



Nutrition News

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February is Heart Health Month! Easy Steps to Heart-Healthy Eating

Coronary heart disease is the number one killer of women and men in the United States. Coronary heart disease is caused by the narrowing of the arteries that feed the heart. When arteries become narrowed or clogged by fat and cholesterol, they cannot supply enough blood to the heart. This can result in chest pain and, if totally blocked, a heart attack. A person with coronary heart disease has a much higher risk of having a heart attack than someone without heart disease.

Your blood cholesterol level has a lot to do with your chances of getting heart disease. It is important to know what your blood cholesterol numbers are because lowering cholesterol levels that are too high reduces the risk of developing heart disease. You can find out your cholesterol numbers by having a lipoprotein profile test. This blood test is done after a 9- to 12-hour fast and will give information about your total cholesterol, LDL (bad) cholesterol, HDL (good) cholesterol and triglycerides. Total cholesterol should be below 200 mg/dL. HDL cholesterol protects against heart disease. HDL levels of 60 mg/dL or more help lower your risk for heart disease. A level of less than 40 mg/dL is considered a major risk factor for heart disease. High levels of triglycerides in your blood can also raise heart disease risk. Triglycerides may be high if you eat too much fat and/or sugar or drink too much alcohol. Levels that are borderline high (150-199 mg/dL) or high (200 mg/dL or more) may signal a need for treatment.

Diet is one of the things that affects blood cholesterol. Saturated fat and cholesterol in the food you eat can make your blood cholesterol go up. Saturated fat has the biggest effect, but dietary cholesterol also matters. Changing the diet is usually the first step in treating high cholesterol. Other strategies include quitting smoking if you smoke, losing weight if you are overweight, getting regular physical activity (30-60 minutes on most, if not all days), and taking any necessary medication prescribed by your doctor.

Dietary Changes for a Heart-Healthy Diet

- Choose foods low in saturated fat. Saturated fats are found mainly in animal foods and tropical oils.
- Choose foods low in total fat. Lower-fat foods are found on the lower levels of the Food Guide Pyramid.
- Select foods low in cholesterol. Cholesterol is found only in animal foods such as meat, poultry, seafood, eggs and dairy foods.
- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables are low in fat, cholesterol-free, high in several vitamins and minerals and provide fiber.
- Choose low fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk and yogurt and reduced-fat cheeses. These foods provide important nutrients, including calcium, but contain less fat and saturated fat than higher-fat dairy foods.
- Use non-stick cooking utensils and spray. Foods can be browned just like when frying, but without the fat.

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- Choose lean cuts of meat such as: beef round, loin, sirloin chuck arm, pork tenderloin, center loin, ham, lamb leg, loin, fore shanks, and veal.
- Trim fat from meat and skin from poultry before cooking (or at least before eating). This significantly lowers the total amount of fat in the food.
- Drain fat from ground meat. For an even greater fat reduction, quickly rinse under hot running water.
- Chill broth and skim the layer of fat that rises to the top.
- Bake, roast, boil, broil rather than fry. These methods do not add fat to the food.
- Choose fats and oils with high percentages of mono- and poly-unsaturated fats such as olive, canola, safflower, soybean and sunflower. Use margarines with liquid oil listed first in the ingredient list.
- Use fat-free or reduced-fat salad dressings and sandwich spreads.
- Use less salt and sodium. Too much sodium can affect blood pressure in some people.
- Season foods with herbs, spices and other flavorings such as lemon or lime juice and wine.
- Read food labels. Look for fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium content. Select foods with low Daily Value (DV) percentages for these nutrients. Look for foods with high percentages of DV for fiber.

Potbelly!

For every inch your waistline exceeds the size of your chest, you can deduct two years from your life. That's how funny a potbelly isn't. For all the world to see, a "bay window" is evidence that you are either eating too much, exercising too little, or both. Despite the comic relief afforded by the tummies of some very successful comedians, a loose abdomen is no laughing matter. Why?

A weak abdomen can interfere with the proper functioning of the organs inside it. Apart from facilitating movements of the trunk and legs, the stomach muscles provide support and protection for the liver, kidneys, pancreas, and of course the stomach. Abdominal muscles that lose their ability to serve as a kind of natural girdle allow these organs--and the lower spine--more internal movement than they were designed to handle. Digestive disorders can result, as can back problems. An estimated 80% of all lower back pain can be traced to lack of abdominal strength.

Sitting gives stomach muscles little to do, and so they weaken. And because sitting also gives the rest of our bodies little to do, we fatten. The combination is devastating and develops into a vicious circle: As a burgeoning waistline makes movement more difficult, movement becomes less likely. Less movement means fewer calories are burned. Fewer calories burned means more calories stored — around the middle. The force behind the evolution of a potbelly, as you can see, is not one to be taken lightly.

