

Choose Wisely... Choose HEALTH!



A newsletter brought to you by OSF Saint Francis Medical Center



A healthy heart checklist

- Do not smoke and avoid second hand smoke
- Be active
- Keep a healthy weight
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables
- Add whole grains to your diet
- Use less salt
- Be kind and forgiving
- Floss daily
- Appreciate the blessings in your life
- Get regular physician check ups

Taking care of yourself.....By Kathleen Riley RN, BSN, MS

February is known as “heart month”. Hardly anyone is in the dark about Valentine’s Day and giving special gifts to those who are dear to our hearts. But what about your own heart? Have you done something good for it lately? Your heart is an amazing muscle that only gets to rest between beats!

- ✓ An adult heart beats about 100,000 times each day adding up to almost 2.5 billion times in an average lifetime.
- ✓ Your heart pumps the volume of your blood (6 quarts) through your body 3 times **each minute**. That adds up to nearly 12,000 miles in one day-4 times the distance across the United States.
- ✓ In a lifetime, your heart will pump about 1 million barrels of blood. That is enough blood to fill 3 loaded super tankers.

What all this means is that choices you make each day can and will affect your *heart* health sooner or later. Tips for healthy living are in magazines, books, radio and television daily. If you have not yet made the changes you need to ensure the health of your heart, don’t delay any longer! If you have made those changes, congratulations! Your heart and those that love you thank you for it.

References: <http://pbs.org/wgbh/nova/eheart/facts.html>

OSF Saint Francis Heart Hospital-Peoria Illinois

Practicing healthy habits can help you lower your risk for heart disease. But when you must have medical care for heart problems, there is no need to leave Peoria. Contained within the walls of OSF Saint Francis Medical Center is the Heart Hospital. With 95 beds devoted solely to cardiac care, the OSF Saint Francis Heart Hospital offers diagnosis and treatment for all types of heart problems for people of all ages. There are 5 coronary catheterization labs, by far the largest in central Illinois, and 3 operating rooms used specifically for cardiovascular surgery. In 2008, nearly 34,116 people were cared for at the Heart Hospital.

But treatment does not end there. To help heal and strengthen the heart and attend to the total well-being of patients OSF Saint Francis and the Heart Hospital offer 3 phases of Cardiac Rehabilitation. Phase 2 and 3 of that program are based in the beautiful riverfront RiverPlex complex.

Heart Hospital victories live on in the hearts of many people throughout central Illinois. You may even know someone who has had such a victory. Families-infants, children, parents, and grandparents-all have been treated by the expert, experienced physicians and staff of both the Heart Hospital and OSF Saint Francis Medical Center. This is an important connection not available at any other local or regional facility. To learn more about the Heart Hospital and view awards, accreditations and patient comments, visit our web site at:

www.osfsaintfrancis.org/hearthospital

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For more information about Choose HEALTH! call (309) 282-1624. Teaching handouts from OSF Saint Francis Medical Center are not medical advice nor are they to be used in place of proper medical care. If you have any questions or concerns about your health or well-being, please talk with your doctor or healthcare provider who knows you best.

Exercise for your Heart by Jamie Doty B.S. M.S.

If you're like most people, you think that heart disease is a problem for other folks. But coronary vascular disease is still the number one cause of death for *all* Americans. It is also a major cause of disability. There are many forms of heart disease, but the most common cause of heart disease is narrowing or blockage of the coronary arteries—the blood vessels that supply blood to the heart itself. This is called coronary artery disease and happens slowly over time. It's the major reason people have heart attacks.

So what's the good news?

You can do something about your risk for heart disease! Be physically active! A sedentary (inactive) lifestyle is one of the top risk factors for heart disease. Regular exercise including swimming, cycling, jogging, skiing, aerobic dancing, walking or many other activities can help your heart. Whether it's included in a structured exercise program or part of your daily routine, *all physical activity* adds up to a healthier heart!

Benefits of physical activity:

- Strengthens heart and cardiovascular system.
- Improves circulation and helps body use oxygen better.
- Improves heart failure symptoms.
- Increases energy levels so daily activities can be done without becoming tired or short of breath.
- Lowers blood pressure.
- Improves overall muscle tone and strength.
- Improves balance and joint flexibility.
- Strengthens bones.
- Reduces body fat and healthy weight.
- Helps relieve stress, tension, anxiety and depression.
- Improves sleep.



Getting Started— Being active is good for most everyone but some folks may need to check with their healthcare provider first, especially if planning to do a more vigorous routine. Men over 40, women over 50, people who smoke, are overweight, have or are at risk for chronic illness, should all consult with their healthcare provider before starting to exercise. Other things to be alert for:

- ✓ **Medication changes.** New medications can affect your response to exercise; your doctor can tell you if your normal exercise routine is still safe.
- ✓ **Heavy lifting.** Make sure that lifting or pushing heavy objects, and chores such as raking, shoveling, mowing, or scrubbing aren't off limits. Chores around the house can be tiring for some people. Make sure you only do what you are able to without getting overtired.
- ✓ **Safe exercises.** Get the doctor's approval before you lift weights, use a weight machine, jog, or swim.

How Often Should I Exercise?

To reach maximum benefits, you should ***gradually work up to*** an aerobic session lasting 30 to 60 minutes, at least three to four times a week. Include strength training 2-5 times a week to improve strength, balance and increase lean muscle mass. Exercising almost daily will help you keep a regular exercise schedule. Stretching should be included with every session of exercise. Classes such as Yoga, Tai Chi, or BodyFlow® can also be included in a well balanced exercise routine to improve balance, a sense of well being, and overall heart health! Post reminders if you must until you get into the habit of being active.



