



EHHD

Eastern Highlands Health District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EHHD Recognizes American Heart Health Month

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in both men and women in the United States. A shocking 1 in 4 deaths are caused by heart disease. To help residents prevent heart disease and increase awareness of its effects, the Eastern Highlands Health District is proudly participating in American Heart Month.

Heart disease is a chronic disease that does its damage to the body over time. The condition flies under the radar until it has done enough damage to end the life of an unsuspecting victim. When it comes to avoiding heart disease, recognizing risk factors and knowing your families health history are first lines of defense.

Here's the good news: heart disease can often be prevented when people make healthy choices and manage their conditions. Director of Health Robert Miller comments that "the key to lowering one's risk for heart disease is to take small, manageable steps towards a healthier lifestyle. We aim to help residents achieve optimal health by using simple, research-based and sustainable strategies." Robert Miller continues to explain that EHHD's health promotion department is actively participating in making policy, systems and environmental changes that will help lower district resident's risk for chronic diseases. You can find more about their current health and wellness initiatives at www.ehhd.org.

Here's a snapshot of the research based formula that will reduce your risk for cardiovascular disease:

- Get an accurate picture of your cardiovascular health by having regular checkups with your primary care physician.
- Know your numbers. Keeping your cholesterol, blood pressure and body weight within normal limits helps keep your risk for cardiovascular disease low.
- Quit tobacco and consume alcohol in moderation.
- Increase your fresh fruit and vegetable intake and lower your intake of pre-packaged and fast foods. Aim for 6 cups of fresh fruits and vegetables per day.



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- Lower your sodium and saturated fat intake, and increase your use of fresh herbs, salt free seasoning, and healthy unsaturated fat intake such as fish, olive oil, avocado and nuts.
- Get moving! Aiming for 30 minutes of exercise 5 times a week keeps your heart muscle strong, reduces stress, and helps you sleep better. All of these habits promote good heart health.

Instead of getting overwhelmed by all the changes you may have to make, take the challenge head on by taking small steps week by week until you're living a heart-healthy lifestyle. An added bonus to making these heart-healthy changes is that you'll naturally achieve a healthy body weight, have more natural energy and lower your overall risk for chronic disease.

For more information on living a heart-healthy lifestyle, including links to a heart-healthy lifestyle assessment, a "heart age" calculator, and heart-healthy recipes please visit EHHD's website at www.ehhd.org/happyhealthyheart.