You don't have to be overweight in order to suffer from abdominal prolapse. Excess weight increases one's chances, but a potbelly can develop in anyone who neglects to maintain sufficient abdominal strength and proper posture. Osteoporosis can cause potbellies in the slimmest and most fit women.

21 Tips for Better Health in the New Year

1. Check out the Dietary Guidelines for Americans
2. Remember, five a day
3. Follow MyPyramid
4. Remember moderation, variety, and balance
5. Practice 3 types of exercise - Strength, Flexibility, and Cardiovascular
6. Diets don't work, but lifestyle changes do.
7. Replace your normal food choices with more healthful substitutions.
8. Unless you have a medical condition, beware of "diets" that eliminate any food group from your diet.
9. Cut back on sugar.
10. Eat less salt.
11. Use food labels as a tool.
12. Health checks are important.
13. Walking is good for physical and mental health.
14. Don't get stressed out.
15. Beware of quick fixes!
16. Poor nutrition is linked to a weakened immune system.
17. Water, Water, Water
18. Small amounts more often.
19. Take your time at mealtime.
20. Not everyone was meant to have the figure of a model.
21. More is not always better and none is not always good



Don't Invite Germs to the Big Game

Finger foods, from popcorn to chips and dips, are traditional fare on Super Bowl Sunday. But, with everybody scooping food from common bowls, it's an invitation for germs to join in. Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education at The Soap and Detergent Association, offers some ideas for keeping those germs from scoring a touchdown.

During pre-game food preparation:

- ➡ Wash hands with warm water and soap for twenty seconds before and after handling food.
- ➡ Frequently clean and disinfect all surfaces used for preparing and serving food. Focus on countertops, sinks, appliances and door handles.
- ➡ Be aware of and prevent cross-contamination as you prepare your favorite recipes.
- ➡ Read and follow cleaning product labels to be sure they are used properly.

At game time:

- ➡ Think individual servings. For example, instead of a common bowl, serve popcorn in lunch-size brown bags or oversized paper cups — just like you get it at the stadium.
- ➡ Put napkins, utensils and plates in multiple locations, so they are always in easy reach of the guests.
- ➡ Keep plenty of hand sanitizers or wipes around so guests won't miss a winning play while they're out washing their hands.



Healthy Snacks for the Super Party



While serving up all those great snacks during the game, consider a more nutritional approach such as these snacks. As always, remember portion distortion and just because it's the Super Bowl, doesn't mean your bowl should be "Super Sized" as well!

- ✗ Pretzels instead of potato chips.
- ✗ Fresh cut veggies or fruit with low-fat dipping sauces.
- ✗ Serve water, juices, or low-fat milk instead of sugar and calorie loaded soft drinks.
- ✗ Popcorn is okay, but cut back on the salt and butter!
- ✗ Try a trail mix or *Chex Mix* instead.
- ✗ Try multi-grain tortilla chips, to serve with low-fat recipes of cheese dip.

SNACK MIX

1 cup unsalted pretzels 1 cup roasted peanuts
1 cup raisins ½ cup unsalted Sunflower seeds

1. Break Pretzels into bite-sized pieces.
2. Mix ingredients together.
3. Store in airtight container.

Makes 12 servings, about 1/4 cup each.

Per serving: Calories150, Cholesterol0, Total fat9 grams, Sodium ...12 milligrams, Saturated fatty acids1 gram (This snack has only half the fat of a one-fourth cup serving of salted peanuts and 144 milligrams less sodium.)

CHILI POPCORN

1 qt. popped popcorn ¼ tsp. chili powder
1 Tbsp. melted margarine ¼ tsp. ground Cumin
Dash of garlic powder

1. Mix hot popcorn and margarine.
2. Mix seasonings thoroughly; sprinkle over popcorn. Mix well.
3. Serve immediately.

Makes 4 servings, about 1 cup each. Per serving: Calories50 Cholesterol0 Total fat3 grams Sodium42 milligrams Saturated fatty acids1 gram (Prepare the popcorn in a microwave oven or hot air popper. The small amount of fat added to the popcorn is just enough to make the other seasonings stick to the popped kernels.)

Nutrition Tips Picky Eater At Home?

Have you ever felt that food has become a source of tension between you and your child? If you're like the typical family, your answer is "yes." It's easy to find yourself in this position, but remember that if you let meals become a battleground, you'll be at the losing end more often than your child.

Experienced parents give the following tips to avoid a mealtime fuss and help your child eat better:

- Offer children food at regular times, not whenever they want it.
- Serve vegetables first, when children are the hungriest.
- Serve water instead of juice or milk when your child is thirsty. If they fill up on milk and juice, they may not be hungry at meal or snack time.
- Try not to talk about the foods you dislike in front of your children. They will model their food likes and dislikes after you or other adults.
- Make mealtimes a pleasant time of day. Let the problems and discipline wait till later.
- Keep your sense of humor even on the days when your child doesn't want to eat what you have prepared.

Sincerely,

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