

# NUTRITION NEWS

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## Healthy Heart Month

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February is Heart Month! This month is dedicated to cardiac health awareness and encompasses many health conditions, including heart attacks, strokes, and high blood pressure (hypertension).

The 2019 update from the American Heart Association reveals the following:

- \* 46% of US adults are estimated to have hypertension.
- \* On average, someone dies of cardiovascular disease every 38 seconds.
- \* On average, someone dies of a stroke every 3.7 minutes.

The good news is that there are strategies that can prevent heart disease. According to the Mayo Clinic, although you cannot change certain risk factors (such as family history, sex, or age), there are a number of other ways to reduce your risk.

1. Don't smoke or use tobacco—this is one of the best things you can do for your heart. It is also important to limit your exposure to second hand smoke, even if you don't smoke.

2. Get moving— aim for at least 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

3. Eat a heart healthy diet— increasing your intake of fruits, vegetables, and fiber. Decreasing your sodium and fat intake is important.

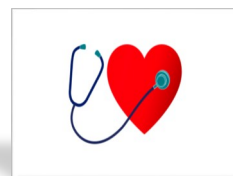


4. Maintain a healthy weight— keep in mind that carrying excess weight around your middle further increases your chance of developing heart disease.

5. Get good quality sleep— adults need at least 7 hours of sleep each night.

6. Manage stress— try managing it by physical activity, relaxation exercises, or meditation.

7. Get regular health screenings — this can include checking your blood sugar, cholesterol, and blood pressure.



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### Monthly Exercise

#### Seated Knee Raises

1. Lift your left knee and then lower it
2. Repeat 5-10 times
3. Lift your right knee and then lower it
4. Repeat 5-10 times



As stated on the previous page, diet and intake can impact your blood pressure, and thereby can affect your risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Being conscious of your overall intake, and especially your sodium intake, can improve your blood pressure. The DASH diet is a specific dietary plan that many physicians still endorse as a way to help bring your hypertension under control.

DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) focuses on including foods that are low in sodium. It also incorporates foods that are rich in potassium, magnesium, and calcium, as these nutrients are also believed to play in role maintaining a healthy blood pressure. The DASH diet features foods such as vegetables, fruits, low-fat dairy products, whole grains, fish, poultry, and nuts. It also recommends limiting your intake of red meats, sweets, and sugary beverages. It is not surprising that this diet is similar to the general recommendations put forth to reduce your risk of heart disease, diabetes, and certain type of cancers.

You can slowly incorporate the DASH diet into your current dietary habits.

Here are some tips to making a gradual, but hopefully lasting, change.

- ♦ Add a vegetable or fruit serving at lunch and dinner.
- ♦ Use only half the butter or margarine that you use now.
- ♦ Get added nutrients such as the B vitamins by choosing whole grain foods,



including whole wheat bread or whole grain cereals.

- ♦ Spread out the servings: have two servings of fruits or vegetables at each meal or add fruits as snacks.
- ♦ Treat meat as one part of the meal, instead of the focus. Try casseroles, pastas, and stir-fry dishes. Try to have two meatless meals per week.
- ♦ Use fruits or low fat foods such as yogurt as desserts or snacks.

If you're trying to lose weight as well, keep these calorie saving tips in mind.

- \* Use low fat condiments, such as low fat salad dressings.
- \* Eat smaller portions— cut back gradually.
- \* Choose low fat or fat free dairy products to reduce your total fat intake.
- \* Limit foods with lots of added sugars, such as pies, flavored yogurts, candy bars, ice cream, sherbet, regular soft drinks, and fruit drinks,
- \* Eat fruits canned in their own juice, as opposed to those canned in heavy syrups.
- \* Snack on fruit, vegetables sticks, unbuttered or unsalted popcorn, or bread sticks.
- \* Drink water or seltzer.

Even simple changes, such as reducing your overall intake (without actually changing the type of foods you're eating) can significantly reduce your blood pressure. Don't forget the importance of portion size!



