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ALASKA CARE

Health Plans



A Publication Of
The Wellness
Council Of America

★ HEALTH INFORMATION PRESENTED AS IF YOUR LIFE DEPENDED ON IT ★

AlaskaCare HealthTracks Wellness Program

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2. You slipped on the ice, your back sore...should you ice it or take a hot shower?

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2. www.intellinurse.com provides convenient links to federal health resources that offer reliable information about specific diagnoses, procedures, drug information, clinical trials, and senior health. You do not have to register or submit health information to use this free service.

If you need help...they have answers!

WIN for Alaska, Inc. your wellness provider is available for all your wellness needs. Visit the HealthTracks website at <http://winforalaska.com/healthtracksak/home.html>

The Big 4

ESSENTIAL HABITS FOR A HEALTHY HEART



February is American Heart Month—and a good time to remember that it's never too late to start protecting your heart health. According to the NIH National Heart Lung and Blood Institute, people can lower their heart disease risk enormously (by as much as 82 percent) simply by adopting sensible health habits.

'The Big Four'—Habits For A Healthy Lifestyle

So, what does a healthy lifestyle consist of? Here are the basics: If you eat a nutritious diet, get regular physical activity, maintain a healthy weight, and stop smoking, you will help to keep your heart healthy. But doing just one or two of these "Big Four" habits isn't enough to protect your heart. To keep your heart strong and healthy, it is vital to adopt and practice all four lifestyle habits.

Some people may need to take additional steps to prevent heart disease. For example, if you have diabetes, you also will need to keep your blood sugar levels under control. Whatever your current health condition or habits, creating an action plan to improve your lifestyle will make a positive difference in your heart health.

Change Takes Effort—One Step At A Time

Taking care of your heart is one of the most important things you can do for your health and well-being. But, because heart health involves changing daily habits, it can require some real effort. To make the process easier, try tackling only one habit at a time. For example, if you smoke cigarettes and also eat a diet high in saturated fats, work first on kicking the smoking habit. Then, once you've become comfortable as a nonsmoker, begin to skim the fat from your diet.

Remember, nobody's perfect. Nobody always eats the ideal diet or gets just the right amount of physical activity. The important thing is to follow a sensible, realistic plan that will gradually lessen your chances of developing heart disease.

So keep at it. Work with your doctor. Ask family members and friends for support. If you slip, try again. Be good to your heart, and it will reward you many times over—with a better chance for a longer, more vigorous life. For more information about heart health, visit the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute at www.nhlbi.nih.gov.

FEBRUARY

CHOCOLATE ALMOND TRUFFLES

INGREDIENTS

½ cup	fat-free half-and-half
1	9.7-oz. bar 70% cacao bittersweet chocolate
½ cup	agave nectar
½ tsp.	vanilla
2 Tbsp.	plant-sterol margarine
1 cup	whole almonds
	Shredded coconut to coat the truffle (optional)

DIRECTIONS

Place the half-and-half in a heavy saucepan at low heat. Break the chocolate into pieces and add to the half-and-half. Add the agave nectar, vanilla and margarine. Stir frequently and continue heating until the chocolate is melted and smooth. Place the mixture into an 8-inch square pan and chill in the refrigerator for about an hour until firm. Toast the almonds and crush in a food processor. (1 cup of whole almonds equals ½ cup of crushed, chopped almonds.) When the chocolate is firm, remove from refrigerator. Using a teaspoon or melon baller, form ½-inch to ¾-inch balls. Roll each ball in the crushed almonds and/or coconut, if desired.

