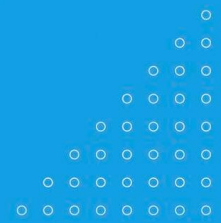




WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

August 2024



HIGHLIGHTS for the [August 2024 Newsletter](#)

Watermelon: A Delicious Way to Lower Blood Pressure

Did you know 1 in 3 adults has elevated or high blood pressure? While medication is frequently used to control blood pressure, diet, exercise and lifestyle habits can make a difference too. Here's a sweet and delicious way to lower blood pressure...

Do THIS 30 Minutes a Day to Live Longer

Julia Hawkins isn't like most 108-year olds. After all, the average life expectancy in the U.S. is 76.3 years old. That age has been in Hawkins rearview mirror for more than 30 years. So what's her secret to living longer? Grab your running shoes and check this out...

Calories in Restaurant Meals Might Surprise You

You hungry? You might head to your favorite restaurant, hit the drive-thru or order take out. But if you're trying to control calories, manage your weight, and improve your health, you might be surprised by what's in most restaurant meals. Here's what you need to know...

Y-Axis: Need a Pick-Me-Up?

Need an early-morning pick-me-up? Skip that cup of coffee, energy drink or cold shower and do this instead to put a little spring in your step.

Recipe: Fruit & Feta Salad

Hungry for a sweet, refreshing and flavorful salad? Grab some watermelon and cantaloupe, plus a few other ingredients, and give this Fruit & Feta Salad recipe a try.

Take the August Health Challenge!

Be Heart Smart: Make heart-healthy choices daily

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question: How can I help my family be more active?



THE Y AXIS



Need a Pick-Me-Up?

Waking up in the morning can be hard for some people. Staying alert when surges of afternoon tiredness hit can be too.



What do you do when you need a pick-me-up?

Some people gulp down caffeinated drinks, take a nap, or go for a brisk walk. But there's at least one more thing you can do.

Chew on this...

Skip the caffeine. Take a walk if you can. And if a nap doesn't fit your schedule, chew on this.

One study found that chewing mint-flavored gum for about 10 minutes may help increase brain activity and alertness.

COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:

evan@thehealthycopywriter.com

Watermelon: A Delicious Way to Lower Blood Pressure

Celebrate National Watermelon Day with this sweet & juicy fruit

Pick up a carefully-cut wedge of watermelon. Take a bite. Savor its sweet taste. If the juice runs down your arm, you know you've picked the perfect melon.

On Aug. 3, 2024, millions of people will celebrate National Watermelon Day. This sweet and juicy fruit tastes great, and it's an iconic part of summer.

But it may also be just the thing to help control blood pressure, according to a recent study.¹

1 in 3 adults have elevated or high blood pressure

According to the American Heart Association, elevated or high blood pressure can lead to:

- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Vision loss
- Kidney disease
- And other health problems

MORE

Try these sweet watermelon recipes <https://tinyurl.com/6cuncxjn>

But it doesn't have to be this way. In the study at San Diego State University, researchers looked at the impact of eating cookies vs. watermelon.

And the results for watermelon were a lot juicier than cookies. Researchers found that...

Eating watermelon every day can help you:

- Lose weight
- Lower Body Mass Index
- Reduce triglycerides and LDL (bad) cholesterol
- Lower blood pressure

There's other benefits, too. Watermelon is low in calories. It contains vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that prevent disease and certain types of cancer. And it's about 92 percent water to help you stay hydrated.

Eating a slice of watermelon may be the most popular way to enjoy this fruit. But it also tastes great in fruit salad, salsa, and drinks. That's some juicy stuff...Yum!

Do THIS 30 Minutes a Day to Live Longer

108-year old shows you how it's done

Julia Hawkins liked to work in her yard. And if the phone rang, she'd run inside to answer it.

At 100 years old, that was pretty active — even for a lot of adults half her age. But she decided she could do better. So she laced up her running shoes and started moving more.

At 105 years old, she clocked a 62-second finish for the 100-meter dash at the U.S. Track and Field outdoor championship for seniors and set a new world record. She also set records at the National Senior Games.

