



Hearts N' Parks
**COMMUNITY
MOBILIZATION
GUIDE**





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A project of the
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and Blood Institute*

and the

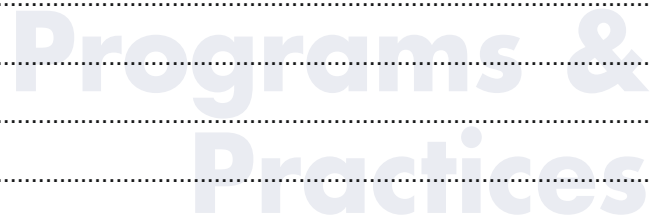


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Reproducibles

Hello!

INTRODUCTION

Hearts N' Parks is a national, community-based program supported by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). It is designed to help local agencies promote heart-healthy lifestyle changes among their residents. The objectives of Hearts N' Parks are to increase the number of children and adults who engage in heart-healthy behavior and to demonstrate the impact that community park and recreation programs can have on behavior. The long-term goal is to decrease the number of people with heart disease. Hearts N' Parks seeks to bring about these changes in the following ways:

- Identifying target groups
- Creating heart-healthy activities and techniques
- Raising the level of awareness of Hearts N' Parks and its messages
- Making the most of existing community resources to extend the reach and effectiveness of Hearts N' Parks
- Conducting an evaluation to document the results of Hearts N' Parks' efforts.

Hearts N' Parks is meant to be **fun** and **flexible**. And it's for **everybody**—young and old, active and nonactive. This Hearts N' Parks Community Mobilization Guide provides the background and resources needed to implement the program. But each community can adapt the material to its own design, resources, and needs.

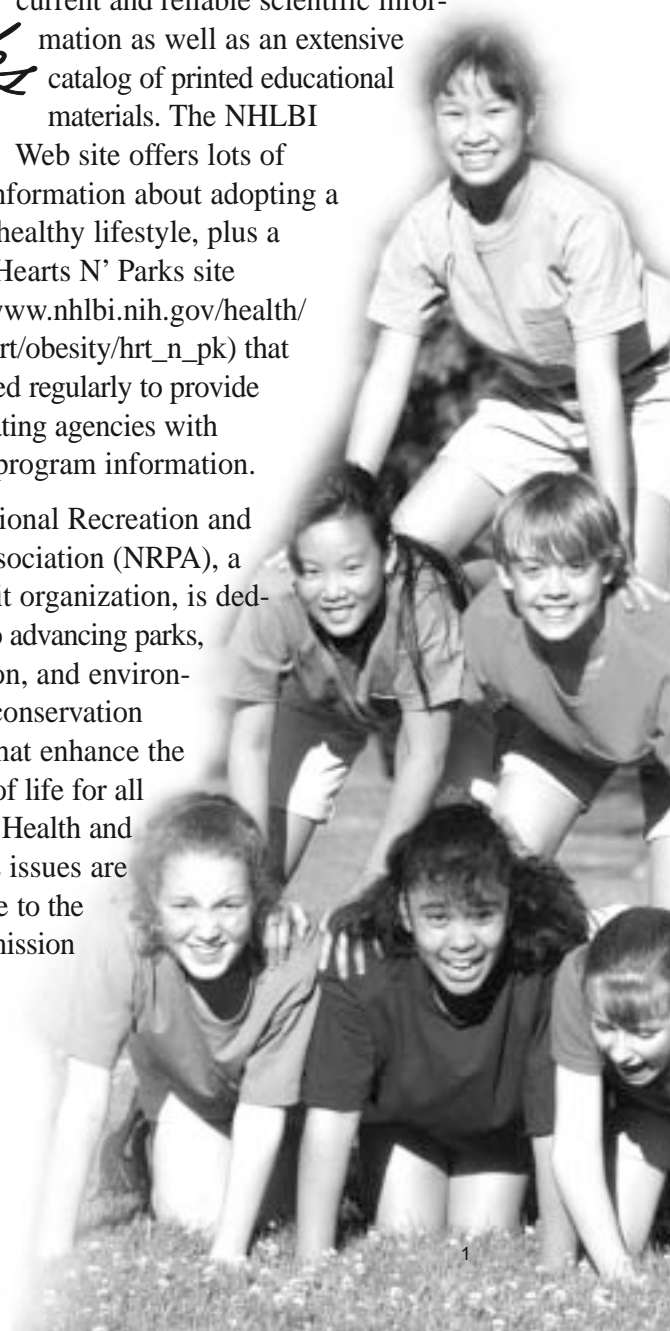
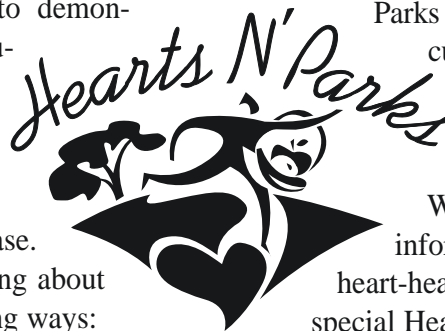
THE PARTNERSHIP

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute is one of the Institutes of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The mission of the NHLBI is to provide leadership for a national program in diseases of the heart, blood vessels, lungs, and blood; sleep disorders; and blood resources management. The NHLBI supports Hearts N'

Parks with a wealth of resources, including current and reliable scientific information as well as an extensive catalog of printed educational materials. The NHLBI

Web site offers lots of information about adopting a heart-healthy lifestyle, plus a special Hearts N' Parks site (http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/heart/obesity/hrt_n_pk) that is updated regularly to provide participating agencies with current program information.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), a nonprofit organization, is dedicated to advancing parks, recreation, and environmental conservation efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people. Health and wellness issues are also core to the NRPA mission



(<http://www.activeparks.org>). Information about Hearts N' Parks can be found at <http://www.heartsnparks.org>.

Local park and recreation departments and other community agencies that foster Hearts N' Parks efforts are part of the partnership. While national agencies, such as the NHLBI and the NRPA, provide basic resources, information, and support, those who work in community programs come face to face with local residents on a daily basis, and are thus better positioned to provide information and services, as well as raising awareness to support and sustain healthy lifestyles. Accordingly, they are able to involve and **keep** people involved in heart-healthy programs, thus ensuring long-term adoption of heart-healthy behavior.

