

# Going Red for **WOMEN**

With Knowledge and Action Against Heart Disease



**FACT: About 80% of cardiovascular diseases can be prevented.**

Yet, heart disease and stroke cause 1 in 3 deaths among U.S. women every year — more than all cancers combined.

**FACT: Risks for heart disease are similar for both women and men.**

Risk factors for heart attack you can't change include family history and age (45+ for men and 55+ for women). But, with lifestyle changes and your health care provider's help, you can control or treat the primary risks:

- High blood pressure.
- Unhealthy blood cholesterol.
- Chronic obesity or overweight.
- Lack of regular exercise.
- Diabetes.
- Smoking.

**FACT: Heart attack signs in women can vary from what men experience.** However, the most common heart attack symptom for both men and women is chest pain or discomfort — unusual pressure, squeezing or fullness in the center of your chest, lasting more than a few minutes off and on.

**Women are somewhat more likely than men to also experience:** shortness of breath, sweating, nausea, vomiting and jaw pain. Other symptoms common to both include pain or discomfort in 1 or both arms, the back, neck or stomach.

**If you have any of these signs, call 911 for an ambulance to take you to the hospital. Note:** Never drive yourself and never have non-emergency responders drive you.



**National Wear Red Day on February 7** is the perfect time to learn more at [GoRedforWomen.org](http://GoRedforWomen.org). You'll find the latest in lifesaving information for women of all ages and ethnicities and learn more specifics about heart disease prevention and related ongoing medical research.

“Science and mindfulness complement each other in helping people to eat well and maintain their health and well-being.” — *What Hanh*

## BEST bits



■ **National Donor Day is February 14.** It recognizes those who have given the gift of life through organ, eye, tissue, blood or marrow donation — and those waiting to receive a lifesaving transplant. Every day in the U.S., 20 people die waiting for a transplant. About 58% of Americans are signed up as donors. To learn about donation and volunteer to help spread the word, visit [organdonor.gov](http://organdonor.gov). Or register as a donor at [RegisterMe.org](http://RegisterMe.org).

■ **Eating disorders are not a lifestyle choice.** They are serious, complex and sometimes fatal illnesses that cause radical preoccupation with food. The most common forms are anorexia nervosa (eating very little), bulimia nervosa (eating followed by purging) and binge eating (anxiety-triggered overeating). The average ages of onset are 18 to 21 years old. **National Eating Disorders Awareness Week is February 23 to 29.** Learn more at [nationaleatingdisorders.org](http://nationaleatingdisorders.org).



■ **During Children's Dental Health Month, check out dental sealants to help prevent cavities in your children.** Cavities are caused by a breakdown of tooth enamel by acids from bacteria that collect on teeth. Dental sealants are a quick, easy and painless way to prevent most cavities children get in their permanent back teeth, where 9 in 10 cavities occur. Sealants are thin coatings that, when painted on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth (molars), can protect against 80% of cavities for 2 to 4 years. Learn more at [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov).



# Jump-Start Your Immunity

**Everyday habits can either protect or weaken your immune system. Poor immunity can lead to chronic allergies, asthma and autoimmune disorders, including lupus, rheumatoid arthritis and type 1 diabetes.**

**Smoking and alcohol abuse are obvious enemies of your immune system.** Researchers have also found we weaken our defenses against germs, viruses and serious illness through many other lifestyle habits.

**Poor sleep:** It raises your stress hormone levels and inflammation. In general, daily sound sleep (7 to 9 hours) protects your health.

**Poor diet:** Not eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds robs you of essential nutrients (including beta carotene as well as vitamins C and E) that strengthen immunity. Kick the junk food and eat well.

**Excess sugar:** Eating or drinking too much sugar reduces the immune system's ability to fight bacteria, an effect that can last for hours. Satisfy your sweet tooth with fruit and drink water instead.

**Chronic stress:** It triggers a steady stream of stress hormones that suppress immunity and lead to disease.

**Negative attitude:** Have you lost your sense of humor? Practice laughing more; it pushes back stress hormones and raises white blood cells that can curb infection.

**Loneliness:** Having a network of good, close friends can boost immunity by easing stress and elevating your mood.



**The takeaway:**  
Take care of yourself.

## Exercise on the Mind

**Exercise does more than boost physical fitness:** It affects how you think and feel mentally. Long before neuroscientists studied the mind-body connection, the ancient Romans described it as "*mens sana in corpore sano*" — a healthy mind in a healthy body.

**Researchers have documented** how exercise impacts not only your muscles, but also your brain and emotions. In fact, just 5 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (e.g., brisk walking) can enhance mood, according to the American Psychological Association (APA).

**That's because even brisk walking releases endorphins,** natural chemicals produced by the nervous system which trigger a calming and beneficial feel-good effect that can help relieve depression. Exercise can also help treat and prevent anxiety and panic attacks by soothing an over-reactive nervous system, the APA notes.



