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JWG News & Views - February 2010

February is American Heart Month and this month's newsletter is packed full of information and helpful tips to keep your ticker in top shape. We want to thank Dr. Joy Lewis for being a contributor and for her excellent article on ways to prevent heart disease. Also inside are the benefits of whole grains and tips on supplements that support heart health. We are very excited about the wine and chocolate tasting on the 12th from 4 to 7pm. Please join us, we'd LOVE to see you! Happy Valentine's Day!



American Heart Month

You are what you eat. You are what you do.

By Joy H. Lewis, DO, Ph.D.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD), which includes coronary heart disease (CHD), stroke and peripheral vascular disease, is by far the leading cause of death in the United States. CVD accounts for more than 900,000 deaths annually and CHD accounts for approximately one in six deaths in the US. In 1963 Congress started to require the President to proclaim February "American Heart Month." The hope was to raise awareness about heart disease and to motivate people to take action towards prevention. The Jackson Whole Grocer asked me to help them celebrate this month by providing some tips for heart health.

While the mortality rates for CVD have declined over the last 35 years, much of this decline can be attributed to advances in medical technologies. There is still quite a bit of room to decrease the burden of CVD by focusing on prevention. In order to determine how much of a role lifestyle factors have in causing heart disease, and how much lifestyle changes can prevent heart disease, the Canadian Population Health Research Institute undertook the INTERHEART study. Their findings were published in 2004. They studied 15,152 cases (people with a history of heart attack) and 14,820 controls (people without a history of heart attack) from 52 countries, representing every inhabited continent. They found that over 90% of the population attributable risk for a first heart attack could be explained by nine "potentially modifiable risk factors." In other words, by working on prevention an individual can decrease his or her risk of having a heart attack. Other large-scale studies such as the Women's Health Study and the Nurse's Health study have also demonstrated the importance of behavior modification and lifestyle changes in preventing heart disease.

Employing the data from these studies, my experience as an Internal Medicine Physician (a doctor for adults), and my experience as a Public Health Researcher, I will highlight my top 11 tips for a healthy heart. You don't need to depend on changing medical technology. You can decrease your risk (and your family's risk) for heart disease by taking action.

(article continued on page two)

February Events Calendar

Feb 8 - Food Demo with Maureen Molinari, RD 12-2pm - Chocolate fondue for Valentine's Day.

Feb 9 - Nordic Naturals demo with Kathleen 4-7pm

Feb 11 - Kaycee Naturals demo - Valentine's ideas 11:30am-1:30pm

Feb 12 - Wine & Chocolate Tasting with Tim from Bottleneck Wines. 4 pm to 7pm - raffle prizes!

Feb 15 - Food Demo with Maureen Molinari, RD & Jack from Hole Fish 12-2pm - Delicious fresh fish!

Feb 17 - Wine Tasting with Tim from Bottleneck Wines. 4 to 7pm

Feb 22 - Food demo with Cara Liberatore 12-2pm Cooking with lovely legumes.

Feb 22 - Ben Clark will demo his Ian Botanique locally handcrafted hydrosol formulas 11a-2p

Feb 23 - Nordic Naturals demo with Kathleen 4-7pm

Chocolate is good for you!

And we have lots of it to choose from. Look for new chocolates by Tcho, Valrhona, Honeybee Gardens, Sacred Chocolate, Amano, Domori and True Bar. Also locally made artisan chocolates by Atelier Ortega and Petit Secret

You are what you eat. You are what you do. (continued from page one)