THE BEGINNING OF HEARTS N' PARKS

Hearts N' Parks began in the summer of 1999 as a pilot initiative in North Carolina called *Hearts N' Parks Y2K*. Parks and recreation agencies in

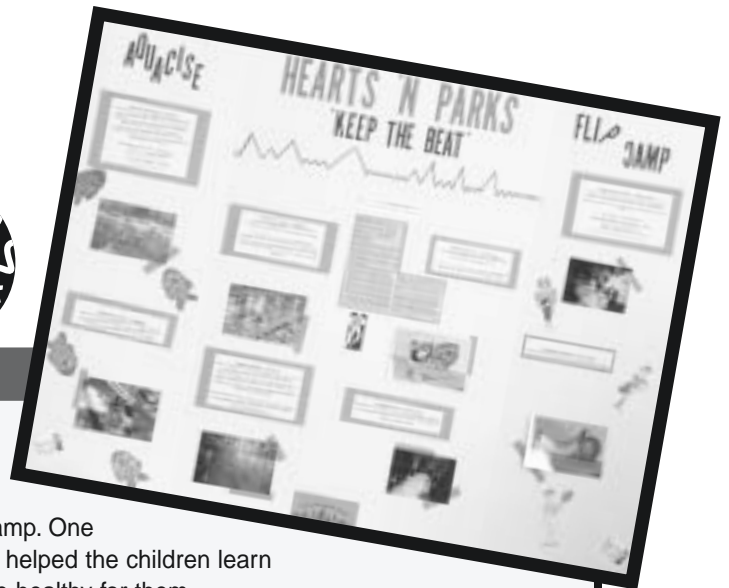
12 communities throughout the State utilized training and resources from the NHLBI and the NRPA to incorporate heart-healthy lifestyle messages in programs for children, adolescents, and adults. More than 2,000 participants, ranging in age from 4 to 74, took part in a number of unique programs. Some of the agencies were very small, with less than 30 people in the Hearts N' Parks program, while one agency, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department in Charlotte, operated a number of Hearts N' Parks programs for more than 1,500 participants.

An important element of the pilot was an attempt to consider changes in attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors of the participants related to heart-healthy eating and physical activity. Despite some limitations in data collection, pre- and posttests administered by the sites provided

SOS

Signs of Success

NORTH CAROLINA, 1999



The Roanoke Rapids Park and Recreation Department conducted a program for children that taught the basics of nutrition to 4 to 6 year-olds in its FLIP (Fun for Little Interested People) camp. One of the activities was an arts and craft program that helped the children learn about different kinds of foods and which ones were healthy for them.

The Garner Parks and Recreation Department sponsored both senior-citizen and youth programs. The senior fitness program, "Keep the Beat...Circle Yourself in Health," lasted 5 weeks and included 12 participants. Participants kept a journal of their involvement and received credit for prizes as an incentive to "keep the beat" toward a healthier lifestyle. Blood pressure screenings were also offered to senior participants.

In Wilson, the Parks and Recreation Department offered a drop-in weightlifting program for adults, and participants were given a journal to track their progress. The department also partnered with local trainers and nutrition specialists to discuss the importance of proper use of weights, the role nutrition plays in building muscle, and the benefits of increasing muscle mass.



valuable insights to the program in a variety of ways. A comparison between pre- and posttests showed that the children participating in Hearts N' Parks appeared to improve their knowledge of healthy eating and expressed greater intentions to eat healthier. The children also reported, on average, learning four new physical activities and getting better at six physical activities. Senior participants reported some improvements in nearly all the variables considered, as well as feeling healthier at the end of the program.

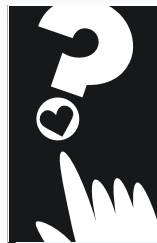
In the spring of 2000, the Arlington County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources, a large, multifaceted agency in Northern Virginia, kicked off a second pilot initiative of Hearts N' Parks. Arlington County was selected as the second pilot site for Hearts N' Parks because of the variety of recreational programs at its two flagship sites: Thomas Jefferson Community Center and Barcroft Sport and Fitness Center.

Arlington's promotion of Hearts N' Parks included programs focused on both adults and children. It featured activities such as blood pressure screenings and a seated exercise class for adults, jumping rope and tennis for kids, and a biking program for all age groups called "Cycle Reebok." The Hearts N' Parks logo was printed on trail maps, mile markers, and other promotional materials for programs and facilities that offer heart-healthy activities. The "Recreation and Leisure" class catalog promoted a series of heart-healthy classes in the fall of 2000.

HEARTS N' PARKS IS SPECIAL

Hearts N' Parks is a unique approach to promoting healthy hearts in the United States. Cardiovascular disease is the number one killer in this country, and lifestyle change is the primary and most important step toward

Do you know?



There is no one size of agency or one type of staff person that works best for participation in Hearts N' Parks. In fact, the pilot sites differed from one another on the basis of size, organizational structure, population density and, most of all, the individual who headed up the Hearts N' Parks effort. For example:


Some of the agencies were large, countywide departments where "large" refers to either size of population or size of geographic area. Moderate to large cities as well as small and medium-sized communities have also been successful at delivering Hearts N' Parks.

Many differences existed among staff people, who either elected or were "selected" to coordinate Hearts N' Parks. Successful Hearts N' Parks coordinators ranged from people who had little or no prior experience in heart-healthy behavior or were actually new to the community service field, to individuals who had extensive backgrounds in health and wellness, experience in community service, or human services.

Congratulations to those people behind the success stories of our pilot sites in North Carolina, who included a summer intern, a newly hired college graduate, a long-time program supervisor, a department manager, a wellness coordinator, and a director of education.

That's right. There is no one specific type of community, agency, or person needed to move forward with Hearts N' Parks. Big or small, experienced or novice, you can become the coordinator of a successful Hearts N' Parks project, and we'd like to help you with that endeavor.

Focused facts



- Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for all people in the United States.
- 60.8 million Americans had one or more types of cardiovascular disease in 1998.
- Cardiovascular disease claimed 949,000 lives in the United States in 1998.
- 41 percent of all deaths in 1998 were attributable to cardiovascular disease.

Source: NHLBI FY 2000 Fact Book

prevention. However, getting the message out to those who most need to hear it is often difficult and confusing.

Hearts N' Parks provides all the tools...

