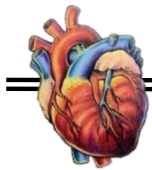


FEBRUARY

HEART AWARENESS MONTH



The perfect gift this Valentine's Day is the gift of heart health. Along with Valentine's Day, **February marks American Heart Month**, a great time to commit to a healthy lifestyle and make small changes that can lead to a lifetime of heart health.



Did you know?

- ✓ Heart disease is the **leading cause** of death for both men and women. **More than half** of the deaths due to heart disease in 2009 were in men.
- ✓ About **610,000 Americans** die from heart disease each year—that's **1 in every 4 deaths**.
- ✓ Coronary heart disease is the most common type of heart disease, killing about **365,000 people** in 2014.
- ✓ In the United States, someone has a heart attack **every 42 seconds**. Each minute, someone in the United States dies from a heart disease-related event.
- ✓ Heart disease is the **leading cause** of death for people of most racial/ethnic groups in the United States, including African Americans, Hispanics, and whites. For Asian Americans or Pacific Islanders and American Indians or Alaska Natives, heart disease is second only to cancer.
- ✓ Heart disease costs the United States about **\$207 billion** each year, this total includes the cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity.
- ✓ Obesity contributes to **five of the ten** leading causes of death in the U.S. including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer, stroke and kidney disease.
- ✓ 94% of American Schools fail to meet federal standards for fat and saturated fat in school lunches.
- ✓ High blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol, and smoking are key heart disease risk factors for heart disease. About half of Americans (49%) have at least **one of these** three risk factors.
- ✓ Several other medical conditions and lifestyle choices can also put people at a higher risk for heart disease, including:
 - ✓ Diabetes
 - ✓ Overweight and obesity
 - ✓ Poor diet
 - ✓ Physical inactivity
 - ✓ Excessive alcohol use

-Centers for Disease Control
-National Heart Lung and Blood Institute

"Have a healthy heart, don't delay or else you might live in dismay"



Sitting Really Can Harm Your Health, Heart Experts Say....

Evidence is building that sitting for too long can cause heart disease and diabetes — even in people who exercise, the American Heart Association says.

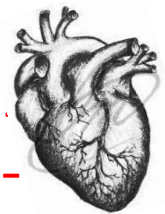
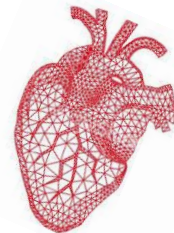
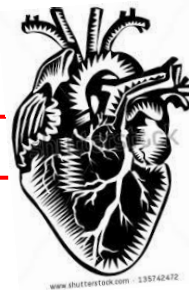
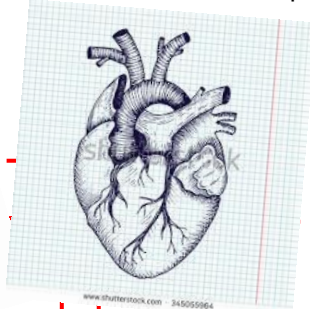
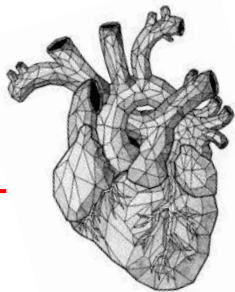
The trouble is, it's hard to measure just how inactive people are and there's not enough evidence yet to show just how much, or how often, you have to exercise to counteract the effects of sitting, the group said in a scientific update.

In the meantime, then, people should try to sit less and move more, the heart association's team of experts advised.

"The evidence to date is suggestive, but not conclusive, that sedentary behavior contributes to cardiovascular disease and diabetes risk," a team led by Deborah Rohm Young, of Kaiser Permanente, Southern California wrote.

Given the current state of the science on sedentary behavior and in the absence of sufficient data to recommend quantitative guidelines, it is appropriate to promote the advisory, 'Sit less, move more.' And it may be worthwhile to encourage desk-bound workers to get up and move a bit every hour or so. At least 30 minutes a day of moderate exercise — walking briskly rather than strolling around the house - should be the minimum goal, they advise.

Yet even this may not outweigh the effects of sitting at a computer all day, driving home in a car, and then relaxing in front of the TV or with a tablet computer.