What Kinds of Exercise Should I do?

Cardiovascular or aerobic: steady physical activity using large muscle groups. This type of exercise strengthens the heart and lungs and improves the body's ability to use oxygen. Aerobic exercise has the most benefits for your heart. Over time, aerobic exercise can help decrease your heart rate and blood pressure at rest and improve your breathing.

Strengthening: repeated muscle contractions (tightening) until the muscle becomes tired. For people with heart failure, many strengthening exercises are not recommended so check with your doctor for precautions or participate in a medical supervised exercise program (see below).

Stretching: slow lengthening of the muscles. Light stretching after a warm up before exercise helps prepare the muscles for activity. Stretching after exercise helps prevent injury and reduce muscle soreness. Regular stretching after exercise while your muscles are still warm also increases your range of motion and flexibility.

Make sure to warm up before and cool down after each exercise session as well. With so many parts to safe effective exercise, don't lose track of what can make it a life long habit that benefits your heart-Fun!!

Resources: www.riverplex.org, www.webmd.com

Want to be more active but afraid to start because of your health?

The OSF Saint Francis **Medical Exercise Program** at the RiverPlex is meant just for you! We have helped people with heart disease, diabetes and other illnesses start exercising safely. Our Registered Nurses, Exercise Specialists, and Dietitians are ready to serve you and help you along your journey to wellness.

Here is what we have to offer:

- ✓ Expert healthcare professionals, registered nurses, dietitians and exercise specialists
- ✓ Indoor walking track
- ✓ Land exercise with treadmills, bikes, Nu-Steps and more
- ✓ Lap and warm water pools and Lazy River
- ✓ Tai Chi basic and advanced classes
- ✓ Structured hour-long classes offered during the morning and afternoon
- ✓ Exercise on your own during program hours
- ✓ Lower level class for beginners or those with more advanced health issues
- ✓ Classes that teach healthy eating with samples to taste
- ✓ Classes that teach other healthy habits

But that isn't even the best part! Let our caring staff:

- ✓ Teach you safe exercise
- ✓ Create a routine best suited to your needs
- ✓ Lead you through group exercise classes
- ✓ Answer questions about your health and exercise concerns
- ✓ Care about and support your needs
- ✓ Respond to any medical emergencies



Learn more about programs offered through OSF Saint Francis at the RiverPlex, by calling 282-1600 or visit our website at www.osfsaintfrancis.org or www.riverplex.org

A Poem to Enjoy....submitted by Marilyn Priddy MA, RD, LDN

T'was a party for Valentine's Day
and all through the place
stood buffet table brimming
with food of good taste.

There were nibbles and morsels
and much bite-size fare;
trays stacked with great goodies
were beyond compare.

The hostess, while mingling,
Was once heard to chat,
"All the dishes I made are
LOW CAL and LESS FAT."

Her guests ate everything
For they had no clue
That the savory menu
Was good for them, too.

No one missed heavy cheeses
or sugary sweets;
No one sought fatty fare or salt-laden
treats.



Enjoying the dinner,
They came back for more;
"May I have the recipes?"
Someone did implore.

The hostess shared gladly
And promised to thereat
To keep her guests happy
and healthy at that.

This poem was written for Christmas but
applies to all holidays and gatherings
throughout the year. It was initially
found in a recipe insert booklet with
"Taste Of Home Light and Tasty"
magazine December of 2007.

Valentine "Treats" for Your Sweethearts - By Marilyn Priddy MA, RD, LDN

What comes to mind when February and Valentine's Day are mentioned? If you're like most people you only think about candy, and probably chocolate candy at that. February is Heart Month so try to think more about giving those you love something good for their heart! Here are a few tips:

- ✓ Container of almonds, walnuts or peanuts
- ✓ Lower fat cookies made with oatmeal or whole grains
- ✓ A dessert that uses lower fat ingredients
- ✓ Dinner invitation to a "fish" restaurant
- ✓ A Valentine's Day party where heart healthy choices are provided
- ✓ Day pass to the RiverPlex-call 282-1500

Be creative. I bet you can come up with many other great ideas that can help take care of your loved one's hearts.

Vitamin D.....not just good for your bones -By Kathleen Riley RN, BSN, MS



Not getting enough vitamin D has long been tied to bone and muscle weakness. Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium and phosphorus which are needed for bone strength. Recent research suggests low levels of vitamin D may also affect the cardiovascular system in a negative way. Besides making people more prone to high blood pressure, congestive heart failure and chronic inflammation of blood vessels, low levels of vitamin D may also increase insulin resistance thus raising the risk for diabetes as well.

Vitamin D is made by the skin when it is exposed to sunlight. But, there are factors that affect a persons ability to make enough vitamin D.

- ✓ Reduced or limited exposure to sunlight
- ✓ Kidney or liver disease
- ✓ Increased age
- ✓ Smoking
- ✓ Darkly colored skin
- ✓ Overweight

Resources: www.webmd.com,
www.midwestheart.com

There are foods rich in vitamin D to include in your daily intake:

- ✓ Fatty fish (salmon, sardines, mackerel)
- ✓ Cod liver oil
- ✓ Vitamin D fortified milk and cereals.

Diet alone cannot provide all the vitamin D needs of the body. If you have or are at risk for heart disease, depression, diabetes, or joint and muscle pain, check with your doctor if you might be low on vitamin D and need to take a supplement.