Her speed and power earned her the nickname, 'The Hurricane.' And at 108 years old, she's still going.

"When you get older, you should have magic moments and passions," says Julia.

"You have to have something to look forward to, something to be ready for, something to care about."

Get 30 minutes of exercise a day

Want to improve your health, feel better, and live longer? Be active, even as you age.

The American College of Sports Medicine recommends adults get at least 30 minutes of exercise five days a week.





Fruit & Feta Salad

Hungry for a sweet, refreshing and flavorful salad? Grab some watermelon and cantaloupe, plus a few other ingredients, and give this Fruit & Feta Salad recipe a try.⁴

Ingredients for the vinaigrette dressing

- 2 T balsamic vinegar
- 1-1/2 T olive oil
- 1 dash black pepper

Ingredients for the salad

- 2 C watermelon chunks
- 2 C cantaloupe chunks
- 1/4 C medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 6 C fresh spinach or arugula
- 1/2 C reduced-fat feta cheese crumbles
- 1/4 C pine nuts

Directions

- Whisk together vinaigrette ingredients.
- Toss with remaining ingredients and serve.

Serves 4. 221 calories per serving.

Calories in Restaurant Meals Might Surprise You

Cook at home more often to control calories

When you're busy and you're hungry, how do you curb your cravings?

A lot of people hit the drive-thru for a burger, fries, and soda, or go to a restaurant.

In fact, a recent survey found that about 58 percent of adults dine in or order take-out at least once a week.

How often do you dine in or get take out?

If it's more than once in a while, it could be the reason you weigh more than you should or have other health problems.

- In a recent study, researchers followed 18,000 people for eight years.³
- They tracked their food choices and looked at the results.
- Restaurant diners ate at least 200 calories more per meal than those who ate at home.
- They also consumed more cholesterol, fat, and sodium than people who ate at home.

A few more calories per restaurant meal may not seem like much.



- But an extra 200 calories just once a week adds up to 10,400 calories in a year.
- You would need to walk for about 52 hours at a brisk pace to burn that many calories.

If you want to keep your weight under control and improve your health, make an effort to prepare your own meals more often. It might take a little planning. But you'll be able to choose healthier options than what's available on a menu.

MORE

Calories in popular restaurant meals
<https://tinyurl.com/4rr9spav>

Do THIS 30 Minutes a Day to Live Longer (continued from page 1)

- Why? Aerobic exercise helps burn calories and fat. It lowers the risk for chronic disease. Exercise also helps strengthen your heart, lungs, and muscles.
- Here's the thing: Only about half of adults get 30 minutes of exercise a day.²

Are you getting at least 30 minutes of exercise most days? If you are, keep it up. If you're not, find an activity you enjoy, and get started.

MORE

7 easy ways to be more active
<https://tinyurl.com/ydvtv3u6>

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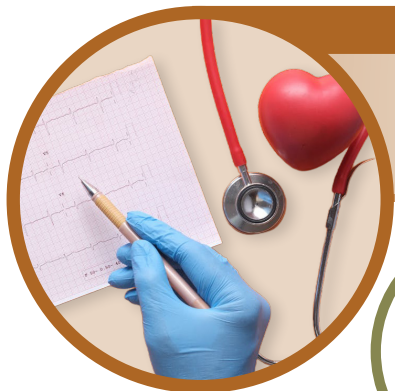
Take the August Health Challenge!

Be Heart Smart: Make heart-healthy choices daily

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question: How can I help my family be more active?





Be Heart Smart

CHALLENGE

Make heart-healthy choices daily

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read “Be Heart Smart.”
2. Create a plan to be active and eat heart-healthy foods.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



When Kevin Smith worked at a New Jersey convenience store, eating candy bars, hot dogs, soda, and junk food was kind of part of the gig.

But that day job also gave him an idea. Make a movie called Clerks. He wrote the script and actually filmed the movie at the store he worked at after hours. And it launched his career as a screenwriter, actor, film producer, and director.

He started gaining success...and gaining weight. After tipping the scale at 330 pounds, Smith had a massive heart attack at age 48. And he knew things had to change.

