

# February is American

## Heart Month

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States and is a major cause of disability. In 2009, an estimated 785,000 Americans will have a new coronary attack, and about 470,000 will have a recurrent attack. Heart disease is a term that includes several more specific heart conditions. The most common heart disease in the United States is coronary heart disease, which can lead to heart attack.

In 2009, an estimated 785,000 Americans will have a new heart attack, and about 470,000 will have a recurrent attack. About every 25 seconds, an American will have a coronary event, and about one every minute will die from one.

The chance of developing coronary heart disease can be reduced by taking steps to prevent and control factors that put people at greater risk. Additionally, knowing the signs and symptoms of heart attack are crucial to the most positive outcomes after having a heart attack. People who have survived a heart attack can also work to reduce their risk of another heart attack or a stroke in the future.

### Signs & Symptoms

- Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- Shortness of breath. May occur with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs: These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.

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## A Glance at Blood Sugar Meters

Today's blood sugar meters have come a long way since their predecessors. People who test their blood sugar today are no longer haunted by cumbersome machines with outdated technology requiring large amounts of blood. Today, with modern technology, the available blood sugar meters compete for dot-sized samples, faster and more reliable results, and compatibility with various computer software and insulin pumps. Given how important it is to test blood sugar regularly, such competition leaves people with diabetes many options for affordable meters.

Just last year, at least 3 companies introduced 4 new meters. Adding to the field of over 30 meters, people who test can choose the best meter to meet their personal needs. A great resource to discover more about available meters can be found at [http://www.diabeteshealth.com/media/pdfs/PRG1208/DH\\_Blood-Glucose-Meters\\_08-09.pdf](http://www.diabeteshealth.com/media/pdfs/PRG1208/DH_Blood-Glucose-Meters_08-09.pdf)



"Testing your blood sugar again, dear?"

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## In the Spotlight: Quality of Life

### Getting Fit...

Researchers here at the Johns Hopkins University have concluded that including physical activity into your daily routine comes with a number of benefits.

The investigators looked at over 200 people participating in two clinical trials of physical activity, one study included with people with diabetes and the other included people without diabetes. Results showed that people with diabetes had a lower health-related quality of life in addition to more self-report of limitations due to physical problems and poorer general health. Fitness played a big role in quality of life for people with diabetes.

While worse fitness isn't the only explanation behind a poor health-related quality of life for folks with diabetes, the study's lead author, Dr. Wendy Bennett and colleagues have concluded that "incorporating physical activity into their daily routine improves fitness, allows them to do more, feel better, as well as reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes-related complications."

The study is published in the online journal, Health and Quality of Life Outcomes.

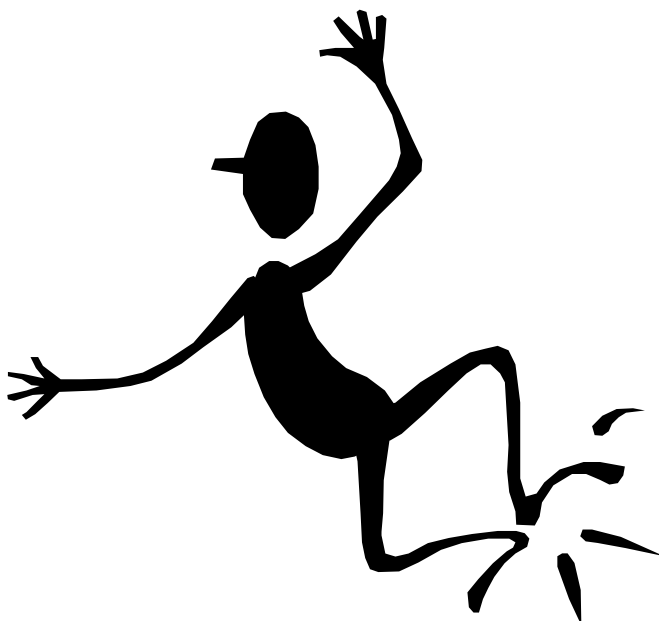
### Slowing age-related memory loss...

Dr. Scott Small and colleagues at Columbia University have looked to see whether lowering blood sugar levels could keep cognitive activity from declining.

MRI scans of over 200 people aged 65 and older without dementia suggest that lower blood sugar levels are better. Higher levels of blood sugar were associated with lower performance on measures of memory functioning.

Results suggest improving glucose levels can aid in controlling decline in memory that occur as we age.

The study is published in the journal, *Annals of Neurology*.



