



Employee Newsletter & Resources

February Is American Heart Month

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, responsible for every 1 out of 5 deaths. Cardiovascular disease and the conditions that lead to it can happen at any age. Some types of heart disease include arrhythmia, heart failure, heart attack and stroke.

February is American Heart Month, a time when you can check in on your cardiovascular health. While heart disease can be deadly for adults, it's also preventable in most people. Risk factors include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, obesity, an unhealthy diet and physical inactivity.



The Art of Waking Up Refreshed

Some people wake up ready to take on the day, while others may need more time or a cup of coffee to start their day. Regardless of which camp you're in, there's an art and a science to waking up refreshed in the morning. Unfortunately, many fall short when it comes to getting enough sleep.




1 in 3 American adults is sleep deprived, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

So, what's the trick to waking up refreshed? First and foremost, getting enough quality sleep each night is a critical first step. Sleep experts recommend that adults get at least seven to nine hours of sleep nightly.

Additionally, consider these tips to improve the quality of your shuteye and improve your chances of waking up energized:

- **Keep a consistent sleep schedule and routine.** Try your best to have the same wake-up and bedtimes, regardless if it's a weekday or weekend.
- **Set one alarm—and make it a happy tone.** Wake up when your first alarm goes off and resist hitting the snooze button. While at it, select an alarm tone on your cellphone that is cheerful or upbeat to kick-start a good mood.
- **Practice gratitude.** Grateful thinking and moods can help you sleep better and longer, so focus on having a positive outlook. Consider keeping a gratitude journal to reflect on daily entries of what you're grateful for. Alternatively, you can focus on positive thoughts and what you're excited to do or achieve the following day. An attitude of gratitude can help keep pessimism or worrisome thoughts at bay.
- **Practice good sleep hygiene.** Sleep experts recommend avoiding exercising or eating spicy foods close to bedtime and sleeping in a cool dark room.

It takes more than one night to see a change in your sleep habits, so stick with it and try it out for at least a week. Talk to your doctor if you continue to have concerns about your sleep quality.

Common Red Flags of Anxiety

Anxiety is a feeling of unease, worry or fear. Occasional anxiety is a part of everyday life, but anxiety disorders involve more than temporary worry or fear. Here are some warning signs of anxiety, according to the National Institute of Mental Health:



Restlessness, irritability or feeling wound up



Excessive worry about everyday things



Physical symptoms (e.g., headaches, muscle aches and stomachaches)



Sleep disturbances

Boost Your Immunity With Nutrition

This winter, cases of the common cold, the flu, RSV and COVID-19 are prevalent. Since a healthy diet can help boost your immune system, it's crucial more than ever to take care of your body so it can fight off infectious diseases.

Consider the following immune-boosting diet tips:

- Focus on putting nutritious foods into your body. Your body absorbs nutrients from whole fruits, vegetables, nuts, grains and proteins more efficiently than processed foods or supplements.
- Limit inflammatory foods such as those with refined carbohydrates, trans fats, high-fructose corn syrup, refined oils and high sodium content. Think of it as limiting or avoiding processed and fast food when possible.
- Choose fruits, vegetables (especially leafy greens), nuts, fatty fish and olive oil. Focus on fueling your bod with healthy foods that include dietary fiber, nutrients or probiotics.
- Stay hydrated and drink enough water for your body to operate at its best.

Take Charge of Your Health

Improve Your Heart Health



Eat heart-healthy foods.

It's crucial to consume a well-balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and protein. Avoid processed and high-sodium foods, and limit saturated and trans fats.



Be active.

It's recommended that adults engage in moderate-intensity aerobic activity for at least 150 minutes each week and muscle-strengthening activities two times per week.



Maintain a healthy weight.

People who are overweight or have obesity have a higher risk for heart disease as extra weight puts stress on the heart and blood vessels.



Prioritize preventive care.

Routine checkups are critical for prevention – and getting screened for heart disease is vital if you exhibit risk factors.

Quick Tuna Casserole

February 2023 Recipe

Makes: 6 servings



Ingredients

- 1 cup water
- 5 ounces wide egg noodles
- 10.75-ounce can of cream of mushroom soup
- ½ cup skim milk
- 6.5-ounce can of tuna (packed in water, drained)
- 1 cup frozen green peas
- 1 cup bread crumbs (optional)

Nutritional information for 1 serving

Calories	279
Total fat	6 g
Saturated fat	2 g
Cholesterol	34 mg
Sodium	665 mg
Carbohydrate	41 g
Dietary fiber	3 g
Total sugars	6 g
Added sugars included	1 g
Protein	15 g

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.
2. Bring one quart of water to a boil in a large pot and cook the egg noodles in the water for two minutes.
3. Cover the pot, remove it from heat and let it stand for 10 minutes.
4. In the meantime, mix the water, soup and milk in a bowl.
5. Combine the tuna and peas with the mixture and pour into a one-quart casserole dish.
6. Drain the noodles well and combine them with the tuna mixture.
7. Sprinkle the top with bread crumbs, if desired.
8. Bake for 30 minutes.

EMPOWERING EMPLOYERS
STRENGTHENING EMPLOYEES