- Hearts N' Parks provides community agencies with the resources to communicate lifestyle changes in a clear and concise way to all kinds of people.
- Hearts N' Parks can be part of health-related programs, such as aerobic or wellness classes, but can also be part of nonhealth-related programs, such as senior center drop-in programs or day camps. It is easily integrated into existing programs, so it doesn't require the effort involved in starting a new program.
- Hearts N' Parks provides the information and tools to spread the word through media support and partnerships.
 - Media support can be advertising your event on radio or television or in the newspaper, and even having the media cover a special event or a day in your program.

- Partnerships can be of any kind...Some examples are local hospitals providing health screenings at your community center or during a special hospital event, health professionals giving lectures, neighborhood grocery stores or restaurants donating heart-healthy snacks, or a more focused effort with one of your current partners.

- Hearts N' Parks programs have increased credibility and visibility because they are supported by two highly respected national organizations, the NHLBI and the NRPA.
- Hearts N' Parks is self-sustaining because it is developed by a community agency that must operate within the means of the community.
- Hearts N' Parks provides the tools to measure what your participants have learned and done. This information helps motivate participants as well as engage partners and senior management.
- Hearts N' Parks is meant for everyone. Information and materials are available for children, adolescents, adults, and seniors.

THE BAD NEWS: CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

The goal of Hearts N' Parks is to increase the number of children and adults who engage in heart-healthy behavior.

Why Heart-Healthy Behavior?

Heart-healthy behavior can prevent the development of **cardiovascular disease (CVD)** and reduce its severity among those who already have it. CVD includes such diseases as high blood pressure, coronary heart disease (myocardial infarction and angina pectoris), stroke, rheumatic fever/rheumatic heart disease, and congestive heart failure.

The risk factors for cardiovascular disease include high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, overweight, obesity, diabetes, smoking, and physical inactivity. These factors do not



RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE

High Blood Cholesterol

High blood cholesterol plays an important part in deciding a person's chance or risk of getting coronary heart disease. The higher your blood cholesterol, the greater your risk. When you have too much cholesterol in your blood, the excess builds up on the walls of the arteries that carry blood to the heart. This buildup is called "atherosclerosis," or "hardening of the arteries." It narrows the arteries and can slow down or block blood flow to the heart. With less blood, the heart gets less oxygen. Without enough oxygen to the heart, there may be chest pain ("angina" or "angina pectoris"), heart attack ("myocardial infarction"), or death. Cholesterol buildup is the most common cause of heart disease, but it happens so slowly that people are not aware of it. Blood cholesterol level is influenced by many factors. These include:

- Diet
- Level of physical activity
- Age
- Weight
- Heredity
- Gender

High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure, also called hypertension, is a risk factor for heart and kidney diseases and stroke. Blood is carried from the heart to all of the body's tissues and organs in vessels called arteries. Blood pressure is the force of the blood pushing against the walls of arteries. Each time the heart beats (about 60–70 times a minute at rest), it pumps blood into the arteries. Some people have blood pressure that stays high all or most of the time. Their blood pushes against the walls of their arteries with higher-than-normal force. If untreated, this can lead to serious medical problems like atherosclerosis, heart attack, enlarged heart, kidney damage, and stroke. High blood pressure is influenced by several factors. These include:

- Diet
- Physical activity
- Family history
- Weight
- Alcohol consumption
- Ethnicity

Diabetes

Diabetes is a disorder of metabolism—the way our bodies use digested food for growth and energy. Most of the food we eat is broken down into a simple sugar called glucose, which is the main source of fuel for the body. For the glucose to get into the body's cells, insulin must be present. In people with diabetes the body produces little or no insulin, or the cells do not respond to the insulin that is produced. As a result, glucose builds up in the blood, overflows into the urine, and passes out of the body. Thus, the body loses its main source of fuel, even though the blood contains large amounts of glucose.

Diabetes is widely recognized as one of the leading causes of death and disability in the United States. Diabetes is associated with long-term complications that affect almost every major organ of the body. It contributes to blindness, heart disease, strokes, kidney failure, amputations, and nerve damage. Diabetes is not contagious. People cannot catch it from each other. However, certain factors can increase one's risk of developing diabetes. People at risk for diabetes include:

- Those with family members who have diabetes (especially type 2 diabetes)
- Those who are overweight
- Those who are African American, Hispanic, or Native American

Overweight and Obesity

Over the past four decades, the number of overweight children, adolescents, and adults has risen. In 1998, a little over one-half of all American adults (about 97 million) and one in five children over the age of 6 were considered overweight or obese, levels unmatched in our nation's history. In 1995, the costs attributed to obesity alone amounted to an estimated \$99 billion.



RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE (CONTINUED)

Being overweight or obese puts someone at risk for developing many problems, such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, gallbladder disease, arthritis, sleep apnea, and breathing problems. Losing weight helps to prevent and control these diseases and conditions. Obesity is a complex, chronic disease that develops from an interaction of genetics and the environment. Our understanding of how and why obesity develops is incomplete, but involves the integration of social, behavioral, cultural, physiological, metabolic, and genetic factors. Assessment and classification of overweight and obesity uses three key measures:

- Body mass index (BMI)
- Waist circumference
- Risk factors for diseases and conditions associated with obesity.

Smoking

Smoking is a major risk factor in four of the five leading causes of death, including heart disease, stroke, cancer, and lung diseases like emphysema and bronchitis. For adults 60 and over, smoking is a major risk factor for 6 of the top 14 causes of death. The good news is that stopping smoking reduces these risks and improves outcomes for people who have suffered a heart attack. In some cases, ex-smokers can cut their risk of another heart attack by half or more.

Physical Inactivity

Physical inactivity increases the risk of heart disease. It contributes directly to heart-related problems and increases the chances of developing other conditions that raise heart disease risk, such as high blood pressure and diabetes. Unfortunately, too few Americans are active enough. Consider:

- About 40 percent of Americans age 18 or older reported no leisure-time physical activity in 1997.
- About 23 percent of U.S. adults engaged in regular vigorous physical activity 3 times a week for at least 20 minutes in 1997.
- Less-active, less-fit persons have a 30–50 percent greater risk of developing high blood pressure.

But the good news is that regular physical activity can help reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. Staying active helps take off extra pounds, helps to control blood pressure, boosts the level of “good” HDL-cholesterol, helps to prevent diabetes, and helps to prevent heart attacks. For those who have heart disease, regular, moderate physical activity lowers the risk of death from heart-related causes. Physical activity has many other benefits. It strengthens the lungs, tones the muscles, keep the joints in good condition, maintains bone density, improves balance, and helps prevent and treat depression. Many people find that physical activity helps them cope better with stress and anxiety.