Did you know that this year is a leap year? That means that February has one extra day in it! What will you do with this extra day? Make it count! There are a number of ways to make it a meaningful day.



After retirement, many seniors begin to think, “Now what?” For years, work has given you a purpose and a sense of accomplishment. Volunteering can provide you with that same sense of accomplishment. A recent census showed that religious and educational activities make up more than half of the volunteer organizations. Hospitals, social services, and cultural organizations make up the majority of the remaining organizations. The census also showed that adults over the age of 55 comprised nearly 36% of the volunteers, with 10% of the volunteers being 75 years of age or older.

Did you know that volunteering doesn’t only benefit the recipient? The volunteer enjoys a number of incidental benefits as well.

- ♦ Volunteering can prevent social isolation and reduce the symptoms of depression: regular volunteering gets you out and about in your community. Because people may be counting on your services and abilities, it promotes a feeling of responsibility and purpose. It also encourages social engagements and friendships.
- ♦ Volunteering can make you feel like you have more time: studies show that people that volunteer feel more useful, capable, and confident and can even help them complete future tasks.
- ♦ Volunteering can help improve intergenerational relationships: seniors who volunteer have a unique opportunity to engage with a younger generation of volunteers. Volunteering together can create lasting

friendships through shared experiences despite generational differences.

- ♦ Volunteering keeps seniors active for longer: no matter what the activity, volunteering is likely to keep you physically active for longer. And as you well know, maintaining physical exercise and an active lifestyle can prevent many injuries and diseases.
- ♦ Volunteering promotes mental health and may help prevent dementia: studies have shown that participating in meaningful activities, such as volunteering, can improve longevity, mental health, and reduce your risk of developing dementia.

A recent study showed that after two years of service, 84% of older adults reported stable health while 32% (who had reported good health at the beginning of the study) reported an improvement in their health after the two year follow up. And 78% of the volunteers said that they felt less depressed at the end of the two year period. So clearly, volunteering benefits more than the recipients!

If you are looking for a meaningful opportunity, contact us at the Office for the Aging. There are opportunities to deliver home delivered meals, volunteer at a congregate dining site, or teach a tai chi class! If none of these options suit you, we may be able to connect you with another local agency that could use and appreciate your time and talents!

*volunteer*



Did you know that February 4 is National Homemade Soup day? Here is a healthy, delicious recipe that you can serve on that day !

### **Italian Red Lentil and Brown Rice Soup**

**-2 tbs olive oil**

**-1 red onion, coarsely chopped**

**-3 cloves garlic, minced**

**-4 cups vegetable broth**

**-1 (14.5 ounce) can Italian-style diced tomatoes**

**-1 1/4 cups red lentils, rinsed and drained**

**-1/2 cup uncooked brown rice**

**-1 tbs Italian seasoning**

**-1 tbs dried celery flakes**

**-1 tsp ground white pepper**

**-1 tsp dried marjoram (or oregano)**

**-1 1/2 tbs balsamic vinegar**

Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion and garlic; cook and stir until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in broth, diced tomatoes, red lentils, brown rice, Italian seasoning, celery flakes, white pepper, and marjoram. Bring soup to a boil; reduce heat, cover, and simmer until lentils break down and rice is tender, about 55 minutes.

Stir balsamic vinegar into the soup just before serving. Top with parmesan cheese. Serve with the following for a tasty meal!



### **Spicy Cheese Quick Bread**

1 3/4 cup flour, 2 1/2 tsp baking powder, 3/4 tsp salt, 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper, 1 tsp garlic powder, 1/2 tsp onion powder, 1 tsp Italian seasoning, 1 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese, 1/2 cup half and half, 1/2 cup milk, 1/3 cup vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Lightly grease a 9x5 inch loaf pan. Mix dry ingredients and cheese, Whisk in cream, milk, and oil just until blended. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake for 35-40 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack.

### **HEAP**

If you received HEAP last year but have not yet received an application for this year, please call our Office at 867-1195.



If you did not receive HEAP last year but want to apply this year, please call our Office at 867-1195.

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