

Wellsville

Get fit and have fun at Wellsville!™

We're making healthy choices!



Matters of the Heart

This month, we'd like everyone to think about matters of the heart, both physical and emotional! Let's start with a few "Did you know's"...

Did you know ... touching your toes could indicate a healthy heart? Try this at home: sit on the floor, legs straight, toes pointing up, and try to touch your toes. Can you? Research indicates that if you have poor trunk flexibility, your arteries may be as rigid as the rest of you. So stretching may prevent stiffening of not only your muscles but also your arteries. Remember as a rule, stretch only when your muscles are warm and hold the stretch for 30 to 60 seconds. Never stretch a cold muscle and do not bounce while stretching either – static stretching is best.

Did you know ... hugs count? Research shows that loving gestures like hugs and kisses trigger the body to release oxytocin, the "feel good" hormone associated with tranquility, calm, trust and compassion. Research shows that people who received a 20 second hug early in the day were better able to deal with stressful events later.

Did you know ... expressing your feelings can make you healthier? Research shows that people who took 20 minutes once every other week to write about the affection they feel for close family members and friends showed significant decreases in their cholesterol levels after a 5-week period. Writing happy thoughts about loved ones can also cause your body to release oxytocin.

Did you know ... people in happy marriages enjoy a host of health benefits? The benefits include longer life, lower cholesterol, a better chance of surviving cancer, improved mental health and lower risk of heart disease. How is this possible? Because when you have the support of a life partner, your body produces fewer stress hormones like cortisol, which is linked to several diseases.

Overall, the key is to keep your limbs flexible with regular activity and stretching. Plus, make sure you give a hug every day.

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Join the Wellsville gang and get movin' and groovin' to a healthier life.



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You know...a hug is like a boomerang - you get it back right away! And, write down positive feelings and thoughts when you can too, and work hard to keep your

relationship with the people you love the most in tiptop shape. Your heart and pretty much every other part of you will thank you for it.

The ABC's of Heart Disease Risks

Over 25 million Americans have diabetes, and over 50 million have pre-diabetes, many of whom do not even know it! And, about four out of every ten Americans have high blood pressure. These are just 2 risk factors for developing heart disease.

An easy way to remember some of the major risk factors for developing heart disease, including diabetes and high blood pressure, is as easy as A, B, C, D, E, F, G,

A - Age: Aging increases your chances of developing coronary heart disease; however, how well you take care of yourself throughout the years is more important than your actual numeric age. That we age is inevitable; how we age is a choice. So, when we take good care of ourselves, we lower our risk for developing heart disease and other diseases. There are many "young" 80 year olds and "old" 30-year-old

folks. Lifestyle plays a large part in how you age. Age fast, age slowly: the choice is yours.

B - Blood Pressure: Your blood pressure can definitely be controlled through exercise, a healthy diet, effective stress management, meaningful, positive relationships, and, in some cases, proper medications. On average, the top number of your blood pressure reading should be 130 or lower and the bottom 75 or lower.

C - Cigarette smoking: We all know using tobacco products is not good for our bodies. Cigarette smoking is a very high risk factor. It's best never to start, but if you do smoke, please consider quitting. There are many options one can take to quit. When you are willing to take those steps towards quitting, be strong and have faith. You can quit if you have a strong desire, a treatment plan in place that's best for you and a

support system to help you along the way! Many people have to quit several times before kicking the habit for good.

D - Diabetes: Even though diabetes is a risk factor for heart disease, diabetes can be controllable. And, you can lead a healthy, active life with diabetes. If you have diabetes, work with your healthcare provider to help you with an eating and activity plan that is best for you. Exercise and healthy eating can help improve insulin sensitivity, facilitate weight control and improve cardiovascular health.

E - Elevated Cholesterol Levels: A healthy meal plan and physical activity can indeed improve your cholesterol ratio by increasing your "good" cholesterol and lowering your "bad" cholesterol levels. HDL is the "good" cholesterol which helps keep the LDL

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The ABC's of Heart Disease Risks

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(bad) cholesterol from clogging up the arteries. Your total cholesterol should be under 200. The HDL "good" cholesterol is best to be over 40 for men, 50 for women and the LDL "bad" cholesterol is best to be 100 or below. A simple blood test can measure your cholesterol levels.

F – Family History: Unfortunately, this is one factor that you cannot control; however, if you know you have a family history of heart disease, diabetes or obesity, you have an added incentive to take care of your health.

G – Gross Inactivity: Inactivity (and overeating) can result in becoming overweight or obese which can be a major heart risk and, can lead to diabetes, high blood pressure and other

chronic illnesses. So kids need to have an hour of active play every day and adults 30 to 60 minutes on most days of the week. And, we all can learn to be "portion-wise" with our food. Eating from buffets, eating out of a bag, "mindless" eating, e.g., eating while watching TV, emotional eating, eating lots of fried, fatty and fast foods, and eating too fast can set you up to overeat. Such habits can lead to a host of chronic illnesses, not to mention, being overweight.

So, be smart, take heart! First, get a check-up with your healthcare provider to learn about your personal heart risk.

To sum up our ABCDEF and G's:

Eat a heart-smart diet, be physically active, live tobacco free, eat mindfully and slowly, manage your stress well, control your portion sizes, embrace a positive attitude, be nice to others, forgive, be kind to yourself, surround yourself with a healthy environment and family and friends who cultivate healthy lifestyle choices, be involved with activities that are meaningful to you and live "on purpose."

By doing these things, you are setting yourself up to living a healthy, happy and fulfilling life! And you'll be adding quality to your years instead of just adding years to your life! You and your family deserve it and are worth the effort! Your heart will love you for it! Carpe Diem!

HAPPY DAY RECIPE

Begin with a smile
 Mix in some laughter
 Add a dash of wisdom
 Stir in plenty of hugs
 Blend with inspiration
 Combine with joy and
 Top off the day with
 A generous sprinkling
 of love!



The information in the newsletter is for educational purposes only, and does not make any medical recommendations or claims, nor does it serve as a substitute for medical advice. Please consult your healthcare provider for any health concerns you may have.





Heart-Healthy Breakfast

Blueberries are probably one of the best fruits that you can eat to benefit your overall health. According to a study presented at the 2009 Experimental Biology Conference, a diet rich in blueberries lowers blood cholesterol levels while improving glucose control and insulin sensitivity, lowering the risk of heart disease and diabetes. Furthermore, the high fiber content, antioxidants and the ability to dissolve the "bad cholesterol" make blueberries the ideal dietary supplement to cure many heart diseases. So enjoy the following recipe - which contains the amazing blueberry fruit.

- Information obtained from www.womenfitness.net, one of the top 100 websites specifically catered toward women's health.

Homemade Blueberry Pancakes

Ingredients

- ½ tsp margarine
- 1 cup all-purpose baking mix
- ½ cup fat-free milk
- 1 egg (or 2 egg whites)
- ½ cup blueberries

**Recipe obtained from the
Wellsville Website.
Visit the site and find even
more fantastic recipes!**

Method

Set the oven to 425 degrees. Put the butter in the small pan and spread it over the bottom of the pan using a paper towel.

Put baking mix into bowl. Add the milk and the egg. Whisk just until the large lumps disappear. Batter should be lumpy. Pour the batter into the pan, and then sprinkle the blueberries over the batter.

Bake the pancake for 13-15 minutes or until the top is light golden brown. Carefully remove the pan from the oven using oven mitts. Sprinkle powdered sugar over the top of the pancake. Enjoy with some light maple syrup.

