

# Celebrate! *A Healthy You*



*A newsletter devoted to helping individuals of every size live in a healthy body.*

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## Love and Care for Yourself

Express love for your heart as well as your taste buds by making heart-smart food and activity choices. The list of tips below may look lengthy but you don't have to put them all into action. Pick the easiest one or two as a starting point. Once you've mastered those, move onto another, then another. Enjoy and celebrate every success!

- ♥ If you smoke or use tobacco in any form, stop. Whether it's cigars, cigarettes or spit tobacco—all of it is hazardous and addictive. Even if you have tried to quit before and failed, try, try again. Your health and the health of those you love depends on it. 
- ♥ Eat more fruits and vegetables. Start by bringing a piece of fruit with you to work or school for a snack. Add a side salad to your burger for lunch, a dish of peaches for dessert after dinner. 
- ♥ Likewise, go for whole grains more often. Whole grain versions of your favorite breads, cereals and pasta contain more vitamins, minerals, and most of all, fiber than refined (or white) versions. Look for brown rice, 100% whole wheat bread and pasta, bulgur, barley and popcorn.
- ♥ Drink lowfat or fat free milk. To make the transition to a lower fat milk easy, switch first to one lower in fat like 2% or 1%.
- ♥ Try reduced-fat versions of other dairy products like cheese and sour cream in recipes. You will probably not notice any difference in flavor or quality.
- ♥ Select lean cuts of meat whenever possible and cut off visible fat before cooking.
- ♥ Go for baked instead of fried versions of chicken, fish, chips and so on. When you do choose fried foods, use paper towels or napkins to blot away as much surface grease as possible. Every drop matters.
- ♥ Serve yourself moderate portions. If you are hungry for more after eating that, have more. Numerous studies have shown that we tend to eat whatever is on our plate

no matter how hungry or full we feel. Too often that means eating much more than we need or even want, and we gain weight as a result. When eating out where food is served already on your plate, split orders with table companions. Or, ask for a 'to-go' container when your meal is served and put at least half in it before eating. Take the extra portion home for a quick meal the next day.

- ♥ Choose packaged foods with lower sodium content. Compare the sodium content on the Nutrition Facts part of the label. Use reduced sodium versions of broth, soy sauce and vegetable juice. Lowering the amount of sodium you eat will help your blood pressure.
- ♥ Use herbs and spices instead of salt to add flavor. Take note of herbs in recipes you already like, then use them in similar recipes. For example, basil and oregano are frequently used in Italian cooking, garlic and ginger in Asian, and so on. Use small amounts to start and make notes on your recipes of what worked and what didn't. 
- ♥ Cut the salt by half or leave it out entirely. For example, salt can be left out of the cooking water for pasta, rice and frozen vegetables. If your recipe has high salt ingredients like sausage, canned soup or vegetables, wait until you taste the finished product before adding more salt.
- ♥ Balance high fat or high salt foods with those leaner and lower. For example, with fried chicken, choose rice instead of mashed potatoes and skip the gravy altogether.
- ♥ Make time to be physically active every day. These activities can be things that need to get done like cleaning or yard work, as well as things for fun like playing sports, walking, and dancing. 
- ♥ Get enough sleep, about 8 hours for most of us. Chronic sleep deprivation has been linked to poor mental and physical health. Make it a priority to get the rest your body needs. 

# Menu of the Month

February is the month to focus on being good to our hearts, and eating heart healthy oatmeal is a great way to do that. **Baked Oatmeal** makes a tasty change to regular cooked oatmeal but is still low in fat and sodium and a good source of cholesterol-lowering fiber. Egg whites and cinnamon in this recipe produce a moist texture and flavor reminiscent of bread pudding. The lengthy baking time makes this dish a better fit for weekends but leftovers reheat very well in the microwave for workday breakfasts. Serve **Baked Oatmeal** with additional milk or yogurt and fruit if desired.

## Baked Oatmeal

2 ¼ cups quick oats or 2 ¾ cups old-fashioned oats, uncooked  
2/3 cup brown sugar  
¾ cup raisins or dried cranberries  
½ cup chopped walnuts  
1 ½ teaspoons cinnamon

3 1/3 cups skim milk  
4 egg whites, lightly beaten  
1 teaspoon vegetable oil  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray an 8-inch baking dish with cooking spray. In a large bowl, combine oats, brown sugar, raisins, walnuts and cinnamon. In a medium bowl, combine milk, egg whites, oil and vanilla and mix thoroughly. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and stir until well blended.

Pour into prepared baking dish and bake for 55 to 60 minutes or until center is set and firm. Cool slightly and serve topped with milk or yogurt and fruit, if desired.

Store leftovers tightly covered in the refrigerator for up to four days. Freeze for longer storage.

Makes 8 servings. Nutrition information per serving: 293 calories, 11g protein, 50g carbohydrate, 3.6g fiber, 7g fat, 90mg sodium.



## Red is the Color of Love

The color red is closely tied to love and Valentine's Day. Red is also linked to some very helpful and healthful nutrients, the phytochemicals lycopene and anthocyanins. These nutrients can help reduce the risk of some cancers and help with heart health, urinary tract health, and even help brain function.

Some of the beautiful red fruits and vegetables are tomatoes (and all the products made from them), red peppers, red onions, beets, red cabbage, kidney beans, red potatoes, red-skinned apples, pink grapefruit, red grapes, strawberries, cherries, raspberries, cranberries, watermelon and pomegranates.

Show your love by adding some red to your menu on Valentine's Day or any day with these ideas:

- ♥ Include red peppers, cherry or grape tomatoes, red onion, red cabbage and pieces of beet in a tossed salad.
- ♥ Make cranberry bread with that bag of cranberries in your freezer left from when they were on sale earlier this winter.

- ♥ Top hot cereal with a heart made from dried cranberries or cherries.
- ♥ Make snack mix with dried cranberries or cherries, almonds and a few chocolate chips.
- ♥ Steam tiny red potatoes with the skins and season with a small amount of margarine and fresh chopped parsley.
- ♥ Make a heart shaped pizza from your own pizza dough. Or, use a large heart-shaped cookie cutter to make individual pizza dough hearts. Spread with pizza sauce and top with red onions and peppers or your other favorite toppings.

### *Words to Consider*

"Life is a magic vase filled to the brim, so made that you cannot dip from it nor draw from it; but it overflows into the hand that drops treasures into it. Drop in malice and it overflows hate; drop in charity and it overflows love." - John Ruskin