



Nourish

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February is American Heart Month

February brings thoughts of Valentine's Day celebrations. February is a good time to think about your heart. Try this heart health quiz based on research by the American Heart Association.



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- About what percent of adults know that heart disease has been the leading cause of death for the past 100 years?
A. 20% B. 35% C. 50% D. 80%
- Which of these is associated with an increase in heart disease? Mark all that apply.
A. An hour decrease in nightly sleep below the recommendation.
B. An hour increase in nightly sleep above the recommendation.
C. Getting the recommended seven to eight hours of sleep.
D. Sleep is not associated with heart disease.
- About what percent of adults have high blood pressure?
A. 27% B. 47% C. 67% D. 87%

Answers: 1. C; 2. A and B; 3. B.

Think about your hard-working heart in February. These are the main strategies to reduce our risk for heart disease:

- Eat a heart-healthy diet such as the DASH diet or Mediterranean Diet. The recommendations at MyPlate.gov are based on these principles.
- Get regular moderate physical activity. Adults should aim for 30 minutes on most days of the week.
- Know your numbers: blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol. Follow your healthcare provider's advice on managing your health.
- Quit smoking and stay away from secondhand smoke.
- Manage stress.
- Lose weight if a health care provider recommends it.
- Get enough sleep.
- Set a goal for February and beyond.
- Join our online or face-to-face Nourish classes at www.ag.ndsu.edu/nourish

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EXTENSION

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Question

I heard that red wine is good for heart health. Is that true?

Drinking limited amounts of alcohol, including red wine, has been studied to determine its relationship with heart health. Red wine contains an antioxidant, resveratrol, found in grape skin. The study results vary. If you do not drink alcohol, don't start now for potential health benefits. Drinking too much alcohol is linked with irregular heart rhythms, high blood pressure, weight gain, risk of stroke and other health issues. You might want to make your own "mocktail" with grape juice and sparkling water. Have red or purple grapes as a snack.

Numerous studies, however, have shown that consuming alcohol is directly linked to increasing the risk for seven types of cancer, including throat cancer and colon cancer. Therefore, minimizing or eliminating alcohol while consuming more fruits, vegetables, beans, lentils, whole grains and choosing healthy fats are strategies known to help heart health. Monitor your salt intake and increase your physical activity to potentially improve heart health.



Pulse foods, including beans and lentils, are high in fiber and may reduce our risk for heart disease and other chronic diseases. Pair this warming soup with some heart-healthy whole-grain crackers or crusty bread.



Red Lentil Soup

8 cups chicken broth, low-sodium
2 cups red lentils (dry)
4 medium carrots, diced
½ teaspoon cumin
½ teaspoon paprika
1 large onion, diced
1-2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 chicken bouillon cubes, low-sodium
1 (10-ounce) can diced tomatoes and green chilies
1 lemon, juiced (about ½ cup juice)
Fresh parsley (for garnish)
Optional: 1 cup diced roasted chicken

Sort, then rinse lentils. Add to broth and bring to a boil. Add diced carrots. Cover, cook for 30 minutes while stirring occasionally. When lentils are tender, add dry spices, bouillon cubes and diced tomatoes. Saute onions and garlic in a frying pan using olive oil. When golden brown, add to soup mixture. Add chicken if desired. Simmer for five minutes. Turn off heat and add lemon juice to pot, stir. Garnish bowls of soup with parsley if desired.

Makes 12 servings. Without chicken, each serving has 170 calories, 3 grams (g) fat, 11 g protein, 25 g carbohydrate, 11 g fiber and 160 milligrams sodium.