NUTRITION

Calories 68 (Calories from Fat 36), Total Fat 4g, Saturated Fat 2g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 6mg, Total Carbohydrate 7g, Dietary Fiber 0g, Sugars 5g, Protein 1g

SERVINGS

Number Of Servings: 40
Serving size: ¼ of recipe

A HEALTHY RECIPE BY RICHARD COLLINS, MD

Florentine MANICOTTI



FLORENTINE MANICOTTI

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp. plant-sterol margarine
- ½ cup chopped onion
 - 1 garlic clove minced
- 2 10-oz. packages chopped frozen spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
- 1 lb. ricotta cheese, fat-free or light
- 4 oz. fat-free mozzarella
- ½ cup Parmesan cheese
- ¾ cup egg substitute
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 12 large manicotti pasta noodles
- 1 26-oz. jar pasta sauce
- Salt and pepper

Preparation

Cook manicotti per package directions. Reserve. Melt margarine. Add onion and garlic. Cook over medium heat until onions are soft. Let cool and transfer onion mixture to a large bowl. Add spinach, ricotta, mozzarella, Parmesan cheese, egg substitute, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Mix well.

Stuff manicotti. Put in a single layer in casserole. Heat sauce and pour over. Cover and bake for 40 minutes at 350 degrees. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese over the top.

Nutritional Analysis

Calories 383 (Calories from Fat 62), Total Fat 7g, Saturated Fat 2g, Cholesterol 20mg, Sodium 1,132mg, Total Carbohydrate 55g, Dietary Fiber 7g, Sugars 15g, Protein 26g

Servings

Number Of Servings: 6, Serving Size: ⅓ of recipe



ABOUT **Richard Collins MD**

Dr. Richard Collins, a leading authority and speaker on the prevention and reversal of heart disease, emphasizes the connection between eating well and living long. His delicious low-fat recipes have been shared with millions through his cookbook, videos, and his nationally-renowned cooking seminars. For more information, visit Dr. Collins' website at www.thecookingcardiologist.com.

Stress Management

ASSESS YOUR STRESS



Stress management involves controlling and reducing the tension that occurs in stressful situations by making emotional and physical changes.

To help you create your own personal stress management plan, here are five key areas that can help reduce stress. Take a look at the areas where you need improvement, and make efforts to reduce your stress!

Attitude

A person's attitude can influence whether or not a situation or emotion is interpreted as stressful. A person with a negative attitude will often report experiencing more stress than someone with a positive attitude. Here's what you can do:

- ▶ Find the positive in situations, and don't dwell on the negative.
- ▶ Plan fun activities.
- ▶ Take regular breaks.

Diet/Nutrition

A poor diet puts the body in a state of physical stress and weakens the immune system. As a result, a person can be more likely to get infections. A poor diet can mean unhealthy food choices, not eating enough, or not eating on a normal schedule, which can also decrease the ability to deal with emotional stress. Try incorporating these suggestions into your daily routine:

- ▶ Eat foods that improve your health and well-being. For example, increase the amount of fruits and vegetables you eat.
- ▶ Eat normal-sized portions on a regular schedule.

Physical Activity

Not getting enough physical activity can put the body in a stressed state. Physical activity has many benefits, including promoting a feeling of well-being. Get started with the following techniques:

- ▶ Start a physical activity program. Most experts recommend 20 minutes of aerobic activity three times per week. (You do not have to join a gym—20 minutes of brisk walking outdoors is enough.)
- ▶ Decide on a specific type, amount, and level of physical activity that makes you feel better and less stressed. Fit this into your schedule so it can become part of your routine.
- ▶ Find a buddy to exercise with—it is more fun and it will encourage you to stick with your routine.

Social Support Systems

Almost everyone needs someone in their life they can rely on when they are having a hard time. Having little or no support makes stressful situations even more difficult to deal with. Be open to social support by:

- ▶ Making an effort to socialize. Even though you may feel tempted to avoid people when you feel stressed, meeting friends usually helps people feel less stressed.
- ▶ Being good to yourself and others.

