



NUTRITION NEWS

Abilene ISD

STUDENT NUTRITION
DEPARTMENT

FEBRUARY 2019

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The month of February is full of quirky holidays that are celebrated and even takes on a couple of national awareness titles, but one of the titles February is known for is 'American Heart Month.' Being that heart disease is the leading cause of death in both men and women in the United States, more months should be dedicated to being 'American Heart Month.' Every year an astonishing 1 in 4 deaths are caused by heart disease. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, someone in the United States has a heart attack every 40 seconds. That means each minute more than one person in the United States dies from a heart disease-related event. Heart disease costs the United States about \$200 billion each year, which goes towards the cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity. So let the month of February be the month where we instill some healthy-heart habits that set us up for longevity and prolonged well-being.



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Heart Healthy Foods

Want to give your heart the health it deserves? Make sure you are fueling your body with the proper foods that are loaded with antioxidants, phytochemicals, fiber, and nutrients. If you're not already, try consistently adding some of these nutrient-dense foods to your diet and reap their benefits.

- 1) **Leafy Green Vegetables**- spinach, kale, collard greens are known for their multitude of vitamins, mineral and antioxidants. More particularly, they're a great source of vitamin K, which helps protect your arteries and promote proper blood clotting.
- 2) **Whole Grains**- whole wheat, brown rice, oats, rye, barley, buckwheat, and quinoa are all higher in fiber, which may help reduce "bad" LDL cholesterol and decrease risk of heart disease.
- 3) **Berries**- strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, and raspberries are all packed with important nutrients and antioxidants that play a role in heart health and protect against oxidative stress and inflammation that contribute to the development of heart disease.
- 4) **Avocados**- an excellent source of heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, have been linked to reduced levels of cholesterol and lower risk of heart disease. One avocado supplies 975 mg of potassium, a nutrient essential for the heart. That's about 28% of amount you need in a day.
- 5) **Fatty Fish and Fish Oil**- salmon, mackerel, sardines, and tuna are loaded with omega-3 fatty acids, which have been studied extensively for their heart-health benefits. One study of 324 people showed that eating salmon 3x a week for eight weeks significantly decreased diastolic blood pressure. Don't like seafood? Take a fish oil supplement, they have been shown to reduce blood triglycerides, improve arterial function and decrease blood pressure.
- 6) **Walnuts, Almonds, Seeds**- all positively contribute to heart health and provide vitamins, minerals, and are a great source of fiber. Chia seeds, flaxseeds and hemp seeds are all great sources of heart-healthy nutrients, including omega-3 fatty acids. For example, hemp seeds are high in arginine, an amino acid that has been associated with reduced blood levels of certain inflammatory markers.
- 7) **Beans**- eating beans has been linked to reduced blood pressure and inflammation, both risk factors for heart disease. Beans contain resistant starch, which resists digestion and is fermented by the beneficial bacteria in your gut. And according to research, resistant starch can improve heart health by decreasing blood levels of triglycerides and cholesterol.
- 8) **Dark Chocolate**- rich in antioxidants like flavonoids, helps boost heart health. One study showed that eating dark chocolate at least 2x per week was associated with a 32% lower risk of having calcified plaque in the arteries. To reap the benefits, make sure to choose a high-quality dark chocolate with a cocoa content of at least 70%.
- 9) **Tomatoes**- are loaded with lycopene, a natural plant pigment with powerful antioxidant properties. Antioxidants help neutralize harmful free radical, preventing oxidative damage and inflammation, both of which can contribute to heart disease.
- 10) **Garlic**- a compound called allicin is found in garlic and it is believed to have a variety of therapeutic effects. Garlic has been used as a natural remedy to treat a variety of ailments for centuries. Studies have found that garlic extract can inhibit platelet buildup which may reduce the risk of blood clots and strokes. Consume garlic in its raw form and let it sit for a little bit to allow the formation of allicin to maximize its potential health benefits.
- 11) **Olive Oil**- familiar with the Mediterranean diet? Olive oil is a staple ingredient. It is packed with antioxidants, which can relieve inflammation and decrease the risk of chronic diseases. Also rich in monounsaturated fatty acids, it has been shown in many studies to be associated with improvements in heart health.
- 12) **Edamame**- rich in isoflavones, a type of flavonoid that may help lower cholesterol levels and improve heart health, it is also a good source of other heart-healthy nutrients, like fiber and antioxidants.
- 13) **Green Tea**- contains polyphenols and catechins, which can act as antioxidants to prevent cell damage, reduce inflammation and protect the health of your heart. Green tea has been associated with plenty of health benefits, from increased fat burning to improved insulin sensitivity.

