

The UConn Buzz



Show Your Heart Some Love

Heart Disease is the leading cause of death in America, and February is American Heart Month. The best way to prevent heart disease is by living a healthy life. Let's focus on some risk factors for Heart Disease that you **CAN** control.

- **Quit Smoking**-smokers are at twice the risk of having a heart attack than non-smokers
- **Improve LDL** (bad) cholesterol
- **Eat a healthy diet**
- **Be active**-150 minutes each week
- **Manage weight**
- **Manage Diabetes**
- **Manage stress and emotions**
- **Lower high blood pressure**- decrease sodium (salt) intake

Unsure what you can do about the above? Talk with your health care provider about how to safely go about making these changes.

Why are low sodium diets or no-added salt options recommended when it comes to heart disease?

High sodium intake increases risk of cardiovascular disease because eating foods high in salt causes our bodies to retain water to balance the salt and water in our cells and blood stream. When water is retained, it increases blood volume causing our heart to work harder to pump all the blood throughout the body-what we often hear as high blood pressure.

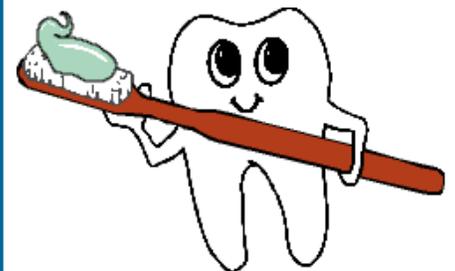
Be aware that it is not just table salt we're talking about, but many

highly processed, pre-packaged foods (like canned soup, sauces, frozen dinners and even bread) contain large amounts of added sodium. Although Americans are not getting enough of many required minerals from their diet (like potassium-beneficial for lowering blood pressure and magnesium-maintains muscles and protects the heart), sodium is quite the opposite. Despite daily sodium recommendations from the American Heart Association to consume 2300mg or 1500mg depending on risk factors, the average American over 2 years old is eating 3400mg. Interestingly enough, it has been estimated that our bodies only need about 500mg for basic physiological requirements.

Talk with your doctor about how much sodium you should be eating daily. Then check the nutrition label on your favorite foods to stay within the recommended limits of sodium and opt for low-sodium foods and those without added salt. Try adding fresh or dried herbs and spices, lemon juice and garlic to your favorite meal to add flavor and cut down on salt used.

Give Kids a Smile DAY!

The first Friday in February (2/3/17) is the American Dental Association's (ADA) Give Kids a Smile Day. This started out as a grassroots effort in 2002 by two dentists who wanted to provide free dental care to children in St. Louis. Efforts have continued to grow raising awareness about the importance of oral health to overall health and over 5.5 million children have been given oral health education, screenings and treatment through this event. [Find out more information on Give Kids a Smile events in your area or how you can help!](#) Keep in mind these good habits for dental hygiene: brush teeth twice a day, floss between teeth once a day, and get cleanings and checkups twice a year from your dentist.



The ADA also has fantastic resources online for proper dental care with [MouthHealthy Kids](#) as well as great ideas for making tooth brushing fun with free coloring sheets, songs to brush to, and even [Tooth Fairy Certificates!](#)

BE THE FIRST TO KNOW

what Be Well is offering

by following us on

[Facebook](#) & [Twitter!](#)



HAPPENINGS AROUND TOWN

- [Opioid Epidemic: Our Communities, Our Concern](#) in Tolland February 8th, starts at 5:30PM, speakers at 6:30pm
- [Storrs Winter Farmers Market](#) Saturdays, 3– 5PM, Mansfield Public Library, rain or shine
- [Cupid Made Me Do It](#) –Willimantic, Saturday, February 11th. This 2-mile “urban scramble” kicks off the Romantic Willimantic Festival
- [Bolton Public Ice Skating](#)- Bolton Ice Palace, times vary
- [UCONN Public Ice Skating](#)- Mark Edward Freitas Ice Forum, times vary
- [Meditation Circle Group Meeting](#) Tuesday evenings, 7pm at Silk Road Health, 39 New London Tpk, Glastonbury.
- [Ellington Winter Farmers Market](#) Saturdays, 2-4PM, at the YMCA, 11 Piney Street, Ellington

Sources include: American Heart Association, American Dental Association, WebMD, CDC, U.S. News, Joslin Diabetes Center

Don't Forget to wear RED February 3rd!

Participate in National Wear Red Day® to show your support for women with heart disease and stroke and increase awareness about cardiovascular health.

National Wear Red Day® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and American Heart Association.

Ravioli & Vegetable Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1 cup diced onion
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1/4 tsp crushed red pepper
- 1 can (28 oz) crushed tomatoes
- 1 can (15 oz) low sodium vegetable broth
- 1 1/2 cups hot water
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 6 to 9 oz fresh or frozen whole wheat ravioli
- 2 cups diced zucchini
- ground pepper to taste



Directions:

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add peppers, onion, garlic and crushed red pepper and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add tomatoes, broth, water and basil; bring to a rolling boil over high heat. Add ravioli and cook for 3 minutes less than the package directions. Add zucchini; return to a boil. Cook until the zucchini is crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Season with black pepper.



Warning Signs - How to Identify a Heart Attack or Stroke



The [American Heart Association](#) (AHA) recommends checking for the following signs if you think yourself or someone else is having a heart attack or stroke and to get help immediately if any of these symptoms are present. Symptoms can happen suddenly and intensely, or they may come about slowly, with mild pain. Symptoms also may come and go.

Be Well is an employee wellness program provided through the Eastern Highlands Health District with funding from the CT Department of Health. The goal of the program is to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Phone: 860.429.3361 Email: be_well@ehhd.org



Heart Attack Warning Signs

Chest discomfort-in the center of the chest may come and go, can feel like pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain

Pain in other areas-Pain or discomfort may radiate to the arms, back, neck, jaw and/or stomach

Shortness of breath-this may happen with or without chest discomfort

Other-cold sweat, nausea, lightheadedness

Bottom Line: The AHA emphasizes the importance of getting help fast and not ignoring any symptoms even if you are not sure. The sooner someone gets help the better the chances for a good recovery.

Stroke Warning Signs Act FAST

- **Face droop**-Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?
- **Arm weakness**-Ask person to raise both hands. Does one arm drift downward?
- **Speech difficulty**-Ask person to repeat a simple sentence. Is the sentence slurred, hard to understand or unable to be said back?
- **Time to call 9-1-1**-If any of the above symptoms are present call 9-1-1 and get them to a hospital immediately.

Cardiac Arrest Signs

Sudden loss of responsiveness-tap the person on the shoulder

Irregular breathing-the person does not take a normal breath when tilting the head up and checking for five seconds