**Regular exercise may boost memory, too,** according to research from the University of Texas Center for Brain Health. What's more, studies show regular aerobic workouts, over time, can improve your brain's executive function, which is needed to plan, solve problems and make decisions.

**So, consider taking a walk instead of a coffee break,** especially if you have a sedentary job, to lower stress levels, brighten your mood and increase your ability to focus and work well.

## Benefits of Family Dinners

**Busy parents and kids may have a tendency to skip sit-down meals together.** But research shows family dinners are worth the planning and effort because eating together regularly has a host of benefits for children and parents.

**For example, Emory University psychologists found that families who share an evening meal** are more likely to discuss emotions, events and family affairs; this boosts youngsters' self-esteem and may improve academic performance. Other benefits include a lower risk of teen pregnancy and depression, according to Columbia University researchers. What's more, teens who eat dinner with their families are less likely to use drugs and alcohol or smoke.

**Parents and kids who eat dinners together** tend to eat more fruit and vegetables and keep weight under control better, too. A study from the American Academy of Pediatrics revealed a 12% lower chance of being overweight, a 20% decrease in eating unhealthy foods and a 35% lower risk of eating disorders in youngsters who frequently ate dinner with their family. And University of Minnesota researchers found dads ate less fast food and moms engaged in fewer dieting and binge eating behaviors when family dinners were common.



# Foods Your Heart Loves

“Knowledge is love and light and vision.”  
— Helen Keller

## TIP of the MONTH

### Deciphering FOOD PACKAGE Dates

Have you ever wondered what the dates on packaged foods mean?

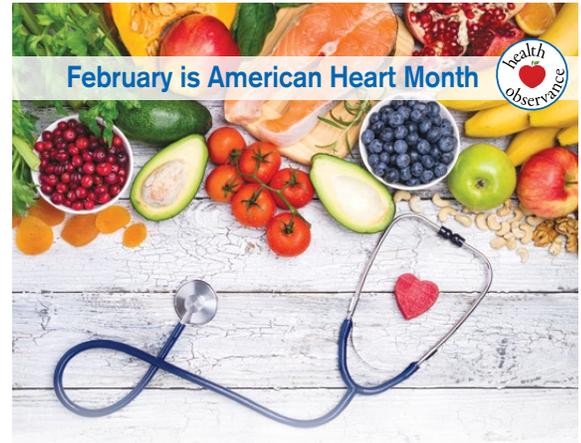
A **Use By** or **Use Before** date indicates when a product will have the best flavor or quality, but you can still eat it after the date. It has nothing to do with the safety of the food except when used on infant formula. A **Sell By** date is meant for the store. It tells the retailer when to pull the product from the shelves, but it, too, has nothing to do with food safety. You can often tell food has spoiled if it develops a bad odor, color or texture due to the presence of bacteria. The dates are not a guide to spoilage. To learn more, search for **food safety by type of food** at [foodsafety.gov](http://foodsafety.gov).



**What do salmon, berries, leafy greens and nuts have in common?** They are all heart-smart foods that ably nourish the body and help combat unhealthy cholesterol, hypertension and heart disease. But it's not just a single food in isolation that can help protect your heart. Rather, it's a combination of nourishing foods and a consistent pattern of healthy eating that has the greatest impact.

HEALTHY EATING TIPS

**For heart-healthy eating, plan Mediterranean and DASH meals using the plate model.** Fill half your plate with vegetables and some fruit, a quarter plate with whole grains, and the remaining quarter with a good source of protein, such as fish, chicken, tofu, lentils or chickpeas. Your heart will thank you.



**Studies show that 2 dietary patterns** are particularly helpful for heart health: the **Mediterranean Diet** and the **Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) Diet**. Both eating patterns are chock-full of vegetables, fruit, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, fish, poultry and low fat dairy, and recommend reducing the consumption of red meat, sweets and salty snacks.

**Both eating plans emphasize whole, unprocessed foods** instead of ultra-processed foods, such as processed meats and cheeses as well as refined breads and other carbs. So, preferably choose apples and carrots rather than apple pie and carrot cake.

**Why are these food plans so powerful for heart health?** Together, these foods provide fiber, which helps regulate blood pressure and cholesterol levels; antioxidants to reduce inflammation; and a host of cardio-protective vitamins and minerals essential for good health. This approach is also lower in sodium, sugars and trans fat, which may raise your risk of heart disease when eaten in excess.