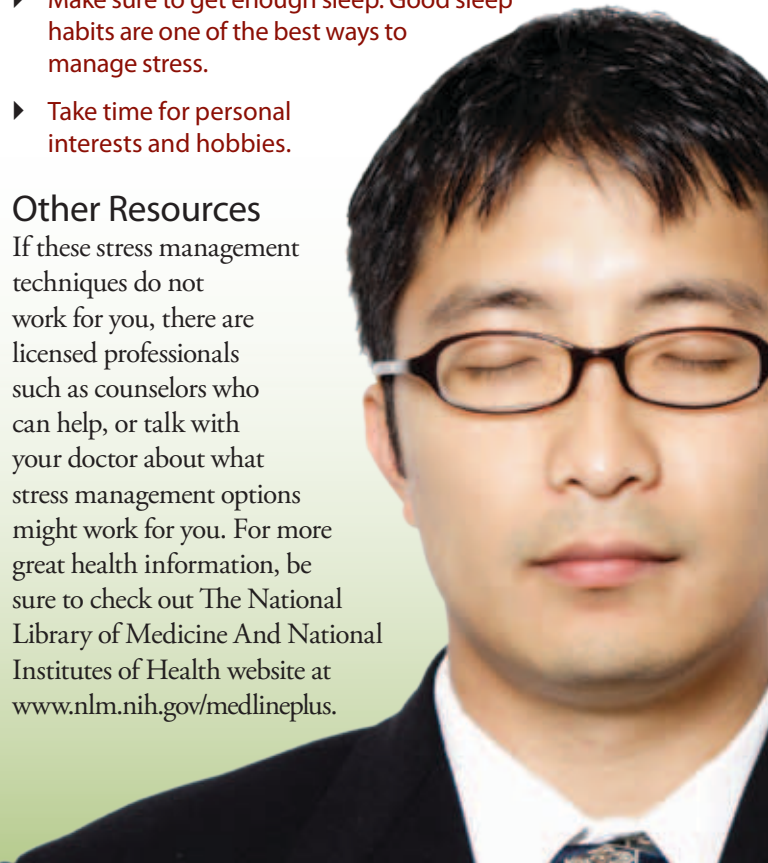
Relaxation And Hobbies

People with no outside interests, hobbies, or other ways to relax may be less able to handle stressful situation. You can try the following:

- ▶ Use relaxation techniques, such as guided imagery, listening to music, or practicing yoga or meditation. With some practice, these techniques should work for you.
- ▶ Listen to your body when it tells you to slow down or take a break.
- ▶ Make sure to get enough sleep. Good sleep habits are one of the best ways to manage stress.
- ▶ Take time for personal interests and hobbies.

Other Resources

If these stress management techniques do not work for you, there are licensed professionals such as counselors who can help, or talk with your doctor about what stress management options might work for you. For more great health information, be sure to check out The National Library of Medicine And National Institutes of Health website at www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus.



On Target

REACHING YOUR TARGET HEART RATE

Maximize The Benefits Of Physical Activity By Finding Your Target Heart Rate

Estimating your 'target heart rate' helps you to determine whether your pulse or heart rate is within the optimum target zone during any physical activity. Target heart rate measures the speed at which your heart beats during peak aerobic exercise and can help you decipher whether you're working out at a level of intensity that's appropriate for you.

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT MY TARGET HEART RATE IS?

Measuring your target heart rate requires some calculation, but it is not difficult to do! Once you do the math, you can write down your numbers so you don't forget. That way, you'll always know what your target heart rate and fitness goals should be.

TO CALCULATE YOUR TARGET HEART RATE

1 Start by estimating your maximum heart rate. Maximum heart rate is based on a person's age—and can be estimated by subtracting your age from 220.

For example, a 50-year-old person would have an estimated maximum heart rate of:

▶ $220 - 50 = 170$ beats per minute (bpm)

2 A person's target heart rate should be a certain percentage of his or her maximum heart rate, depending on the intensity level of the activity. To find your target heart rate, multiply your maximum heart rate (bpm) by 50 to 70% for moderate-intensity physical activity, or 70 to 85% for vigorous-intensity.

For example, a 50-year old person with a 170 bpm maximum heart rate:

▶ **Moderate Physical Activity (50% level):**
 $170 \times 0.50 = 85$ bpm (Target Heart Rate)

▶ **Vigorous Physical Activity (70% level):**
 $170 \times 0.70 = 119$ bpm (Target Heart Rate)

This example shows that for a 50-year old person to achieve their target heart rate and get the maximum benefits from moderate-intensity physical activity, they'll want to make sure that their heart rate remains between 85 and 119 bpm during the workout.