- 1) Eat a healthy diet with many fruits and vegetables and a lot of fiber. Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and brussel sprouts are beneficial. Green leafy vegetables and citrus fruits are important. You should eat 6 servings a day. Find the fruits and vegetables that you like and keep them on hand. Clean a bunch of lettuce on the weekend to use during the week. Cut up carrots and put them in water so they stay fresh. Find ways to make it easy for yourself to access these foods when you are in a hurry. Keep healthy snacks on hand so you don't make poor choices when you are hungry. While taking anti-oxidant supplements have not been proven to decrease the risk of heart disease, eating anti-oxidant foods has. Vegetables and fruits are rich in antioxidant vitamins. Try to make a habit of eating only when sitting, and take your time.
- 2) Know your cholesterol and understand what the numbers mean. When you get your cholesterol checked you should find out details about the types of cholesterol. The Triglycerides in your blood represent the fats (the less fat in your diet the lower the triglycerides). You want your triglycerides to be below 150. The LDL is the "bad cholesterol," you want this number to be less than 100 and in many people it should be less than 70. Cholesterol comes from animal products. Red meats are high in cholesterol. If you must eat red meat try to find grass fed/grass finished meat. The HDL is your "good cholesterol"; you want this to be above 40. Exercise can raise your HDL. Talk to your physician about your results and your personal risk for heart disease. Ask your physician to calculate your "Framingham risk score" or go to this web site and calculate it yourself. <http://hp2010.nhlbi.nih.gov/atp/iii/calculator.asp>
- 3) **AVOID HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP.** This is found in many drinks and in processed foods. High fructose corn syrup was not commercially available until the 1960's; the rise in the use of this product has paralleled the obesity epidemic in our country. High fructose corn syrup promotes the production of fat in the body, promotes weight gain and increases hunger. The very well funded corn lobby has engaged in a deceptive and potent campaign to suggest high fructose corn syrup is not dangerous. Science and the facts prove otherwise.
- 4) **AVOID PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED OIL.** This is the same thing as trans fat. A product can be labeled "zero trans fat" if it has less than .5g of trans fat (partially hydrogenated oil) per serving. In many cases the serving sizes have been decreased so the manufacturer can "earn" the zero trans fat label. There is no safe amount of trans fat to eat. Trans fat lowers your good cholesterol, raises your bad cholesterol, increases inflammation in your body, increases weight gain around the middle, increases your triglycerides and this is just the beginning. The take home message is simple: read the full ingredient label and don't eat food with partially hydrogenated oil.
- 5) Eat fish. If you don't eat it twice a week, take a fish oil supplement. You can buy fish oil over the counter or ask your doctor about prescription strength fish oil.
- 6) Exercise, even modestly. Many people living in Jackson feel it is not exercise if they are not running or skinning up Snow King. While it is generally true that more exercise is better for your heart, moderate exercise is extremely helpful as well. Walking briskly for 30 minutes a day has been shown to reduce the risk for heart disease. The key is to find something you like to do and do it regularly. Find a friend with whom you can exercise. Make a commitment to each other and to your self. You will be more likely to follow through. People tell me frequently they just don't have the time for exercise. We all need to make the time. Make exercise a priority. Put it on your schedule; don't wait for the time to make itself.
- 7) Don't smoke. One year after quitting smoking an individual's risk for a heart attack and death from CHD is reduced by 50%. Several years after quitting a prior smoker's risk for CHD begins to approach that of someone who never smoked. It is therefore never too late to quit smoking. Nor is it ever too early.
- 8) Know your blood pressure. Get it checked regularly and ask for the numbers when it is checked. Eating a healthful diet that is low in salt can help reduce your risk of high blood pressure, as can exercise and weight control. If you have high blood pressure get it treated. Own your own blood pressure cuff. Make sure it is accurate and check your blood pressure at home.
- 9) Get tested for diabetes. If you have diabetes treat it aggressively and control your blood sugar. Work to prevent diabetes by eating well and exercising.
- 10) Control your weight. Obesity, and particularly central obesity (weight gain around the middle), increases your risk for heart disease.
- 11) Finally, don't live in isolation. People with strong social networks have reduced cardiovascular risks.

As a wise patient of mine once said, "Bad habits are hard to break, but so are good ones." Your heart is an engine. The lower the quality of the fuel, the more damage to the engine. If you have a problem with your heart, address the underlying cause, not just the symptom. I wish you a happy and healthy American Heart Month.

Joy H. Lewis, DO, Ph.D.

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Yusuf, S. et al. Effect of potentially modifiable risk factors associated with myocardial infarction in 52 countries (the INTERHEART study): case-control study. *Lancet* 2004 Sep 11;364(9438):937-52.

The Whole Picture of Heart Health by Mary Ryan, MS, RD

According to the CDC heart disease remains the leading cause of death for American men and women and in 2009, heart disease will cost the United States \$304.6 billion. This total includes the cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity.



These grim statistics keep us focused on how to adjust our lifestyles to protect our hearts and dietary changes are a big part of a holistic approach. We've all heard it before – protect your heart by eating more fatty fish, veggies, fruit, legumes, and nuts and cut back on the bacon and cheese. Oh yeah, these days dark chocolate is often added to the mix! The reality is the entire plant kingdom has something to offer our hearts, including whole grains.

Grains have been much maligned between the various low carb diets and more recently diets that claim we are not adapted to grains so should go back to more ancestral eating habits (though this is not popular among eco-eaters given the environmental costs of eating meat). There is also a major trend away from grains that include gluten (wheat, rye, barley and most oats) both due to a rise in Celiac Disease as well as other observed intolerance to wheat and/or gluten.

While Americans do eat way too much processed wheat, whether or not this is linked to the rise in Celiac and other wheat or gluten-related issues is still up for debate. However, this is likely a reason many people who eschew their grain habits in favor of the latest dietary fad can lose weight and feel better (depending of course, on the rest of their lifestyle choices). It is easy to eat a lot of grain when it is processed into bread, cereal, pasta, cookies, and other foods lacking the dietary fiber found in whole grains. Plus processing these grains removes many key nutrients, some essential for heart health.

