

Mission In Motion

Health & Wellness Monthly Newsletter
February 2012



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Seafood Is A Great Source of Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Catch the benefits of fish

When it comes to safeguarding your heart health, fish is the “reel” deal. Rich in omega-3 fatty acids, fish can benefit the hearts of healthy people and those who are at risk for or who have cardiovascular disease.

The American Heart Association recommends eating fish (particularly fatty fish) at least two times a week. Fish is a good source of protein and doesn't have the high saturated fat found in fatty meat products. Examples of fish that are good sources for omega-3 fatty acids include:

Mackerel	Lake trout
Albacore tuna	Sardines
Salmon	Albacore Tuna

Source: American Heart Association

How does your heart rate?

Healthy lifestyles play a big part in reducing your risk of heart disease. Ask yourself these questions to evaluate your lifestyle:

1. Do I smoke? If so, how do I stop?
2. What eating habits do I need to change?
3. Am I including physical activity in my daily routine?
4. How can I be more relaxed?
5. Do I need medication to reduce my heart attack risk?

With the right answers, a healthier lifestyle is only a heartbeat away.

Source: American Heart Association

A Change of Heart

Healthy lifestyle changes can prevent heart disease

Are you at risk for heart disease? You could be, considering that heart disease is the leading killer of Americans today*. Certain lifestyle factors play a major role in contributing to heart disease. That means you have the power to control many of the risk factors that can lead to this life-threatening condition. Change isn't always easy, but when you get support from health care providers, family and friends and helpful resources, you can introduce healthy habits into your daily routine.

Don't be a risk-taker

If you have more than one risk factor for heart disease or stroke, start making smart lifestyle choices now to help reduce your risk. Begin with small changes, and as you adopt healthy, new habits, keep making more changes to work toward improving your health. The American Heart Association recommends the following lifestyle changes to increase your protection against heart disease:

- Have your blood cholesterol checked regularly. Take steps to lower it if it's high.
- Don't smoke. Smokers have more than twice the risk of heart attack as nonsmokers do. Even if you don't smoke, being exposed to tobacco smoke daily puts you at higher risk.

- Have your blood pressure checked regularly. Take steps to lower it if it's high.
- Be physically active. Try to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most or all days of the week.
- Recognize and treat diabetes.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Take steps to lose weight if needed.
- Eat healthy foods low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium.
- Don't drink too much alcohol. It can increase your blood pressure.

Chewing the fat

Learning the difference between good and bad fats is the first step in lowering your chance of developing heart disease. Unhealthy fats, which include saturated fat, trans-fatty acids and dietary cholesterol, raise LDL cholesterol and can increase your risk. Monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats don't. Some studies suggest they might even help lower LDL cholesterol slightly when eaten as part of a low-saturated-fat diet. To control your risk of heart disease, make it a regular habit to eat foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol.

* American Heart Association

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Beat Congestive Heart Failure

Take Care of Yourself

- Stop smoking because it damages your blood vessels, reduces the amount of oxygen in your blood and makes your heart beat rapidly. Ask your physician to recommend a program to help you quit.
- Extra body weight makes your heart work harder. If you are overweight, talk to your physician about ways to get your weight within an acceptable range.

See Your Physician

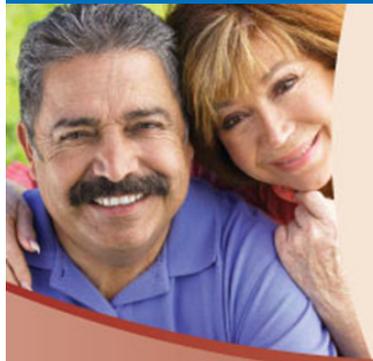
- Keep regular appointments with your physician, so that he or she can monitor your condition and adjust your medications, if necessary, to help minimize your symptoms. If you notice a new symptom or if others get worse, call your physician immediately.

Keep Track of Your Weight

- Weigh yourself once each morning and log the number.
- If you gain two pounds or more in one day, call your physician right away. Rapid weight gain may be a sign that you are retaining fluids, and your physician may prescribe a treatment plan.

These tips are intended as general information only. Please consult your physician for specific advice.

