

LIVE WELL – WORK WELL



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LOOKING TO IMPROVE YOUR HEART HEALTH? REDUCE YOUR STRESS

According to the American Heart Association (AHA), more than 1 in 3 women has a form of cardiovascular disease. And, heart disease is the leading cause of hospital stays for men in the United States. Due to the prevalence of the disease, the AHA recognizes each February as American Heart Month in hopes of raising awareness about the disease and how to prevent it.

Stress and Heart Health

While there are risk factors that contribute to heart disease that you can't control, there are many things you can do to maintain your heart health. One of those things is to reduce your stress.

When stress is excessive, it can contribute to a host of health problems, including high blood pressure. If high blood pressure goes untreated, it can result in heart disease.

Reducing Your Stress

Taking steps to reduce your stress will improve your overall health. Try these tips:

- Plan and prioritize your most important responsibilities.
- Listen to relaxing music to help you calm down.
- Take time off from work to clear your mind.
- Exercise regularly to get your blood and endorphins flowing.

When to Seek Help

If the stresses in your life become more than you can bear or manage with these simple techniques, consider seeking professional assistance. A knowledgeable professional will be able to work with you to devise time management skills and stress-reducing techniques.

February is
American Heart Month



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2 HEART-HEALTHY INDULGENCES YOU'RE SURE TO BE EXCITED ABOUT

You may have heard whispers of dark chocolate and red wine being good for you and thought it's too good to be true. That's right, there is some science behind the claims that these two indulgences can be good for your heart health.



According to researchers, red wine contains an antioxidant called resveratrol, which can help reduce inflammation and improve heart health. Dark chocolate contains a different antioxidant, called flavanol, which helps reduce blood pressure and improve heart health.



This doesn't mean you should go out and buy red wine and chocolate and splurge. Talk to your doctor to determine what enjoying these "in moderation" means for you.

Keep Your Heart Healthy Through Exercise

Did you know that exercising regularly could help you fight off chronic conditions and diseases? Exercise can help control your blood pressure, blood sugar and weight, raise your "good" cholesterol, and prevent diseases such as cancer, Type 2 diabetes and heart disease. According to the AHA, you should do these three exercises to improve your heart health:

1. **Aerobic activity:** Get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity (e.g., briskly walking) or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (e.g., running) every week.
2. **Muscle strengthening:** Incorporate muscle-strengthening exercises at least two days a week. For the purposes of general training, focus on two to three upper body and lower body exercises. Abdominal exercises are an important part of strength training as well.
3. **Flexibility training:** Flexibility training is important too, but it is frequently neglected, resulting in increased tightness as you age and become less active.

Fast Facts About Your Heart

Over 750,000 Americans die each year due to heart disease.
That's one death every 40 seconds.

