



Nourish

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Know the Signs: Heart Health, Stroke Awareness and Smart Eating

Have you known anyone who has had AFib or an MI? Perhaps you know CPR.

We encounter many acronyms and initialisms in our lives, and knowing more about heart-related abbreviations could save your life or someone else's.

- AFib stands for atrial fibrillation, which is an irregular, often rapid heartbeat. It can increase our risk for stroke, but it can be managed by medications and medical procedures.
- MI means myocardial infarction, or heart attack.
- CPR, or cardiopulmonary resuscitation, is used in emergencies and includes chest compressions and rescue breath that can increase survival rates after heart attacks. Certification classes are available in many communities.

During February, American Heart Month, think about your heart and what you can do in case of emergencies such as a heart attack or stroke.

- Know the FAST acronym for strokes according to the American Stroke Association at www.stroke.org
 - **F** = Face drooping
 - **A** = Arm weakness
 - **S** = Speech difficulty
 - **T** = Time to call 911

To help prevent future heart issues, take lifestyle steps such as stopping smoking (if you smoke), getting 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week, eating a healthful diet, reducing stress, controlling diabetes (if you have it) and getting enough sleep.

- Consider learning more about another acronym: the DASH diet.
 - **D** = Dietary
 - **A** = Approaches to
 - **S** = Stop
 - **H** = Hypertension

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is a risk factor for strokes and heart attacks. The DASH diet features fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and low-fat dairy, and it limits sodium and added sugars.

- Learn more at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/education/dash-eating-plan



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Question

My dentist took my blood pressure the last time I had an appointment. Is dental health linked to heart health?

Medical professionals in the early 1900s saw the link between tooth infections and endocarditis, an inflammation of the heart. Poor dental hygiene can promote gum disease, which is connected to heart disease. Bacteria in our mouths can build up as plaque, and bacteria can circulate through our bloodstream, potentially contributing to heart issues.



- See your dentist twice a year for cleaning and checking, or as recommended.
- Brush your teeth twice a day and floss at least once a day (and don't forget your tongue).
- Eat a balanced, healthful diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables, lean proteins and calcium-rich milk fortified with vitamin D.
- Limit or avoid sweetened and carbonated beverages.
- Take your medications as prescribed.

Broccoli and potatoes are sources of potassium, a mineral linked to heart health. Keep sodium content low by using low-sodium broth. Evaporated milk has had at least half of its water removed and produces a thicker, richer soup.

Broccoli Potato Soup

- 4 cups broccoli, chopped
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth (can also use vegetable broth)
- 1 cup non-fat evaporated milk
- ½ cup instant mashed potatoes, prepared with water for 1 cup potatoes (or 1 cup mashed potatoes)
- Salt and pepper (to taste, optional)
- ¼ cup cheddar cheese, shredded as garnish

Combine broccoli, onion and broth in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Cover and simmer about 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add milk to saucepan. Slowly stir in potatoes. Cook, stirring constantly, until bubbly and thickened. Season with salt and pepper; stir in a little more milk or water if soup starts to become too thick. Ladle into serving bowls. Sprinkle about 1 tablespoon of cheese over each serving.

Makes four servings. Each serving has 195 calories, 4 grams (g) fat, 15 g protein, 26 g carbohydrate and 230 milligrams sodium.

Recipe source: Arizona Nutrition Network.