Visit Blue Access® for Members at www.bcbstx.com for more information about heart failure.



Reducing risk makes the heart grow stronger



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Reducing Risk Makes the Heart Grow Stronger

Are you in a risky relationship with your heart? It may be tempting to believe that doing just one healthy thing will take care of your heart disease risk. For example, you may hope that if you exercise regularly, you can still eat a lot of fatty foods and stay fairly healthy. Not true. To protect your heart, make the changes that address each and every risk factor you have, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, being overweight, smoking or high cholesterol.

Make an appointment with your doctor for a thorough checkup and work to-

gether to help achieve your heart healthy goal. Remember to ask questions about your chances of developing heart disease and ways to lower your risk.

You can learn lots more about heart health by visiting the Personal Health Manager—just log into Blue Access® for Members at www.bcbstx.com. When you do, it'll be love at first "site."

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Healthy Heart Tips:

1. There are 1,440 minutes in every day—schedule 30 of them for physical activity. Aerobic exercise gets your heart pumping and increases your oxygen intake, and benefits range from heart disease prevention to stress reduction. Thirty minutes of physical activity each day is one of the best things you can do for your health!

Source: University of California, Berkeley Wellness Letter

2. Go nuts over almonds! Like all nuts, almonds are a great source of protein. Plus, they're good for your heart. Most of the fat in this nut is monounsaturated—a healthier type of fat that may help lower your blood cholesterol level.

Source: Mayo Clinic Online Resources

Heartburn Home Remedies, What's the Best Choice?

If one has ever woken up in the middle of the night with the burning feeling in the chest and stomach, they may have already asked themselves, what's the best remedy for heartburn relief? Some of the signs of this annoying sensation include gas and bloating, a nasty taste in ones mouth along with feelings of nausea.

A good home remedy for controlling the overabundance of hydrochloric acid would be handy when the fluids that the body uses when digesting food creeps up to cause irritation and chronic heartburn. The tissues in ones throat and esophagus become irritated when the stomach acids seep up the throat while sleeping and cause chronic heartburn symptoms. These symptoms can irritate and possibly cause cancer on down the road in the throat and esophagus area.

However, there is hope. Homeopathic medication is available to those who search for answers. Some health food stores carry several natural items that can help bring relief from the discomfort of heartburn such as chewable papaya tablets used to control the hydrochloric acid that causes heartburn. There are also natural drinks that one can use to ease and control the burning of the disorder such as Aloe Vera for healing and Chamomile tea to relieve irritation. Licorice can be eaten to treat stomach and esophagus ulcers.

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February Health & Wellness Training Series:

Is it Heartburn or a Heart Attack?

February 23, 2012

City Hall—Council Chambers

Speaker and Time: To be announced

Look for Health & Wellness Training Series flyer for more information.



Recipe: Honey crusted chicken

By Mayo Clinic staff

Ingredients

Serves 2

- 8 saltine crackers, each about 2 inches square
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, each 4 ounces
- 4 teaspoons honey

Directions

Preheat the oven to 375 F. Lightly coat a baking dish with cooking spray. Crush the crackers on a cutting board, using the back of a knife. Place crackers in a small bowl and add paprika. Stir to mix well. In a separate bowl, add the chicken and honey. Toss to coat evenly. Add the cracker mixture. Mix and press the chicken into the cracker mixture until it's evenly coated on both sides. Place the chicken in the prepared baking dish. Bake until lightly browned and cooked through, about 20 to 25 minutes. Serve immediately.

Upcoming Monthly Health & Wellness Training Series:

February 2012 — Heart Disease/
Heartburn

March 2012 — Kidney Disease

April 2012 — First Aid

May 2012 — Physical Fitness

June 2012 — Depression

July 2012 — Varicose Veins

(All topics subject to change)

*If you have a subject or topic that you would like more information on, feel free to make your requests at 956-580-8630.

Next Month's Issue:

March 2012: Nutrition

Mission In Motion

Human Resources Department

1201 E. 8th Street

Mission, TX 78572

956-580-8631

Noemi Munguia—Human Resources Director

Romie Palomo—Benefits Coordinator

Elena Perez—Personnel Manager

Vicky Ortiz—Insurance Benefits Specialist