### Spicy-Sweet Salmon with Garlicky Kale

### EASY recipe

- 3 tbsp horseradish
- 1 tbsp honey
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- Pinch pepper
- 21 oz. salmon (4 fillets)
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 bunch (about 8 cups) kale, chopped
- Water, as needed
- ½ tsp salt or more to taste



**Preheat** oven to 400°F. **Line** a baking sheet with foil or parchment paper. **Mix** horseradish, honey, mustard and pepper in a small bowl. **Place** salmon on baking sheet and spoon mixture evenly over fillets. **Bake** 10 minutes per inch of thickness (usually 12-15 minutes). **Meanwhile**, add olive oil and garlic to a frying pan set over medium heat. **Add** kale and sauté until wilted, about 8 minutes, adding 1 tbsp water (or more as needed) to prevent scorching. **Add** kale to plate and serve salmon atop kale.

**Makes 4 servings. Per serving:**

314 calories | 35g protein | 10g total fat | 2g saturated fat | 5g mono fat | 3g poly fat | 20g carbohydrate | 4g sugar | 6g fiber | 518mg sodium

## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

Phone: 800-871-9525

Fax: 205-437-3084

Email: [PBeditor@ebix.com](mailto:PBeditor@ebix.com)

Website: [www.personalbest.com](http://www.personalbest.com)

Executive Editor: Susan Cottman • Advisers: Patricia C. Buchsel, RN, MSN, FAAN; Jamie Lynn Byram, MBA, AFC, MS; Eric Endlich, PhD; Mary P. Hollins, MS, JD, CSHM; Kenneth Holtyn, MS; Reed Humphrey, PhD; Gary B. Kushner, SPHR, CBP; Diane McReynolds, Executive Editor Emeritus; Zorba Paster, MD; Charles Stuart Platkin, PhD; Cara Rosenbloom, RD; Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP; Margaret Spencer, MD • Editor: Aimie Miller • Designer: Heather Burke

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Personal Best® Two Perimeter Park South, Suite 160 East, Birmingham, AL 35243 • 800-871-9525 • fax 205-437-3084.

## Contact Us

### Midwest Region Laborers' Health and Safety Fund

### 1 North Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 525

### Springfield, Illinois 62701

Phone: 800.218.2253

Website: [www.midwestlaborers.org](http://www.midwestlaborers.org)

## EXPERT advice — Eric Endlich, PhD

### Q: How to react to road rage?

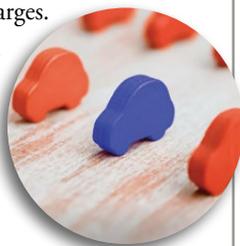
**A:** Uncontrolled anger at another motorist, known as road rage, can lead to dangerous behaviors, such as ramming another's vehicle, using a weapon or running someone off the road. Heavy traffic, delays and driver stress can escalate aggressive driving into road rage.

#### PREVENTION:

- **Steer clear of drivers** who are tailgating, weaving, running red lights, honking, cutting others off or speeding. Don't take it personally.
- **If you are getting angry**, try to relax with music or deep breathing. Acting on your anger isn't worth possible injury or criminal charges.
- **Obey** the traffic laws.

#### REACTION:

- **If confronted**, pull over and let the angry driver pass by.
- **Stay calm.** Don't make eye contact or reciprocate insults or gestures.
- **Be prepared:** Sudden maneuvers or braking may be required.
- **If you feel threatened**, call 911 (hands-free) and report the incident.



## Signs of Stroke? Think **F.A.S.T.**

Every year, about 800,000 people in the U.S. suffer strokes. A stroke happens when the blood supply to your brain is interrupted or reduced. Strokes can be devastating, but if you think **F.A.S.T.**, then you may increase your chances of recovering, depending on the stroke's severity.

### Use **F.A.S.T.** to identify the common symptoms of stroke:

#### FACE:

You try to smile and 1 side of your face droops.



F for face

#### ARMS:

You attempt to raise your arms and 1 side drops down.



A for arms

#### SPEECH:

You speak and you have slurred speech or your speech sounds odd.



S for speech difficulty

#### TIME:

Call 911 immediately if you have 1 or more of these symptoms.



T for time

**Other signs include:** dizziness, trouble walking, trouble seeing with 1 or both eyes, confusion, numbness or weakness on 1 side.

**Reduce your risk of strokes by practicing these safe habits:** Get plenty of exercise (if approved by your health care provider), manage your cholesterol levels and blood pressure, eat healthy and lose weight if you're overweight.

## TOPDOLLAR tip

### Cash-Back Cards

Cash-back credit cards are a useful financial tool if you're looking for perks, such as cash back, shopping points, travel points, mileage and other reward systems.



**However, if you carry a balance on the credit card, you could be wasting money.** For example, if you carry a \$2,500 balance on a credit card with a 16% interest rate and continue to charge items for rewards, you aren't making the best financial choice. You could purchase a plane ticket for less than the interest you are paying on the credit card balance. **If you must carry a balance, look for the lowest interest rate, period.** If you pay in full each month, look at the extras available. **Do your research:** Check online to compare credit cards and rewards offered to make the best choice for you.