To reap benefits from physical activity, you don't need to train for a marathon. You need to engage in only about 30 minutes of moderate-level activity on most—and preferably all—days. A moderate-level activity is one that's about as demanding as brisk walking.



RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE (CONTINUED)

Children and Heart Disease

The evidence shows that the atherosclerotic process begins in childhood and that many American children have risk factors for coronary heart disease. A report card on the state of the cardiovascular health of America's children revealed:

<u>Health factor</u>	<u>Status</u>
High Blood Cholesterol	Average blood cholesterol levels in American children and adolescents are too high. Children and adolescents with elevated blood cholesterol levels are more likely to have elevated levels as adults. Research shows that atherosclerosis develops in the late teenage years, and cholesterol levels in young adults predict the risk of coronary disease over the next 40 years.
Overweight	Nearly 14 percent of children and 11.5 percent of adolescents are overweight (NHANES III), more than double the percentage of a decade ago. Up to 20 percent of overweight children remain so throughout life. One in five children over the age of 6 is considered overweight, and overweight or obesity acquired during childhood or adolescence may persist into adulthood and increase the risk for some chronic diseases later in life.
Physical Activity	Most children accumulate at least 1 hour of activity daily, but a sizable percentage do not get frequent, vigorous, continuous activity. Of high school students, about 70 percent of boys and 55 percent of girls do a vigorous physical activity three or more times per week. Activity levels of girls are below those of boys and tend to decline with age.

just add up in a simple manner. Instead, each one multiplies the effects of the other risk factors. For example, if you smoke and have high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol, you're eight times more likely to develop coronary heart disease than someone with no risk factors. The good news is that all of these risk factors, except for smoking, can be prevented or controlled by two important behaviors: **heart-healthy eating** and **physical activity**.

Hearts N' Parks incorporates both of these behaviors and strives to make them attainable and fun.

THE GOOD NEWS: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTHY EATING

As you can see from the discussion about cardiovascular risks, the good news is that the likelihood of developing heart disease can be reduced by focusing on **physical activity** and **heart-healthy eating**. It's simple, and it's easy.

Physical Activity

Although physical activity is fundamental to cardiovascular fitness, it is important to understand that it doesn't have to be vigorous in order to be beneficial to your health. Any *moderate physical activity*, if engaged in often enough, can improve and maintain cardiovascular health. This is not to say that vigorous activity such as jogging is unnecessary, but only to say that at a minimum, everyone should engage in at least 30 minutes of

moderate physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week for adequate fitness. The U.S. Surgeon General, in his 1996 "Exercise Lite" message, endorsed this recommendation, which cited the conclusions outlined in a pivotal 1995 report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.*

So what constitutes *moderate physical activity* in "Exercise Lite"? The most common example is brisk walking, typically at a pace of about 15 minutes per mile. Thus, walking about 2 miles (for 30 minutes) would provide a day's worth of moderate activity.

- Consider measuring 2 miles from your home (or wherever you might walk from) using the odometer in your car. That way, you don't have to keep track of time or distance when you walk, and you'll know just how far you need to go to get your day's worth of activity.

Other kinds of moderate activity might include walking your dog, playing golf, or tossing a Frisbee. Count vacuuming, but not washing dishes. Mowing your lawn with a power mower is moderate activity, but a push mower is vigorous activity. You can ride your bike to the store, play table tennis, go square dancing, or do some serious yard work, and it adds up to 30 minutes before you know it.

The idea is to have an active lifestyle: don't ride in a car when you can walk, don't take the elevator when you can climb the stairs, don't fax something you can deliver by hand, and don't use automated or electronic devices just because they exist.

Seniors and Physical Activity

Moderate physical activity is important for older adults because it can help reduce the chances of developing high blood pressure,

* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), *Journal of American Medical Association*, Feb. 1, 1995.

Resources



The "Guide to Physical Activity" in the reproducible section of this guide gives examples of moderate amounts of physical activity and ideas for fitting physical activity into your schedule.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TIPS

As a Hearts N' Parks coordinator, you have a unique and remarkable opportunity to positively impact your participants' lives by exposing them to the fulfilling and fun rewards of physical activity. Below are a few tips to ensure that your physical activity-based programs are effective for participants of all ages:

- Encourage activities that can be done easily throughout life.
- Focus instructional feedback on process, not product.
- Offer a diverse range of competitive and noncompetitive activities appropriate for different ages and abilities.
- Provide participants with the skills and confidence they need to be physically active.
- Individualize activities.
- Make sure activities are inclusive and get everyone off the sidelines.
- Be an active role model. Get out there and join in the fun.

obesity, and other ailments. It may also help prevent problems related to mobility. It is never too late for seniors to start being physically active. Moreover, studies have shown that when seniors visit community parks for recreation and activity they acquire a feeling of renewal and social fulfillment, which provides further incentive to continue being physically active. Walking and playing with grandchildren are activities seniors can enjoy for moderate activity. Swimming, jogging, or biking are more intense and should only be undertaken by seniors who have checked with a doctor first.

Kids and Physical Activity

Keep in mind that kids, especially 6- to 10-year-olds, are usually different from adults in the way they engage in physical activity. Most kids tend to have quick bursts of energy that come between longer periods of rest, which is perfectly normal and should be encouraged. However, if the children you work with are in the 11- to 14-year-old range, they may be active for longer periods of time. It is a good idea to try to get a sense of your kids' physical limitations early on

and remain aware of how active they are during the program. This will help ensure that their level of intensity does not compromise the quality of the activity or lead to injuries.

Heart-Healthy Eating

Adopting a heart-healthy eating plan provides individuals with health benefits without the necessity of giving up favorite foods. Such an eating plan balances calorie intake with physical activity and is low in saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium, and rich in fruits and vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, and whole grains. A heart-healthy eating plan can help protect against high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and overweight. It may also protect against cancer and other health problems.

The earlier individuals take action to adopt a heart-healthy eating plan, the better. Research shows that heart disease begins early in life and that, once learned, bad habits are difficult to break.

What is A Heart-Healthy Eating Plan?

