

Better Health Works

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Heart Health for the Ones We Love

Heart disease is responsible for one of every four deaths in the U.S., making it the leading cause of death in the country. When we see a friend or family member suffering from heart-related complications or making poor decisions for their heart health, talking to them about making changes can be difficult. Here are suggestions to help start a conversation that can lead a loved one to live heart healthy:

Make a Connection

- Let your loved one know you are concerned because you care for them.

Share the Facts

- About 600,000 people die of heart disease in the U.S. every year — that's more than all types of cancer combined.
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women.
- Coronary heart disease (CHD), also known as coronary artery disease, is a narrowing of the small blood vessels that supply blood and oxygen to the heart. CHD is the most common type of heart disease, killing more than 385,000 people annually.
- Every year about 715,000 Americans have a heart attack.

Suggest Improvements

- Quit smoking and avoid secondhand smoke.
- Manage your cholesterol and blood pressure.
- Drink alcohol only in moderation (one drink a day for women, two drinks a day for men).
- Get active with a goal of two and a half hours of moderate aerobic activity each week.
- Aim for a healthy weight; even losing just 10 pounds can decrease your risk of heart disease.
- Eat healthy and read nutrition labels.
 - Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.
 - Choose fat-free or low-fat milk products, or soy products with added calcium.
 - If your breads, cereals, or grains have more than one ingredient listed, make sure "whole-wheat" or "whole-grain" is listed first.
 - Choose from a variety of protein sources, and stick with lean meats.
 - Cut back on saturated fats and look for products with zero trans fats.

Get Involved

If possible, join your loved one in making lifestyle changes and encourage each other to stay on track. Getting started can be hard for some, and having a partner can make all the difference. Go grocery shopping and cook healthy meals together, plan a daily walk, and remind each other to get your blood pressure and cholesterol levels checked.

Let Us Help

If your loved one is a Capital BlueCross customer and is living with heart failure or CHD, we can provide free and confidential assistance. Our Condition Management program offers one-on-one coaching by phone with experienced care managers, educational resources, monitoring to support a physician's care plan, and self-care empowerment programs.

-Courtesy of CDC.gov and HealthFinder.gov.

Join the Million Hearts Campaign

Million Hearts® is a national initiative to prevent one million heart attacks and strokes in the U.S. over the next five years. Sign the Million Hearts pledge today!

Healthy Recipe: Five Bean Salad

If you're looking to incorporate a variety of proteins in your diet, give this heart-healthy salad a try! As a bonus, it's low in calories, so dig in for a second serving.

Ingredients (per serving):

- 1/4 cup each of 5 cooked beans: kidney, black-eyed, Great Northern, chickpea, and black beans
- 1/3 cup red onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup celery, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- Red wine vinegar, to taste
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 cup shaved Parmesan cheese

Directions:

In a medium bowl, mix together beans, celery, parsley and onion. Set aside. In a small bowl mix oil, vinegar salt and pepper together, adjust to taste. Add to the bean mixture and toss to combine. Add cheese before serving.

Nutrition (per serving):

Calories: 102

See more healthy tips and recipes at capitalbluestore.com/blog.

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