



HEART SMART GAZETTE

Edited by KRISTINE BROCKHAGEN- December 2008

All information provided by the American Heart Association and available on their website



JUMP ROPE FOR HEART

Please join our Jump Rope for Heart event on Friday, January 30! The children will be jumping rope during their scheduled physical education class. You may bring your tennis shoes so you can jump or perhaps you might like to turn rope. We could also use some cheerleaders on the sideline. Hope to see you there.

TOP TEN WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS

1. Be a positive role model. If you're practicing healthy habits, it is easier to convince your children to do the same.
2. Try doing activities that encourage the entire family to be active together. This habit models the importance of exercise.
3. Limit TV, video games, and computer time.
4. Encourage physical activities that children really enjoy. They will stick with it longer if they love it.
5. Be supportive. Everyone likes to be praised for a job well done.
6. Set specific goals and limits, such as one hour of physical activity a day or two desserts per week other than fruit. When goals are too abstract or limits too restrictive, the chance for success decreases.
7. Don't reward children with food. Candy and snacks as a reward encourage bad habits.
8. Make dinnertime a family time. When everyone sits down together to eat, there is less chance of children eating the wrong foods or snacking too much.
9. Make a game of reading food labels. The whole family will learn what is good for their health and will be more conscious of what they eat.
10. Stay involved. Be an advocate for healthier children. Make sure your children's health-care providers are monitoring cardiovascular indicators like BMI, blood pressure, and cholesterol. Contact public officials on matters of the heart. Make your voice heard.

The American Heart Association has dietary recommendations for infants, children and adolescents to promote cardiovascular health:

Start in Infancy:

- Breast-feeding is ideal nutrition and sufficient to support optimal growth and development for about the first **4–6 months** after birth. Try to maintain breast-feeding for 12 months. Transition to other sources of nutrients should begin at about **4–6 months** of age to ensure sufficient micronutrients in the diet.
- Delay introducing 100 percent juice until at least **6 months** of age and limit to no more than 4–6 oz/day.
- Don't overfeed infants and young children. Children shouldn't be forced to finish meals if they aren't hungry as they often vary caloric intake from meal to meal.
- Introduce healthy foods and keep offering them if they're initially refused.

The American Heart Association recommends this eating pattern for families:

- Energy (calories) should be adequate to support growth and development and to reach or maintain desirable body weight.
- Eat foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.
- Keep total fat intake between 30 to 35 percent of calories for children **2 to 3 years of age** and between 25 to 35 percent of calories for children and adolescents **4 to 18 years of age**; with most fats coming from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, such as fish, nuts and vegetable oils.
- Choose a variety of foods to get enough carbohydrates, protein, and other nutrients.

- Eat only enough calories to maintain a healthy weight for your height and build. Be physically active for at least 60 minutes a day.
- Serve whole-grain breads and cereals rather than refined grain products. Look for “whole grain” as the first ingredient on the food label and make at least half your grain servings whole grain. Recommended grain intake ranges from 2 oz./day for a **one-year-old** to 7 oz./day for a **14–18-year-old**.
- Serve a variety of fruits and vegetables daily, while limiting juice intake. Each meal should contain at least 1 fruit or vegetable. Children’s recommended fruit intake ranges from 1 cup/day, between ages **1 and 3**, to 2 cups for a **14–18-year-old**. Recommended vegetable intake ranges from ¾ cup a day at age one to 3 cups for a **14–18-year-old**.
- Introduce and regularly serve fish as an entrée. Avoid commercially fried fish.
- Serve nonfat and low-fat dairy foods. From ages **1–8**, children need 2 cups of milk or its equivalent each day. Children ages **9–18** need 3 cups.

You may be surprised to learn these are serving sizes:

- 1 slice of bread
- ½ cup rice or pasta (cooked)
- 1 small piece of fruit (super-large apples are 2+ servings)
- 1 wedge of melon
- ¾ cup fruit juice
- 1 cup milk or yogurt
- 2 oz. cheese (about the size of a domino)
- 2-3 oz. meat, poultry or fish (this is about the size of a deck of cards)

Most servings are well over the standard portion size, so we’re all getting extra calories we don’t need. But with a little effort, we can take control. Cutting down the helpings will cut down the waistlines.

Managing Stress

Think about the times in your life when you’ve felt stress: maybe while giving a presentation at work, worrying about your children, racing to meet a deadline, or arguing with your spouse. Remember how your heart was pounding and you were breathing harder? People with heart failure need to avoid that kind of physical response to stress.

Emotional stress and anxiety make the heart work harder, which can make symptoms worse. That’s why patients and their caregivers should work together to keep stress under control.

Twelve strategies for reducing stress

- Talk with family, friends, clergy or other trusted advisers about your concerns/ stresses and ask for their support.
- Take 15 to 20 minutes a day to sit quietly, breathe deeply and think of a peaceful scene.
- Learn to accept things you cannot change.
- Count to 10 before answering or responding when you feel angry.
- Don’t use smoking, drinking, overeating, drugs or caffeine to cope with stress. These only lead to more stress!
- Look for the good in situations instead of the bad.
- Exercise regularly. Do something you enjoy, like walking, swimming, jogging, golfing, walking a pet, tai chi or cycling. Check with your doctor to determine what activity level is right for you.
- Think ahead about people, places, or events that may upset you and limit your time with them. If you’re still working or volunteering, cut back on your hours and adjust your schedule to avoid driving in rush-hour traffic.
- Plan productive solutions to problems. For example, talk with your neighbor if the dog next door bothers you, and set clear limits on how much you’ll do for family members.
- Learn to say no. Don’t promise too much. Give yourself enough time to get things done.
- Seek out a mental health professional or counselor if you can’t cope on your own. Helping people is their specialty.

Did you know?

- Two minutes of continuous jump rope is equal to running a 10 minute mile. Jumping rope is a great way to strengthen your heart.
- The main pumping room of the heart is the left ventricle. It pumps 85% of the blood.
- Stretched end to end, the vessels of the circulatory system measure about 60,000 miles.
- The capillaries, the smallest blood vessels in the body, are so tiny that ten of them together are only as thick as a human hair.
- In the course of one day, the amount of blood pumped through the heart of a normal, healthy adult at rest is 2,100 gallons.