In several studies people who ate three servings of whole grains a day had a 20-30% lower risk of heart disease than those with the lowest intake did. Whole grain foods consumed in these studies included dark bread, whole-grain breakfast cereals, popcorn, cooked oatmeal, brown rice, bran, barley, and other grains like bulgar and kasha. There are other studies linking whole-grain consumption with lower risk of stroke and conditions linked to heart disease such as high cholesterol and type 2 diabetes.

What is a whole grain?

Using wheat as an example, whole grains contain all three parts of the kernel – bran, endosperm and germ. Refining wheat normally removes the bran and the germ, leaving only the endosperm. This process results in a loss of roughly 25% of the protein and seventeen other nutrients from the wheat kernel. Among the lost nutrients are all of the selenium and vitamin E, both are important anti-oxidants linked to heart health. Processing also affects the amount of beneficial plant compounds called phytonutrients such as saponins (linked to lowering cholesterol) and lignans (with anti-cancer properties) found in many whole grains. Though processors add back some vitamins and minerals to enrich refined grains, whole grains are healthier, providing more protein, fiber and many important vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients.

Many rice varieties – brown, wild, red, black

Rolled oats

Hulled barley

Bulgar

Wheat, spelt, and rye berries

Popcorn

Quinoa*

Buckwheat*

*Technically seeds not grain but consumed like grains and highly nutritious.

Thankfully many companies have increased the number of foods made with whole grains. A bonus for busy people on the go who must rely on restaurants and other ready-to-eat options for meals. The rise in gluten sensitivities and desire to eat more simple, whole foods has also thrust a wider variety of delicious whole grain alternatives to wheat into mainstream culture. All of this is good news for our hearts!

For the Love of Your Life by Jessa Smout

When it comes to the love of your “LIFE” cardiovascular health is a terrific place to start. Considering it is the number one cause of death in the U.S. there is not a better place to begin loving your LIFE. In heart health discussions, Omega 3's are the star supplement but I want to mention a few other important ones to consider, Co-Q10 and magnesium.

Coenzyme Q10 (Co-Q 10) or ubiquinone is a substance found in all human tissue. It is a powerful antioxidant that is similar to Vitamin E. Because Co-Q10 is found in all parts of the body it plays a vital role in many functions especially production of energy in our individual cells. **As a result it may help with the following: allergies, alzheimers, anti-aging, asthma, candidiasis, cardiovascular health, diabetes, obesity, periodontal disease, and other health issues.**

There has been extensive research done on Co-Q10 regarding its many possible uses, however, in regards to aiding in heart health the information is irrefutable. *Prescription for Nutritional Healing* states “A six year study conducted by scientists at the University of Texas found that people being treated for congestive heart failure who took coenzyme Q10 in addition to conventional therapy had a 75 percent chance of survival after three years, compared with a 25 percent survival rate for those using conventional therapy alone”. Because CoQ10 is known to help strengthen the heart muscle it is effective in helping in both prevention and treatment of heart disease.

In the Natural Care Department, we have many different forms of CoQ10. Three of my favorites are: *The Jackson Whole Grocer's Private Label*, *Bluebonnet*, and *Mega Food*. **Some great food sources are: peanuts, blueberries, cranberries, mackerel, salmon, and sardines.**

Magnesium is an essential mineral that is found in most food but can be taken as a supplement too. As magnesium is needed in almost every function of the body it is difficult to take too much, but low levels of magnesium can make any disease worse. **Magnesium provides essential help for the prevention of calcification of soft tissues which could result in higher blood pressure.** Magnesium also helps relax the muscles and blood vessels, it helps maintain normal heart rhythm and muscular contraction and is incredibly helpful with stress (which is not good for the heart for many reasons).

We have many magnesium supplements in the store ranging in price, size and form. Jake's favorites are: *Source Naturals Ultra-Mag*, *Trace Mineral's Ionic Magnesium* and *Mega Food's* straight magnesium from a whole foods source. We also have *Peter Gillham's* magnesium powder at 20% off for the whole month. **Food sources include chocolate, halibut, almonds, cashews, spinach and whole grains such as wheat and brown rice (which give you the added benefit of fiber).**

For the *other* Love of Your Life

Regarding the other “Love's of your life”, consider all the wonderful people out there who deserve a Valentine's Day present be it your Grandma or your best friend! We have a lot to choose from in the Natural Care Department. There are great shampoos, conditioners, lotions, soaps, body scrubs, and bubble baths on sale for the whole month of February. There are also some new eye pillows in from *Jane* and *Nummies*. An eye pillow with some aromatherapy oil and stone ground chocolate will make a great gift for that special someone.

Featured Books for February:

Follow Your Heart cookbook by Janice Cook Knight, *Comfort Foods Made Healthy* from the creators of Eating Well Magazine, *Reversing Heart Disease* by Dr. Dean Ornish

