



get out and play.

healthy changes  
everything:



BlueShield  
of Northeastern New York

# Wellness News February 2014, Volume 5, Issue 2

## Risk Factors for Coronary Artery Disease

Coronary artery disease (CAD) results from the buildup of plaque on the coronary arterial walls. It can lead to coronary heart disease (CHD), and can ultimately cause premature death. Living a healthy lifestyle can reduce one's risk of CAD, and can even delay the progression of CAD to CHD. Risk factors for CAD include:

- Dyslipidemia
  - High LDL (bad) cholesterol
  - Low HDL (good) cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Family history
- Obesity
- Smoking
- Age
  - Males ages 45 and older
  - Females ages 55 and older

### Did you know?

Heart disease is the cause of almost 50% of all U.S. deaths each year, affecting nearly 14 million Americans.

### Do one thing.

Assess your risk for CAD with your doctor. You can work with a health coach to develop a healthier lifestyle. Contact our health coaches at 1-877-878-8785, option 2.

## Be Your Own Valentine



Love is in the air, and this Valentine's Day is the perfect time to start showing yourself how much you care. Take action to improve your health by planning healthy meals, joining a gym or incorporating more physical activity into your daily routine, and scheduling some "you time." Many people get so caught up in loving and caring for others, that they completely neglect themselves. This year, be your own Valentine by investing time and effort to improve your own health.

### Did you know?

The Chocolate Manufacturer's Association of America says 36 million boxes of chocolate are sold for Valentine's Day.

### Do one thing.

Make it heart-healthy by purchasing chocolate that is at least 70% cocoa.



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## Get Fit – 2014 Fitness Trends

Each year, health and fitness professionals certified by the American College of Sports Medicine are surveyed to predict the year's most notable fitness trends. This year's top ten trends include:

1. High-intensity interval training (HIIT)
2. Body weight training
3. Educated, certified, and experienced fitness professionals
4. Strength training
5. Exercise and weight loss
6. Personal training
7. Fitness programs for older adults
8. Functional fitness
9. Group personal training
10. Yoga

### Did you know?

Not all personal training certifications are created equal.

### Do one thing.

If you are in the market for a personal trainer, look for one who holds a reputable, nationally accredited health and fitness certification, such as ACSM or NSCA.

## Eat Fit – Preventive Health and Wellness

Snacking often gets a bad rap, but there are many benefits to snacking—as long as you make healthy choices. Snacking, as part of a healthy, balanced diet, can increase your metabolism and improve heart health. Just make sure you are eating snack-sized portions. These snacks are full of nutrients and can easily fit into a heart-healthy diet:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Air-popped popcorn
- Low-fat or fat-free yogurt
- Dark chocolate (70% cocoa or greater)
- Dried fruit
- Unsalted nuts

### Did you know?

Forty-nine pistachios contain just 160 calories—that's the same as a measly serving of 10 potato chips.

### Do one thing.

Next time you are craving a salty, crunchy snack, try cracking open a few pistachios. Not only are they low-calorie, but they are packed with heart-healthy nutrients.

## Live Fit – Healing Powers of Meditation

It's no secret that increased levels of distress can have a negative impact on your overall health and well-being. Meditation may help you cope with and minimize the negative effects of stress. Originally intended to increase understanding of the meaning of life, meditation is now commonly used to calm moods and restore inner peace. It is an effective means of relaxation and stress-reduction. Specifically, emotional benefits of meditation include:

- Gaining new perspective on stressful situations
- Building skills to manage stress
- Increasing self-awareness
- Focusing on the present
- Reducing negative emotions



### Did you know?

Meditation may help control serious health conditions, such as allergies, asthma, cancer, depression, heart disease, high blood pressure, and sleep disorders.

### Do one thing.

Speak with your primary care physician to learn if meditation is right for you.

## Chocolate Bark with Pistachios and Dried Cherries

### Ingredients:

- ¾ cup roasted, shelled pistachios
- ¾ cup dried cherries (or dried cranberries)
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated orange zest
- 24 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped, divided

### Directions:

1. Line the bottom and sides of a jelly roll pan or baking sheet with foil. Toss pistachios with cherries in a medium bowl. Divide the mixture in half; stir orange zest into one portion.
2. Melt 18 ounces of chocolate in a double boiler over hot water, stirring often so it melts evenly.
3. Remove the top pan and wipe dry. Stir in the remaining 6 ounces of chocolate until thoroughly melted and smooth.
4. Add the pistachio mixture containing the orange zest to the chocolate; stir to mix well. Quickly scrape the chocolate into the prepared pan, spreading it to an even ¼-inch thickness with a rubber spatula. Sprinkle the remaining pistachio mixture on top; gently press it into the chocolate with your fingertips. Refrigerate, just until set, about 20 minutes.
5. Invert the pan onto a large cutting board. Remove the pan and peel off the foil. Using the tip of a sharp knife, score the chocolate lengthwise with six parallel lines. Break the bark along the score lines. Break the strips of bark into 2- to 3-inch chunks.

Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

Source: EatingWell, Fall 2003

For more healthy tips:

Call our health coaches at 1-877-878-8785, press 2.