To follow a heart-healthy eating plan means basically eating some foods more often and

HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS TO HELP FOLLOW A HEART-HEALTHY EATING PLAN:

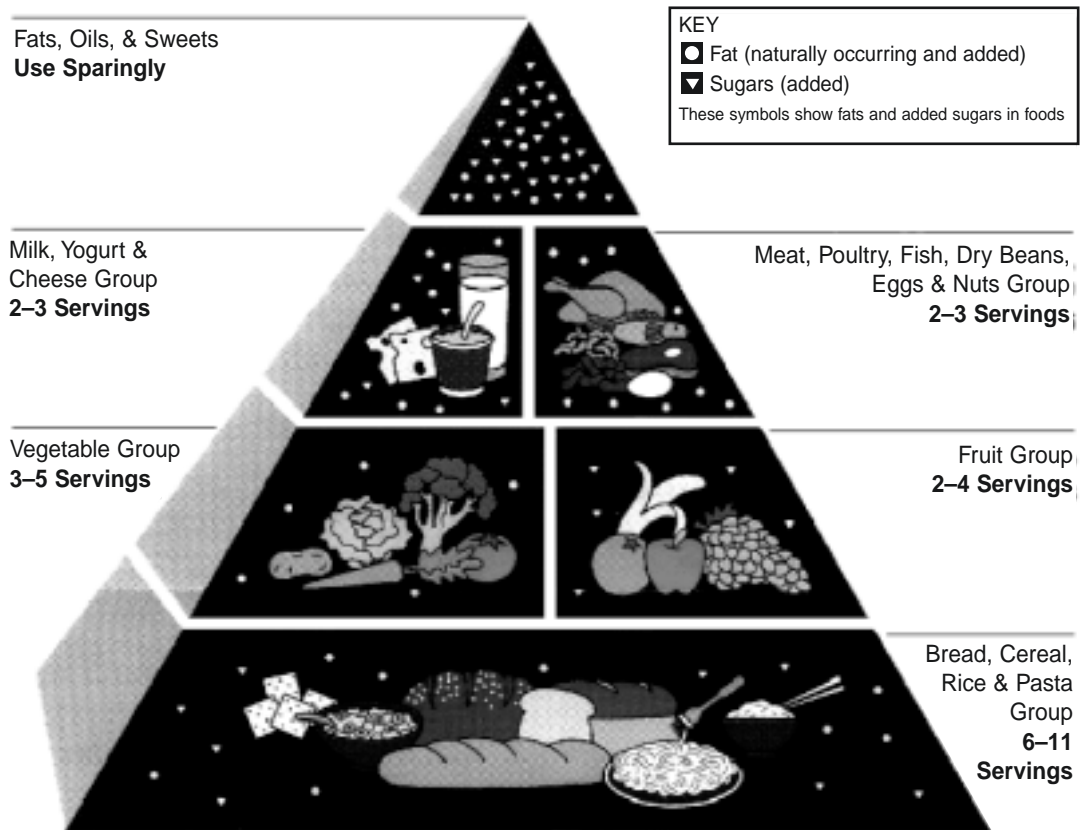
- Practice balance, variety, and moderation in your eating habits.
- Eat fewer high fat meats and eggs. Choose lean meats, chicken or turkey without skin, or fish.
- Eat lower fat dairy items—fat-free or 1 percent milk, low-fat yogurt, and cheese.
- Choose bread, rice, pasta, and other starches that are made of whole grains.
- Choose whole grain and high fiber cereals that are also low in sugar.
- Avoid high fat, high sugar snacks and desserts.
- Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
- Limit processed foods that have a lot of salt or fat, such as regular luncheon meats, prepared food, fast food, and canned soups and sauces.
- Substitute corn, safflower, sunflower, peanut, canola, and olive oils for butter, shortening, and stick margarine.
- Avoid foods made with coconut and palm oils.
- Choose and prepare foods with less salt.
- For greater variety, include healthy cultural traditions when planning meals.

other foods less often. Foods that can be eaten more often include those that are lower in calories, fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium. Examples of these foods include low-fat dairy products, lean meat, fish, and poultry, as well as high-fiber foods and complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains, starches, fruit, and vegetables. Saturated fat raises blood cholesterol levels and should be avoided. It is found mainly in fresh and processed meats; high-fat dairy products (like cheese, whole milk, cream, butter, and ice cream); lard; and in the coconut and palm oils found in many processed foods. Cholesterol is found in eggs, organ meats, and dairy fats.

Calories are the energy from carbohydrates, fats, and protein contained in foods. Fat contains more calories than these other

components, so eating high-fat foods can make it difficult to avoid excess calories. Low-fat, however, doesn't necessarily mean low calorie. Sometimes extra sugar is added to low-fat muffins or desserts, and they may be just as high in calories. Limit portion sizes of foods high in calories, such as cookies, cakes, other sweets, french fries, and fats, oils, and spreads.

These tips are consistent with the latest version of *Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans* released in May 2000 by the Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These guidelines provide the basis for Federal nutrition policies, education, and dietary guidance for healthy Americans ages 2 and up. The 10 Dietary Guidelines emphasize the following ABCs for building a healthy diet and lifestyle:



Aim for Fitness:

1. Aim for a healthy weight.
2. Be physically active each day.

Build a Healthy Base:

1. Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.
2. Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
3. Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
4. Keep foods safe to eat.

Choose Sensibly:

1. Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.
2. Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
3. Choose and prepare foods with less salt.
4. If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

The *Dietary Guidelines* include the Food Guide Pyramid to help with healthy food choices and daily servings or portion sizes.

Weight Control on a Heart-Healthy Eating Plan

Balancing calorie intake with regular physical activity can help individuals achieve or maintain a healthy weight. For individuals who are overweight, even modest amounts of weight loss of approximately 10 percent of initial body weight can have health benefits. Weight loss can lower high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol levels, and high blood sugar levels. Reducing these risk factors helps to prevent cardiovascular disease and/or decrease its severity in those with existing disease.

To maintain or lose weight, it is important to watch the types and amounts of food consumed. In general:

- Begin the day with a hearty breakfast to provide energy and nutrients, and to jump-start metabolism.
- Control calories by eating smaller meals spaced throughout the day rather than eating one or two large meals.