He started eating more fruits and vegetables. Walking the dog became a daily routine. And in six months he lost 50-plus pounds, and adopted a lifestyle to lose 50 more.

“I’m on a different path now,” says Smith. “I had to make a switch after my heart attack. Because what’s the alternative, death? It took a minute, but my overall health is better. I sleep better, move better, think better, and I’m healthier.”

How’s your heart health? Did you know heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States?¹ It doesn’t have to be. Your health habits can make a difference. Take the month-long health challenge to Be Heart Smart.

Video:
How to prevent a heart attack
<https://tinyurl.com/2u7xh6uw>

The Tick-Tock Test

How’s your heart health?
Answer these questions to find out:



T F

1. Is your blood pressure 120/80 or higher?
2. Do you eat red meat?
3. Are you sedentary most of the time?
4. Do you have a family history of heart disease?
5. Are you overweight or obese?
6. Do you smoke or have exposure to secondhand smoke?

If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, you could be at risk for heart-related problems. Routine check-ups to measure blood pressure, blood fats, and weight can help you know what habit changes will improve heart health. Diet, exercises, and healthy lifestyle habits can make a big difference.²

Beat the Odds: 8 Heart-Healthy Habits

If you want to improve your heart health...do something about it. About 80 percent of heart-related problems are preventable with diet, exercise, and smart lifestyle habits.³ Heart are 8 ways to beat the odds and improve heart health:

1. Feast on fruits & veggies

Here’s what you should be eating: 1-1/2 to 2 cups of fruit per day, and 2 to 3 cups of vegetables per day. The truth: Only 12% of adults eat enough fruit, and only 10% eat enough vegetables.⁴

Why more fruits & veggies? They’re low in calories. They contain antioxidants, fiber, vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. Try this:

- Eat a banana for breakfast.
- Add berries to yogurt, cereal, or oatmeal.
- Eat more salads made with leafy greens and other vegetables.
- Include chopped or shredded vegetables in casseroles, breads, or pasta sauce.
- Eat more steamed vegetables.
- Include more beans, peas, and legumes with meals.



Beat the Odds: 8 Heart-Healthy Habits

2. Go with the (whole) grain

Research shows that eating fiber-rich foods like whole grains can protect your heart.⁵ Whole grains help improve cholesterol levels and lower the risk for heart disease. Whole-grain foods can also help you manage your weight and control blood sugar levels.

- Eat more whole-grain breads, pasta, oatmeal, and rice.
- When baking, replace half of the refined flour called for in the recipe with whole-grain flour.
- Make sandwiches or toast with whole-grain bread.

3. Choose fats with benefits

Fats found in fried foods, ice cream, cheese, milk chocolate, red meat, and many processed foods increase your risk for heart problems. On the other hand, healthy fats protect your heart.

- Use healthy vegetable oils (canola, soy, olive, etc.) for cooking and baking.
- Eat more olives, avocados, nuts, and seeds.
- Add fish to your diet 1 to 2 times a week.

4. Shake the salt habit

Most people eat too much sodium, and may not even realize it. Processed foods like pizza, frozen dinners, and fast food are especially high in sodium. Too much can lead to high blood pressure and damage your heart. Aim to eat no more than 1,500 mg of sodium per day.⁶

10 steps to improve heart health
<http://tinyurl.com/ydvn65w>

5. Be smoke-free

Avoid secondhand smoke. And if you smoke, quit! If you don't smoke, don't start. After you stop, your heart begins to grow stronger right away. Within as little as two years, your risk of a heart attack is nearly the same as a non-smoker.⁷

6. Move It

Regular exercise is important for keeping your heart healthy. Aim to get at least 30 minutes of exercise five days a week.⁸ Here are some ways to be more active:

- Take a 10-minute walk each morning and afternoon.
- Go to the gym. Try jogging or running. Or take a group exercise class.
- Yard work and vigorous house cleaning counts as exercise too.