WRITE YOUR TARGET HEART RATE NUMBER HERE:

get

Ways To Measure Your Heart Rate

Generally, to determine whether you are exercising within the target zone, you must stop exercising briefly to take your pulse or monitor your heart rate.

1. Take Your Pulse

You can take the pulse at the neck, the wrist, or the chest. (We recommend the wrist.)

Here's how to do it: Turn your palm up and press the tip of your index and middle finger on your wrist to feel your pulse on the artery that's in line with the thumb. Place the tips of the index and middle fingers over the artery and press lightly. Using a stopwatch or second hand, count the number of heartbeats during a full 60-second time span, or take your pulse for 30 seconds and then multiply the number of heartbeats by 2. (You should start the timer on a heartbeat, which is counted as "zero.")

2. Use A Heart Rate Monitor

All heart rate monitors work by wirelessly measuring electrical signals from the heart and displaying them on a screen such as a watch, stopwatch or pager-sized receiving unit. This data is intended to help you make sure that your training regimen is not too easy or too intense, but just right for maximum effectiveness. There are two main types of heart rate monitors: chest strap models and finger sensor models.

♥ CHEST STRAP MONITORS

The chest strap model fastens around the chest with a strap, and wirelessly transmits continuous heart rate data to a wristwatch-style receiver. With a basic model, you can time your workout and track your continuous, average, high and low heart rate data. Advanced models may use a coded signal to protect your data from interference, or could be partnered with a foot pod sensor that attaches to your shoe for tracking distance and speed. Some higher-end models also have GPS (Global Positioning System) receiver capabilities to help you map-out routes or elevations and improve your workouts.

♥ FINGER SENSOR MONITORS

A finger sensor heart rate monitor consists of a wristwatch-style component. The heart rate monitor is activated when you touch a finger to the sensor. While finger sensor models are more affordable than chest-strap versions, you must pause during exercise in order to take a measurement and they tend not to be as accurate or have as many features.



Heart Disease And

Heart disease is the leading cause of death among US women. It affects 1 in 10 females over age 18.

Her...

Talk With Your Doctor

Your physician can be an important partner in helping you set and reach goals for heart health. But don't wait for your doctor to mention heart disease or its risk factors—speak up and ask questions. Many physicians don't routinely bring up the topic, especially with their female patients. New research shows that women are less likely than men to receive heart healthy recommendations from their doctors.

Know The Key Symptoms

Chest pain or discomfort has long been seen as the most common early warning sign of a heart attack. But recent research has raised questions about whether this holds true for women.

A new research investigation by the National Institutes of Health looked at the available evidence from 69 studies done over 35 years and concluded that chest pain is the most common sign of heart attack for most women. Taken together, the studies showed that the majority of women—two-thirds to three-quarters—had chest discomfort with heart attack.

In addition, the authors found that women seem to report a wider range of symptoms than men. These symptoms include shortness of breath, nausea or vomiting, loss of appetite and dizziness.

Take Your Risk Seriously

Although chest pain may be the most common sign of heart attack for most women, experts recommend that any new symptoms be promptly evaluated. Surveys suggest that more women are now aware that heart disease is their leading killer, but many still don't take their risk of heart disease personally and seriously.

“Your physician can be an important partner in helping you set and reach goals for heart health.”



Heart Disease And

Him...



According to the American Heart Association, heart disease affects more men than women.

Visiting a physician for an annual checkup is a simple—and essential—step to keeping your heart healthy. However, some men refuse to go to the doctor regularly. A recent article by the American Heart Association listed the top 10 reasons—and solutions—for why men skip this important appointment:

1. I don't have a doctor.

Step one toward staying healthy is finding a doctor you trust. To find a doctor that's right for you, you can check with your insurance company, browse online listings, ask your friends and family for recommendations, or call local doctors' offices to ask questions.