- Read food labels and choose foods lower in calories, total fat, and saturated fat.
- Keep simple sugars, such as desserts and sweetened beverages, to a minimum.
- Be familiar with portion sizes and avoid eating second portions.
- Balance food intake with physical activity.
- Add finely chopped vegetables to favorite recipes.
- Choose whole grain bread for sandwiches.
- Offer alternative desserts, such as fruit bars, ginger snaps, graham crackers, low-fat pudding, and yogurt.
- At fast food restaurants, order a small, plain hamburger (no cheese), grilled chicken or lean roast beef sandwich, and baked potato instead of french fries.

Special Tips for Kids

One in five children over the age of 6 is considered overweight. Overweight and obesity acquired in childhood may persist into adulthood and increase the risk of disease later in life. Children today are consuming excessive amounts of saturated fat, total fat, and calories from fast foods and snacks and are not getting enough physical activity. Additional heart-healthy advice for parents and kids includes:

- Cut back on high-fat foods by offering more fruits or vegetables as snacks.
- Offer low-fat milk and juice instead of soft drinks.

Special Tips for Seniors

It is important for seniors to follow a heart-healthy eating plan because the risk of heart disease increases with age. A heart-healthy eating plan, along with medications if needed, can help control risk factors like high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol. Maintaining a healthy body weight by consuming nutritious foods and being physically active is also important for older individuals.

Resources



The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) publishes a variety of educational materials for adults, children, and adolescents on ways to follow a heart-healthy eating plan and help control high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, and overweight. Check out materials available from the NHLBI catalog, and in particular the Web page "Aim For A Healthy Weight" at www.nhlbi.nih.gov. The Web page provides information for patients and the public, and guides individuals to determine their weight and risk status and to choose lifestyle changes for losing weight. It includes a chart on diseases associated with obesity, menus and recipes, shopping lists and ideas, an interactive menu planner, and a guide to physical activity.

Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans, May 2000, Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Dietary Guidelines include the Food Guide Pyramid to help with healthy food choices and daily servings or portion sizes. Further information can be found at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's nutrition Web site, www.usda.gov/cnpp. Also, check out the USDA's Web site for kids, www.usda.gov/news/usdakids/index.html.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Community Mobilization Guide is organized according to the 5Ps that make up the Hearts N' Parks project. Each section contains basic information, as well as suggested steps and actions to be taken.

- **1st P—People:** Identification of targeted groups for participation in Hearts N' Parks
- **2nd P—Programs:** Techniques for creating and delivering heart-healthy activities and alternatives to participants
- **3rd P—Public Visibility:** Techniques to raise the level of awareness of Hearts N' Parks and its messages, as well as tools and strategies for reaching targeted groups and working with the media
- **4th P—Partnering:** Methods to make the most of existing community resources to extend the reach of Hearts N' Parks
- **5th P—Performance Measures:** Tracking sheets, surveys, and directions for data analysis to document the results of your Hearts N' Parks efforts.

At the end of each of the five P sections you will find a **Countdown Checklist** to help you implement your Hearts N' Parks effort. The activities and actions are:

- **Getting Started**—Things you need to do initially.
- **Moving Forward**—Actions to take as you proceed.
- **Keeping the Beat**—Ways to extend Hearts N' Parks programs and practices.

The final section, **Celebrating and Sharing**, provides postprogram guidance.

If you find that you have specific questions about Hearts N' Parks that are not addressed in this guide, you may contact the NRPA by telephone at (800) 649-3042, or by e-mail at programs@nrpa.org. You may also contact NHLBI at (301) 592-8573, or by e-mail at NHLBIinfo@nhlbi.nih.gov.

Information spots

Within each section you will find subsections that can assist you as you implement Hearts N' Parks. They include:



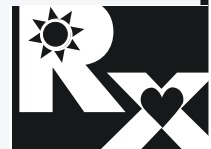
SOS: Signs of Success—Examples of successful programs or strategies related to implementation of Hearts N' Parks projects or related activities.

Do You Know?—Additional information or insight into a particular topic or area.



Resources—Refers you to specific resources at the end of the section or within the guide.

Rx: Resource Examples—Excerpts from some of the resources available either within the guide or by ordering, or accessing the Web sites of the NHLBI and the NRPA.



Focused Facts—Facts or statistics that you may wish to refer.

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)—At the end of each section.



SOS

Signs of Success

ARLINGTON COUNTY SLOGAN

Hearts N' Parks—Mobilizing the Vision

"Your Community, USA, Is the Healthiest and Happiest Place to Live, Work, Learn, and Play."
(See pages 57,60, and 61 for details)



HOW TO SIGN UP FOR HEARTS N' PARKS

Please complete and send in the registration form on the following page.

Also, consider using the Hearts N' Parks pledge on page 16, or the slogan from Arlington County, VA as a promotional item to spark interest. Make it into a large poster for display or reproduce it on colorful paper and pass it out as a flyer to potential Hearts N' Parks participants.

Welcome

TO HEARTS N' PARKS

The NHLBI and the NRPA are pleased that you have decided to become a Hearts N' Parks community. To become officially designated as a Hearts N' Parks community, please complete and mail, fax, or e-mail this form to:

National Recreation and Park Association
22377 Belmont Ridge Road, Ashburn, VA 20148
Fax: (703) 729-4753; E-mail: programs@nrpa.org



Name of City/Town/County: _____

Name of Agency/Organization: _____

Name of Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Population of Community: _____

Please identify those aspects of Hearts N' Parks that you would like to consider pursuing. Feel free to check all.

- Yes, we'd like to consider all 5Ps of Hearts N' Parks.**
- People**—Yes, we would like to extend our impact upon people's health and well-being.
- Programs**—Yes, we would like to incorporate heart-healthy information and activities into our existing programs.
- Public Visibility**—Yes, we would like to share information about the benefits of physical activity and heart-healthy behavior with our residents and the media.
- Partnering**—Yes, we would like to use community contacts to pull together resources to enhance health.
- Performance Indicators**—Yes, we would be interested in demonstrating the impact of our programs and services on health.

TAKE THE

Hearts N' Parks

Pledge

 I/We pledge to adopt **at least three** of the following heart-healthy habits during the Hearts N' Parks Program:

 **Lunch lightly!** Pack or buy a low-saturated-fat, low-cholesterol lunch. Try a veggie sandwich with low-fat cheese, hummus, or a fresh green salad.

Take a commercial break! Work on your flexibility during television commercials three times a week. Hold each stretch for at least 10 seconds, working up to 30 seconds in a slow, controlled manner—no bouncing!