“Regardless of how much physical activity someone gets, prolonged sedentary time could negatively impact the health of your heart and blood vessels.”

Regardless of how much physical activity someone gets, prolonged sedentary time could negatively impact the health of your heart and blood vessels," Young said in a statement.

"There are many important factors we don't understand about sedentary time yet. The types of studies available identify trends but don't prove cause and effects," she added.

They did define sedentary behaviors: They include sitting, reclining, or lying down while awake as well as reading, watching television or working on the computer. Light housework or slow, leisurely walking doesn't rise to the level of moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Based on existing evidence, we found that U.S. adults are sedentary for about six to eight hours a day," Young said. "Adults 60 years and older spend between 8.5 — 9.6 hours a day in sedentary time."

The researchers cited a study that showed half of all jobs required some sort of activity in the 1960s, but now fewer than 20 percent do.

"There are clearly physiological changes that occur when physically active individuals become inactive," Young's team wrote in the journal *Circulation*. This includes changes in the way the body uses insulin to convert food efficiently to glucose that the body can use.

1. Which Snack Is More Heart-Healthy?

- (a) Popcorn
- (b) Pretzels

2. Working Out at a Moderate-Intensity Level Means . . .

- (a) You can sing while maintaining your effort.
- (b) You can have a comfortable conversation while you're exercising.

3. Which Is the Heart-Healthier Way to Cook Fish?

- (a) Baked
- (b) Sautéed

4. How Much Exercise Do You Need?

- (a) An hour every day
- (b) A half-hour most days of the week

5. Which Morning Beverage Can Help Your Heart?

- (a) Coffee
- (b) Tea



6. Will Beef Help Control Your Cholesterol?

- (a) No way.
- (b) Yes!

7. Which Contains More Heart-Healthy Lycopene?

- (a) Fresh tomatoes
- (b) Fresh watermelon



Latest Advice for a Healthy Heart. -CBSnews

Doctors have long known that **too much stress** isn't good for the heart, but a recent study from Massachusetts General Hospital may help explain why.

Through PET and CT scans, researchers found that people with elevated levels of activity in the amygdala -- a small region of the brain closely tied to stress -- were at **higher risk for heart disease and stroke**.

Experts say the findings suggest that **reducing stress** -- through techniques like meditation and mindfulness -- may go beyond improving psychological well-being and help with maintaining heart health.

Blizzards and other big snowstorms may do more than leave a slippery mess -- they could also be hazardous to your heart. New research published in the American Journal of Epidemiology finds a sharp spike in hospital admissions for heart problems two days after **winter weather events**.

While the study found that hospital admissions for heart attacks, chest pain and stroke actually fell **on the day of the storm** -- possibly because people can't get out for medical care -- they rebounded again in the next 48 hours.

The research did not identify the cause of the increase in hospital admissions after a snowstorm, but experts suspect **shoveling** has something to do with it.

Heart patients are advised to **avoid shoveling snow** and prepare ahead of the storm by making sure they have plenty of prescription medications on hand, to avoid running out when it may be difficult to refill them.

Some doctors also advise people who are not usually physically active to avoid shoveling, as the **extra exertion** and **cold temperatures** could put excessive strain on the heart.



When you eat can be as important as what you eat, Heart Association says

Remember good old breakfast, lunch and dinner?

Americans have pretty much thrown that out the window, the American Heart Association says. And that may affect how much weight we are putting on.

In fact, it might be a good idea to plan when to eat as much as what to eat, the group says in a new scientific statement. The association appointed a committee of experts to review the evidence from dozens of reports for one big study.

“This study clearly demonstrated that adults in the United States eat around the clock,” the American Heart Association says in the statement, published in the journal *Circulation*.

It’s still not 100 percent clear if it’s better to eat breakfast every day, or to eat less after 6 p.m. But a growing body of evidence does suggest that breakfast is good for you and that eating late at night can help you put on more pounds, even if you skipped meals earlier in the day.

“Meal timing may affect health due to its impact on the body’s internal clock,” said Marie-Pierre St-Onge, an associate professor of nutritional medicine at Columbia University who helped write the statement.

