

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL HEALTH MINISTRY - FEBRUARY 2013

February is Heart Healthy Awareness Month

Tips for a more healthy lifestyle - February 2013

Your heart is a muscular organ about the size of your palm. It is the engine that keeps your body going. Oxygen rich blood is pumped via our arteries away from the heart to the rest of our body and our veins bring blood back to the heart to be oxygenated and the cycle continues. So you see it is important to keep our heart as healthy as possible.

For a healthier lifestyle make small change day by day. It is unrealistic to think you can change a life time of certain unhealthy habits within a week or two. Set realistic short time goals. I.e. 5% -10% of body weight over 6 months, Don't beat yourself up if you over indulge once in awhile. Change takes time and encouragement.

Let us share some tips promoting wellness and a healthy heart.

Do, exercise at a minimum of 30 minutes 3 to 5 days a week. (You may gradually increase the time exercise is done. Such as, start at 10 minutes and gradually increase the time. Engage in exercise you enjoy, i.e. brisk walk bicycling,, dancing salsa, Zumba, etc. Join a gym or an exercise group, or walk with a friend or neighbor.

If you **smoke**, it is time to quit. Join a smoking cessation group or contact your doctor regarding prescribing medication that can help you quit the habit.

Choose a low-fat, low salt, high fiber diet.

Low Fat: Avoid foods high saturated fat and high cholesterol. Choose fish, poultry, and lean meat. (Portion size 2-3 oz or a deck of cards) Trim fat from meat and take off skin from poultry. Bake, broil, steam or roast. **Avoid fried foods.** Eat oily fish such as salmon .halibut and sardines at least 2 times a week. (helps to boost immune system).

Replace whole milk with low fat product

Animal fat, (saturated fats, solid at room temperature), found in meats, egg yolk, whole milk, is bad - **raises cholesterol**.

Polyunsaturated fat, (liquid or soft at room temperature), found in plant oil fat, soy, corn, sunflower-seed oils, .nuts and seeds, is good - **lowers cholesterol**.

Monounsaturated fat, (liquid at room temperature), found in plant oil, mainly olive, canola, peanut oil. Also avocado. is good - **lowers cholesterol**. Choose olive oil and canola oil. (Serving size is 1 teaspoon of soft margarine or 2 tablespoon of light salad dressing).

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Use egg whites... (Less calories anyway) .

Salt intake – Limit use. Avoid potato chips, pretzels, cured meats, soy sauce etc. Read the labels of all canned or baked goods. Your average daily intake of salt should be one teaspoon. (Less than 2.400mgs of sodium).

Use herbs and spices instead of salt.

Limit sweets and sugars to avoid unnecessary calories. Use artificial sweeteners.

Eat plenty of vegetable from the cabbage family such as broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, kale.

Foods containing Vitamin A such as carrots, peaches, squash, apricots

Foods containing Vitamin C, such as, green and red peppers, oranges, broccoli, cantaloupe, strawberries, etc.

Eat food containing fiber such as whole grain cereal and bread, (oat bran, oatmeal, beans, barley, etc) fruits, peas and beans, raw and slightly cooked vegetable.

What to do when you cannot walk outside.

During inclement weather exercise in door. Use exercise video or DVD.

Rent from library or video rental store, or purchase. Try Cynthia Kereluk and/or Leslie Sansone tapes or DVDs. (Exercise programs on TV may appeal to you).

Reminder before you start your exercise routine to clear it with your doctor, "warm up" and or stretch. Drink water before, during and after exercise.

Wear loose fitting clothes and proper fitting sneakers for walking or jogging.

When doing strength exercise do not hold your breath. (This could cause changes in your blood pressure) As you lift breath out., breath in as you relax.

If your water intake is not limited by your doctor, drink six to eight 8-ounce glasses of water and non-caffeinated tea throughout the day.

Limit intake of caffeinated drink and alcohol to one to two servings daily. (These drinks can dehydrate you and affect your blood pressure.

If you live near a mall, you can walk indoors there.

Visit www.befitnyc.gov for classes in your neighborhood . (Many senior citizen centers have exercise programs)

If you like to watch TV, get up and walk around during commercial break. (Have a fruit or water for snack). Lay off the other snacks and stay out of the kitchen.

Let your Medication work for you.

Know the name, strength, side effects, and reason why you are taking medication. (If you miss a dose do not double up on the next dose.

Know the dosing schedule (once a day , before or after meals etc)

Take your medication just as prescribed.

Consult your healthcare provider before stopping your medication.

Please keep the above in mind, most of the time and apply them to your general lifestyle change. Limit yourself of some of your favorite" bad habits".

Remember the changes you do now will last a lifetime. Be well, and God Bless.

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