Stock the snack cupboard! Buy heart-healthy snacks, such as pretzels, graham crackers, mini carrots, whole wheat crackers, fresh fruit, and low-fat or fat-free dairy products.

Jump to it! Improve your muscular endurance by jumping rope three times a week. How long can you go?

Shop savvy! Read labels before buying food to make healthy choices at the grocery store. Watch the calorie, fat, saturated fat, and sodium content.

Tip the scale! Test your muscular strength by getting into a push-up position and pressing your hands down on a bathroom scale to see how high you can make it go.

Go green! Try a new green vegetable. Eat a green vegetable every day!



Get your heart pumping! Take a family walk, go dancing, rake leaves, or work in the garden.

Be on the alert for mega-portions. Learn what one serving or portion of each type of food looks like.

Pass on the salt! Try a new spice or seasoning when cooking and leave the salt in the shaker.

Have fun! Have a heart-healthy cookout and invite your friends.



Please complete and place in a visible area, such as a bulletin board for all to see!

Visit the NHLBI Web site at www.nhlbi.nih.gov

Frequently Asked Questions



1 What qualifications do I need to be a Hearts N' Parks Coordinator?

If you are enthusiastic, motivated, resourceful, and a good role model, you are qualified to do the job. You don't need a special degree or certificate, and you don't need to be a nutrition or fitness expert. Successful Hearts N' Parks coordinators have ranged from people who had little or no prior experience in heart-healthy behavior or were new to the community service field to individuals who have extensive backgrounds in health and wellness or experience in community service.

2 What are risk factors and how do they fit together with respect to cardiovascular disease?

Risk factors are the conditions or behavior that increase the risk of developing cardiovascular disease. They include high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, overweight, obesity, diabetes, smoking, and physical inactivity. However, these factors do not exist exclusive of one another. In fact, each factor poses a greater risk when it exists alongside the others. For example, if you smoke and have high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol, you're eight times more likely to develop coronary heart disease than someone with no risk factors. Moreover, having one of the risk factors can make you more likely to have others. Physical inactivity, for example, can contribute to overweight or obesity, which in turn may lead to diabetes.



HEARTS N' PARKS: 1ST P—PEOPLE

The common element of every human service agency, and the starting point for all services developed for the public, is people. Because Hearts N' Parks is about making life better for people and helping them to make better decisions about their health, it is an absolute necessity that the first P of Hearts N' Parks is people.

Every member of the community has the potential for playing a role and being involved with Hearts N' Parks. It is important to target a variety of people who can help support the overall goals of Hearts N' Parks and help make heart-healthy behavior a way of life in your community. There are essentially two groups of people important to this project. Some individuals and groups will serve as part of the support and delivery system for Hearts N' Parks. Other people will be participants of the program.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR HEARTS N' PARKS

To start your Hearts N' Parks initiative, you will need the help of many people.

Groups of people whose support you will find helpful include:

Decision-Makers	Agency managers Board members Elected officials
Staff	Full- and part-time Support- and front-line Volunteers
Media	Those employed by local media outlets
Partners	Individuals and other community organizations

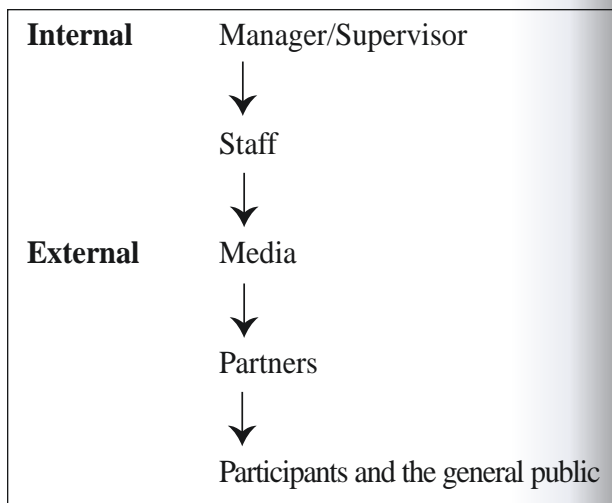
Participants Individuals involved in your programs and activities

General Public Everyone else in the community

In order to gain community support, we need to let all of these groups know:

- Why Hearts N' Parks is important for the community
- The relationship of park, recreation, and leisure activities to a healthier lifestyle
- How these groups can help and/or become involved.

You need to start internally, moving from decision-makers to staff whose help you will need in providing the services. Then you can work on getting external support for the project.



DEPARTMENT STAFF

High on the list is the staff of your department. There are many ways you can help staff become engaged in this community-wide initiative:

- Orienting staff to Hearts N’ Parks so they know the specific facts about CVD and heart-healthy behavior, as well as details about the 5Ps of Hearts N’ Parks
- Brainstorming and program planning sessions where staff identify ways in which they can bring Hearts N’ Parks to participants and the general public
- Training staff in methods to incorporate heart-healthy activities into their programs
- Involving staff in the selection of resources, such as those available from NHLBI and NRPA, to assist them in achieving program goals
- Assisting staff in selecting programs to be used in outcomes assessment efforts
- Training staff about the guidelines and procedures for assessment activities
- Enabling staff to take part in various heart-healthy activities that your department sponsors.

The involvement of department staff in this project is essential. There is a direct link between the needs of targeted groups and the programs and services designed to address these needs.

OTHER SOURCES OF SUPPORT

There are many others who can and will provide support for this program. Two of those groups are the media and community partners. More extensive information about how to involve those two groups is provided later in this guide.

PARTICIPANTS AS TARGET GROUPS

Participants are an important target group to involve early. Participants differ from one another on a number of factors. These factors include:

- Relationship with department
- Participation in heart-healthy activities
- Stage of change status for heart-healthy behavior.

These factors indicate various target groups. On the basis of the relationship with your department, some people can be considered casual participants not having a formal or regular relationship with your department while others may be current or regular participants. People not involved with your department are viewed as potential participants.

People can also be categorized on the basis of the programs they choose. Some people may gravitate towards programs such as aerobics, yoga, or healthy cooking classes that have a strong emphasis on heart-healthy behavior. Other people may primarily participate in activities that do not have a specific heart-healthy focus. So participants, casual or current, can be categorized as involved either in heart-healthy or nonheart-healthy programs.