WEIGHT TRAINING VERSUS CARDIO

Let's take a look at weight training and cardio and establish the different benefits each has on the body. It is important to have a balance between the two, especially as you age. Weight-bearing exercises (weight training, jogging, hiking, climbing stairs, walking, dancing, tennis, basketball) are very important for bone health. They are a huge help in treating and preventing osteoporosis, as well as increasing strength in muscles, and aiding in coordination and balance. During weight-bearing exercises, bone adapts to the impact of weight and the pull of muscle by building more bone cells. Thus, bone becomes stronger and denser. There are some who lean one way or the other, meaning, they only focus on cardio or they only lift weights. Below are some reasons to balance the two, as they are both beneficial for one's health and wellness.

Some, girls mainly, are worried that weight training will make them big and bulky. This could not be any further from the truth. First, women do not produce near enough testosterone for this to happen and, second, building and maintaining muscle is already a challenge in itself, even for men. In fact, weight training may be the answer for those trying to improve their body composition. Weight training does the body wonders. It builds muscle, and as lean muscle increases so does metabolism. So as your metabolic rate increases, you burn fat faster. The more muscle you have, the more calories you burn just sitting there, because muscle takes more energy to sustain. For each pound of muscle you gain, you can burn 35-50 more calories per day. That adds up. Research has shown that you burn more calories in the hours following a weight training session, compared to a cardio session. This is your body working hard to recover your muscles. However, establishing an exercise routine that incorporates both cardio and weight training is ideal for enhancing overall health and body composition.

Cardio has many benefits. To name a few, it makes your heart strong so that it doesn't have to work as hard to pump blood, helps burn fat and calories for weight loss, increases lung capacity, helps reduce risk of heart attack, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, and some forms of cancer. In comparison to weight training, cardio takes the win for burning more calories per minute. For most activities, the more you weigh, the more calories you will burn. And the more intense a cardio session is, the more calories you burn. But let's not forget the effect that weight lifting has on the body even after completing a workout. If you want to build a lean, fit body, the treadmill or elliptical alone won't achieve this. It will take some weight lifting to get that stronger, leaner physique. Studies have shown that cardio accomplishes overall weight loss compared to weight training. But lean mass being put on from lifting weights has to be considered, as it weighs more than fat.

Doing both strength and cardio decreases body fat significantly more than each method alone. So incorporating both styles of training would be the wisest decision in order to optimize results. Take away: strength training changes your shape (for women who want to have curves in all the right places and men who want a chiseled physique), and cardio changes your size (sheds the lbs).

Baked Salmon and Asparagus in Foil



Ingredients:

- Salmon fillets
- Asparagus
- Fresh Lemon
- Garlic
- Olive oil
- Salt & pepper
- Dill

Instructions:

- 1) Set oven to 400 degrees F.
- 2) Cut salmon into equal portions, then tear foil into equal sheets and divide asparagus into equal portions, laying them in the center of foil.
- 3) Mix together minced garlic and oil then drizzle over the asparagus. Season each salmon fillet and lay over the asparagus.
- 4) Drizzle top of each salmon fillet with 1 tsp of olive oil mixture and season top with salt and pepper to taste. Top each with about 2 sprigs of fresh dill and 2 lemon slices.
- 5) Wrap and cover salmon and asparagus with the foil to enclose.
- 6) Place in oven for about 20-25 min.
- 7) Enjoy!

“Appreciate where you are in your journey, even if it's not where you want to be. Every season serves a purpose.”