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Healthy Directions of Poway

HEART HEALTH MONTH

February is all about hearts and love, and a great time to make sure yours those of loved ones are HEALTHY. To start with it is important to know your numbers for total cholesterol, triglycerides, HDL, LDL, and blood pressure. For good health experts agree on shooting for the following levels: Cholesterol at or below 200mg/dl; Triglycerides at or below 200mg/dl; HDL (good cholesterol) 40 and above; LDL (bad cholesterol) less than 130, or less than 100 if you already have heart disease; and blood pressure of 120/80. To achieve these numbers or stay heart healthy practice the following habits: avoid tobacco products and exposure to them; maintain a healthy weight; get 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise daily; eat a **healthy diet**; manage stress; aim for blood glucose levels of 100 mg/dl. What's considered a healthy weight is a BMI or body mass index between 19-25. Visit www.mypyramid.gov to calculate your BMI and learn about your nutrition needs. The American Heart Association recommends the following: consume not more than 300 mg of cholesterol daily; consume 25-35% of your calories as fat, with less than 1% as trans fats, and less than 7 % as saturated fats; 15% of calories as lean protein and the remaining 50-60% as high fiber, complex carbohydrates; limit sodium intake to 2000mg daily. It's important to read food labels, eat more "fresh, organic" foods and meals made from scratch with them. Eat out less often and steer clear of processed, refined & ready made meals. The foods which are kindest to your heart are oats, nuts, high fiber (20-35 gm daily) foods like fruits, vegetables and 100% whole grains, fish eaten at least twice weekly, plant sterols found in Benecol and Take Control margarines, flaxseed, and green tea. The foods most unkind are fried, processed, sugary, those high in cream, butter, organ meats, egg yolks, bacon, lunchmeat and wieners. So chose wisely for you, your **Valentines and Superbowl** company. For more information & healthy recipes, consult Healthy Directions of Poway at 858-335-2140.

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