2. I don't have insurance.

You can call doctors' offices or local agencies and ask if they're taking new patients and what options they have for people who don't have insurance. They may offer discounts or charge using a sliding scale.

3. There's probably nothing wrong.

You may be right, but you're not a doctor. That's why you need one, to be sure, especially since serious diseases such as high blood pressure—which can cause heart attack and stroke—don't have symptoms. Finding a health problem early can make a huge difference in the quality and length of your life.

4. I don't have time.

There are over 8,000 hours in a year, and you want to save... two? These two hours at your appointment could save your life if you really DO need a doctor. And if you want to spend more time with your family, these two hours aren't the ones to lose.

5. I don't want to spend the money.

It makes more sense to spend a little and save a lot than to save a little and spend a lot. If you think spending time with a doctor is expensive, try spending time in a hospital.

6. Doctors don't DO anything.

When you see your doctor, it may feel like you don't get anything but tests—but you do! By having a thorough check-up and conversation with your doctor on a regular basis, you get news and knowledge that can bring better health or prevent worsening conditions.

7. I don't want to hear what I might be told.

Maybe you smoke, drink too much, or have put on weight. Even so, your doctor is there to help you. So don't deny reality: listen to someone who'll tell you the truth you need to hear and help you take action.

8. I've got 'probe-a-phobia.'

If you're afraid of exams, just remember that your chances of survival are much better if a health condition is caught early—so it's worth it. Don't let one test stop you from getting all the benefits of an annual physical.

9. I'd rather tough it out.

Don't think you can beat health problems by just 'sucking it up.' Having a regular appointment with your doctor will help you stay on top of your game.

10. My significant other has been nagging me to get a checkup and I don't want to give in.

Okay, you don't want to look like a pushover, but isn't it POSSIBLE you could be wrong? Give in on this one—it's important to see the doctor.

When it comes down to it, there are no good reasons not to see the doctor, only excuses. So don't wait. Schedule your annual physical today.

You'll find this men's health topic and more at the American Heart Association's website—be sure to visit www.heart.org for more information and ways to keep your heart healthy!



Your Heart Will Thank You

When you don't feel like cooking, don't let your food get the best of you! Take the chance to notice and swap for the 'heart-healthier' choices available to you—even when you're eating on the go.

Selecting Packaged Foods:

- ◆ Check the Nutrition Facts label to choose frozen meals that are lowest in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol. Also watch the calories and sodium content. Make sure the dinners include vegetables, fruits, and whole grains—or add them on the side.
- ◆ Choose store-bought baked goods that are lowest in saturated fat, cholesterol, trans fats, and hydrogenated (hardened) fats. Also, remember that even “no cholesterol” and fat-free baked goods still may be high in calories.

When Dining Out:

- ◆ Order small. To reduce portion size, try ordering an appetizer as your main meal. Or, take half of your entrée home and save it for the next day.
- ◆ Don't hesitate to ask your server how foods are prepared and what type of cooking oil is used. (Preferred types lower in saturated fat are: canola, safflower and olive oils.) Ask them to leave all butter, gravy, and sauces off an entrée or side dish.
- ◆ Select foods cooked by low-fat methods. Look for terms such as broiled, baked, roasted, poached, or lightly sautéed.
- ◆ Limit foods high in calories and fats, especially saturated fat and trans fat. Watch out for terms such as fried, crispy, creamed, escalloped, hollandaise, bernaise, casserole, and pastry crust.
- ◆ When ordering dessert, choose fresh fruit, fat-free frozen yogurt, sherbet, or fruit sorbet (which is usually fat free, but ask for the calorie content). Or, try sharing a dessert.



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INTERACTIVE MINDS

Signs Of A Heart Attack THAT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW

In the case of a heart attack, fast action can save lives.

Everyone should know these warning signs of a heart attack:

- ◆ Pain or discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back.
- ◆ Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Can include one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- ◆ Shortness of breath often comes along with chest discomfort, but it also can occur before chest discomfort.
- ◆ Other symptoms may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