7. Chill out

Studies show that people with high stress levels at work or home have higher rates of heart disease. Learning to manage stress in healthy ways is good for your heart.⁹

- Limit your stress load. Don't over commit. Learn to say "No" and "I need more help."
- Get adequate rest daily.
- Make time to exercise, relax, and do fun things.
- Don't use alcohol or other addictive substances to manage stress.

Are you at risk for heart disease?
<https://tinyurl.com/s2s7skd>

- Develop a good support system. Talking with family members, friends, or co-workers about stress in your life can help.

8. Get regular checkups

Visit your doctor at least once a year for a check-up. Preventive care and exams can make a difference. Want to keep your heart healthy for years to come? Now is always the best time to start.

Heart of the Matter

Ready to learn a little more about your heart to keep it healthy? Check out this data on heart health...

100,000

Average number of times heart beats per day

6

Number of quarts of blood the heart pumps through the body every 20 seconds

2.5 billion

Average number of beats the heart makes in a lifetime

30%

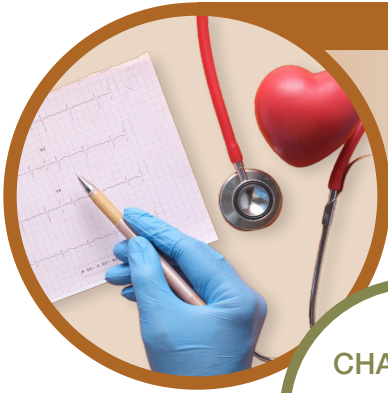
Average reduction in heart disease risk from eating more plant-based foods, less red meat and more olive oil

702,880

Number of people who die from heart disease each year

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Be Heart Smart

CHALLENGE
Make heart-healthy choices daily

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, or add to your digital calendar).
2. Record the number of days you make heart-healthy choices.
3. Use the calendar to record your actions and choices to create heart-healthy habits.
4. Review your progress at the end of each day, week, and at the end of the month. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____		
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_____ Number of days this month I practiced heart-healthy habits

_____ Number of days this month I did other types of physical activity besides walking

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____

Q. How can I get my family to be more active?

A. Before you can get them moving, there's something you need to know. Screen time has a big pull on kids. On average, kids ages 8 to 18 spend an estimated 6 to 9 hours a day staring at a screen.¹

Less screen time means you'll have more time for other things, like being active. Make sense? Getting regular exercise can help you and your family:

- Maintain a healthy weight or lose weight
- Improve heart health
- Build stronger bones and muscles
- Prevention chronic diseases
- And more.

Ready to make exercise a family affair? Here are some simple ways to be more active:²

Be an example

It starts with you. Make time to exercise, walk, ride a bike, work in the yard, or go to the gym.³

- When your kids see that exercise is important to you, they will be more inclined to model your behavior.
- The opposite is true as well. One recent study found that children with overweight or obese parents are about twice as likely to be overweight or obese as adults.⁴

Plan active family time

The average adult spends 7-plus hours a day in front of a screen



(computer, phone, tablet). If you want to be more active, swap some of that screen time with physical activity and make a plan...

Cut back on screen time, even if it's just an hour, and plan to do something active, like:

- Take a walk.
- Go for a hike.
- Ride bikes.
- Play a game of Frisbee at the park.
- Try something new together like basketball, volleyball, table tennis, or swimming.

You don't need to do a lot of planning to be more active as a family. Park farther from the store and walk. If you're at the mall or airport, take the stairs instead of the escalator.

Turn chores into games

Household chores don't have to ruin your day. Turn your to-do list into a game.

Get your family involved and see how fast you all can:

- Weed the garden
- Walk the dog
- Vacuum the house
- Put away groceries
- Take out the garbage
- Clean the bathroom
- Fold and put away laundry

ASK THE *Wellness* DOCTOR

You'll burn extra calories by being more active, and you'll get the chores out of the way for more family fun time.

Move More + Sit Less = Live Longer

One recent study found that just 20 minutes of moderate exercise per day cuts your risk for early death by 21 percent. Bump that to 40-plus minutes per day and the risk of early death drops by 31 percent.⁵

Helping your family be more active is a lifestyle choice. Encourage them, be consistent, and make it fun.

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