## February is American Heart Month (continued from page 1)

### Reducing Risk: Healthy Lifestyle

A healthy diet and lifestyle are the best weapons you have to fight heart disease. Many people make it harder than it is. It is important to remember that it is the overall pattern of the choices you make that counts. As you make daily food choices, base your eating pattern on these recommendations:

- Choose lean meats and poultry without skin and prepare them without added saturated and trans fat.
- Select fat-free, 1% fat, and low-fat dairy products.
- Cut back on foods containing partially hydrogenated vegetable oils to reduce trans fat in your diet.
- Cut back on foods high in dietary cholesterol. Aim to eat less than 300 mg of cholesterol each day.
- Cut back on beverages and foods with added sugars.
- Choose and prepare foods with little or no salt. Aim to eat less than 2,300 mg of sodium per day (or less than 1,500 mg if you are in a higher risk group for high blood pressure).
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. That means no more than one drink per day if you're a woman and two drinks per day if you're a man.
- Keep an eye on your portion sizes.

Physical activity in your daily life is an important step to preventing heart disease. You can take a few simple steps at home, at work, and at play to increase the amount of physical activity in your life. See our last issue of *Sweet Talk* for more tips.

Source:  
[http://www.cdc.gov/DHDSP/announcement/s/american\\_heart\\_month.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/DHDSP/announcement/s/american_heart_month.htm)

## Supporting Positive Self-Management Choices

Each issue of *Sweet Talk* will provide tips for positive self-management choices. This issue we feature **Healthy Coping!**

Coping with everyday stress, strong emotions, or family problems can become especially challenging when you have diabetes. Healthy coping includes managing stress and seeking out support from friends and loved ones.

Some ways to manage stress include:

1. Meditating - taking 10-15 minutes out of each day to focus on something positive or inspiring can help alleviate stress and keep one's inner peace.
2. Journaling - people who journal can keep anxiety in check by writing down their problems, concerns, and daily experiences.
3. Moving regularly - the benefits of being active gone beyond the

physical results. People who walk or exercise regularly reports less stress and more positive outlook on things.

**Coping with having diabetes can make it especially challenging.!**

Getting support from family and friends can be as simple as asking for it. Oftentimes, people assume

all is well with others if they don't see obvious signs of trouble. Reaching out to those who care for advice or simply to blow off steam about a personal conflict can do wonders for the soul.

Talk with your health care provider about healthy coping strategies and resources for help.

## Tools You Can Use

### My Food Advisor™

Want help managing your nutrition? The ADA's My Food Advisor™ may be just the tool for you. It provides calorie and carbohydrate information as well as meal planning tips. Visit <http://tracker.diabetes.org/myfoodadvisor.html>

### Guide to Type 2 Diabetes Medications

It's important to understand the medicines you take to manage your diabetes. Diabetes Health has published an updated type 2 diabetes medication guide.

Log on to find out detailed information about your specific medicines at: [http://www.diabeteshealth.com/media/pdfs/PRG1208/DH\\_Type-2-Meds\\_08-09.pdf](http://www.diabeteshealth.com/media/pdfs/PRG1208/DH_Type-2-Meds_08-09.pdf)



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*The over-arching mission of the Prevention & Control Core is to understand and reduce health disparities in type 2 diabetes and its complications by facilitating research in the following areas: (1) epidemiology, (2) health services research; (3) outcomes research; and (4) real-world trials of primary and secondary prevention.*

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**We're on the Web!**

[http://cdip.med.jhmi.edu/intro/Community/  
community\\_main.html](http://cdip.med.jhmi.edu/intro/Community/community_main.html)

## Barley Soup

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Yields: 4 servings

### Ingredients:

1 lb collard greens, chopped, fresh,  
rinsed well, sliced into thin strips

2 cups low sodium chicken broth

1/2 teaspoon dried basil

2 teaspoons olive oil

3/4 cup fresh chopped onion

2 medium garlic cloves, minced

1 tablespoon fresh ginger root, grated  
(powdered okay)

1 teaspoon fresh, chopped jalapeno  
chili peppers

1 teaspoon black pepper

### Directions:

1. Place collard greens, chicken stock, and basil in a saucepan. Cook, covered, for 30 minutes.
2. In a nonstick skillet, heat olive oil. Sauté onion and garlic. Add ginger root and jalapeno pepper.
3. Add cooked collard greens to skillet. Cook, stirring, until most of liquid has evaporated.
4. Mix in pepper.

