problems making exercise a regular part of your life, then you might only think of exercise as something you have to do in the gym. But that's just not true! Things like walking, dancing in your living room, bowling and even cleaning the house can count as exercise as long as you're getting a little out of breath when you're doing them.

Make a list of all of the active things you do and find a way to make at least one of them a part of your day, every day. After a few months of making those activities habits, try new ones or more traditional workouts like a group exercise class. As you get in the habit of being active and start to get more fit, you might just be amazed and what activities you like.

2. **Embrace the power of 10.** Think you can't get heart-health benefits from just 10-minute bouts of activity? Think again. Ten minutes of walking three times a day has been shown to lower blood pressure more effectively than a longer 30-minute bout of walking. Something as simple as walking before work, over lunch, and after dinner is a fabulous way to squeeze in exercise – no gym required!
3. **It's not just about cardio.** When people think of heart-healthy exercise, they generally think of aerobic or cardio activities like jogging. But did you know that strength training (think lifting weights or doing bodyweight exercises like push-ups and lunges) can improve the health of your ticker, too? When you lift weights at a moderate intensity, you get your heart rate up. This means that you're working both your muscular system and your cardiovascular system. So definitely do some resistance training a few times a week.
4. **Use exercise to de-stress.** Stress plays a critical role in heart health, and exercise is great at kicking stress to the curb. Learn to see exercise not as something that you *have* to do, but instead as something you *want* to do because it makes you feel good. While most workouts will pump up your feel-good endorphins, workouts like yoga, Pilates and Tai Chi are especially good for de-stressing and improving the mind-body connection.
5. **Support your efforts with a healthy diet.** Working out – as awesome as it is – is only part of the heart-health equation. Eating a nutritious diet rich in fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats is key to overall health, along with helping to give you the energy you need to power through those workouts and your everyday life.

(American Heart Association)



Take your health to heart!