Animal studies show that eating right before sleep might alter metabolism not only to promote weight gain, but in harmful ways that could help lead of diabetes and heart disease.

“However, more research would need to be done in humans before that can be stated as a fact,” she said.

And more people are eating late because more people are eating at all hours, the Heart Association team found. Between 1971 and 2010, the percentage of men who eat three squares a day fell from 73 percent of men in the 1970s to 59 percent in 2010. While 75 percent of women said they ate three meals a day in the 70s, by 2010 just 63 percent did.

Skipping breakfast may or may not cause people to put on weight — studies have mixed results — but people who do not eat breakfast are far less likely to get enough vitamins and mineral, the Heart Association team found.

And one consistent finding – the occasional short fast may be downright good for you. Several studies have found that people who fast as often as every other day or as little as one day a week can lose more weight than people who do not.

Beyond that, there is little consistent evidence on whether it’s best to eat at any given time, although smaller, more frequent meals may be both more fashionable and perfectly good for health, the Heart Association said.

“The impact of meal timing, particularly related to the evening meal, deserves further study,” the report reads.

So until there’s more firm guidance, what should people do? Slow down, plan and enjoy eating, the group recommends.

“We suggest eating mindfully, by paying attention to planning both what you eat and when you eat meals and snacks, to combat emotional eating,” St-Onge said.

“Many people find that emotions can trigger eating episodes when they are not hungry, which often leads to eating too many calories from foods that have low nutritional value.”

Quiz Answers...



1) Answer: Popcorn, if It's Air Popped

In the circle of snacks, pretzels are a healthy choice, mainly because they're low in fat. Three cups of air-popped popcorn, on the other hand, has enough fiber to actually help you lower the LDL (bad) cholesterol levels in the body. Popping those kernels at home is healthier than eating the bagged variety. And remember to skip the butter.

2) Answer: Neither Singing Nor Talking

Trick question!

According to the American Heart Association (AHA), you can tell you're working out at a moderately intense level if you can talk in short sentences but not able to comfortably have a conversation.

If you feel short of breath and can't talk at all, you're pushing too hard. If you're able to sing, you're not pushing hard enough.

You can more scientifically measure your physical activity more accurately by checking your heart rate. Target heart rate is generally within 50 to 85 percent of your maximum heart rate, and your maximum heart rate is about 220 minus your age.

3) Answer: Fish Is Best for the Heart When It's Baked

Research has shown that omega-3 fatty acids, found in oily fish, can reduce one's risk of cardiovascular disease. A recent study of nearly 49,000 women, published in *Hypertension: Journal of the American Heart Association* found that those who ate little to no fish had 50 percent more heart problems than those who ate fish at least once a week.

4) Answer: A Half Hour on Most Days

If you got this one wrong, it may be because the right answer is easier than you thought it would be. You don't have to hit the gym or the pavement every day for your heart to reap the benefits. The American Heart Association recommends 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic activity five days a week, for a total of two and a half hours of workout time a week.

5) Answer: Both Coffee and Tea!

You don't have to choose -- studies have linked both coffee and tea to heart health.

Research shows that in moderation (two to four cups a day), coffee may lower risk of heart disease. Additionally, a 2011 study published in the journal *Stroke* found that women who drank a cup or more of coffee a day have up to a 25 per cent lower risk of stroke than those who sip java less often.

6) Answer: Yes, Beef Is a Go on a Low-Cholesterol Diet

The tastiest cuts of red meat are often high in cholesterol-raising saturated fat, which is why people who are watching their levels often steer clear of beef.

But as long as the meat you eat is lean and low in saturated fat, it can be a surprisingly healthy (and still tasty) part of a heart-friendly diet, according to a recent study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

Which meat should you buy? The leanest beef cuts include the round, chuck, sirloin, or loin. "Choice" and "select" grades are lower in fat than "prime," so go for those, whenever possible.

7) Answer: Watermelon Is the Lycopene Winner

Lycopene is an antioxidant compound that gives some red-colored fruits and vegetables their color. Research shows that antioxidants can help lower blood pressure and prevent oxidation of LDL cholesterol. When most people think of lycopene, they think of tomatoes. But two cups of watermelon actually pack more lycopene (18.16 mg) than a medium-sized tomato (4 mg).