It is also important to begin to visualize people based upon their personal or individual understanding of, and relationship to, heart-healthy behavior. This can range from people with almost complete lack of knowledge or interest to people who lead very heart-healthy lifestyles. The stages of change framework will help you envision various target groups on this basis. There are a number of stages of change, including people who resist change all the way up to people who have made lifestyle changes.

Traditional program models have a tendency to focus on people who are currently enrolled or involved in existing programs and services. Since they are right there in front of you, it is easy to assume they are the only targets for programs or services. Since just about everybody has the potential to become involved in leisure or community activities, you can expand your target groups to include those

people who are either not involved or don't appear to be involved in any way with your department. Gear up for your potential participants.

DEFINITION OF TARGET GROUPS ON BASIS OF PARTICIPATION AND RELATIONSHIP

There are plenty of opportunities to increase the range of participants by expanding your view of target groups to include those people who are casual or secondary participants. For instance, people who run in your parks or stop by your community center to attend a civic meeting may be considered casual participants. You also have a large number of secondary participants. Just think of all those parents who come in and out of your center or drive by your facilities either dropping off or picking up their children.

Many adults, among them working parents, are often unable to find or make the time for heart-healthy behavior. This provides you with a unique opportunity to reach these parents who are secondary participants in your programs. Don't overlook this parent-child connection as

a way to distribute information, raise awareness, and even as a way to encourage family participation in physical activity and healthy eating.

People who have some contact with your facility still must pass by bulletin boards or signboards that can include heart-healthy information.

There are three different types of participant groups based upon their relationship with your department: casual, current, and potential. When you look at those three groups on the basis of whether or not they participate in programs that have a heart-healthy focus or not, you create a number of target groups as follows:

- **Casual Participants.** People not formally involved in any specific programs.
 - *Non-Involved.* Informal or infrequent users; may be secondary participants who know of your programs through participation of children or friends.
 - *Heart-Healthy Independents.* Frequent users of parks or facilities for regular physical activity but usually on a drop-in or informal basis.



Do you know?

About 20 percent of the people enrolled in your programs probably account for 80 percent of your total participation? This 20/80 rule applies to almost everything, including heart-healthy behavior. For instance:

About 22 percent of American adults report regular, sustained physical activity of any intensity lasting 30 minutes or more 5 times per week. These people are the 20 percent that account for 80 percent of sustained physical activity.

About 25 percent report no leisure-time physical activity.

Sixty percent or more don't achieve the recommended amount of physical activity (30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity at least 3 or 4 days a week).

These are the 80 percent who are not getting adequate physical activity.

Grow your market share. Don't be fooled by the level of heart-healthy behavior you see in front of you. You may have waiting lists for your gymnastics classes and long lines during the late afternoon or early evening hours in your fitness center, but that doesn't mean that you've reached everybody who needs information, support, or assistance. Be sure to target and go after the 80 percent not involved.

- **Current Participants.** People currently participating in programs.
 - *Non-Heart-Healthy Focus.* Involved in a program that doesn't target physical activity or healthy eating.
 - *Heart-Healthy Focus.* Involved in a program that focuses on heart-healthy behavior.
- **Potential Participants.** People not currently involved or possibly not even aware of your programs and services. They may become target groups for information, communication, or programs.

STAGE(S) OF CHANGE CHARACTERISTICS	
Precontemplation (resisting change)	Don't engage in physical activity or eat heart-healthy and have little or no intention of doing so
Contemplation (change on the horizon)	Intend to make change in behavior; length of time in this stage can vary considerably
Preparation (getting ready)	Planning to incorporate physical activity and heart-healthy eating into lifestyle
Action (making change)	Engage in heart-healthy behavior on a regular basis but have been doing so for less than 6 months
Maintenance (staying there)	Continuous engagement in heart-healthy behavior for 6 months or more
Termination (end of change cycle)	Physical activity and healthy eating as a way of life

STAGES OF CHANGE FOR HEART-HEALTHY BEHAVIOR

People have varying levels of information about and involvement in heart-healthy behavior. There may be a writer for the local newspaper who always makes time for physical activity in her day or a board member with a family member who has had a stroke. These people have higher levels of awareness and involvement with heart-healthy issues and behavior than many others do. Other people may not be aware of, or interested in, making lifestyle changes. One way of defining those differences is to use the “stages of change” model.

STAGE(S) OF CHANGE

Not everyone is ready to hear the same messages or to receive them in the same way. Naturally, people differ from one another and there can be a variety of reasons for these variations in motivation or lack of motivation.

The Stage(s) of Change model identifies six different stages as people make changes in their behavior (See Box).

AT-RISK GROUPS

Individuals who are either unaware of heart-healthy behavior or are not interested in involvement in such behavior are at higher risk for CVD. Though essentially everyone is at some risk for CVD, it's important to make sure that these high-risk people are targets for your information and programs.

People who tend to fall into the at-risk group tend to have higher than average levels of overweight or obesity and lower than average levels of physical activity, as well as high blood cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, and high rates of smoking. Lifestyle changes can have a positive impact on all risk factors.

Focused facts



Women in general are less active than men.

People with lower incomes and less education are typically not as physically active as those are with higher incomes and education.

African Americans and Hispanics are generally less physically active than whites.

Adults in the northeastern and southern states tend to be less active than adults in north central and western states.

People with disabilities are less physically active than people without disabilities.

By age 75, one in three men and one in two women engage in no regular physical activity.

The proportion of adolescents from poor households who are overweight is almost twice that of adolescents from middle-and high-income households.

Overweight is especially prevalent among women with lower incomes and less education.

Obesity is more common among African American and Hispanic women than among white women.

Among African Americans, the proportion of women who are obese is 80 percent higher than the proportion of men who are obese; this difference is also seen among Hispanic women and men.

Resources



NHLBI resources designed to reach groups more at risk for CVD include:

For Participants:

Preventing Heart Disease—Eight easy-to-read bilingual booklets (in Spanish and English).

Improving Cardiovascular Health in African Americans—Package of seven easy-to-read booklets.

Controlling High Blood Pressure: A Women's Guide.

Package of four easy-to-read booklets for Native Americans and Alaska Natives from three tribes: Bristol Bay Area, Ponco Tribe, and Pueblo of Laguna

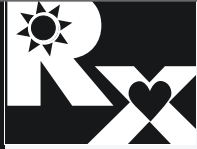
For Your Agency's Use:

Heart-Healthy Home Cooking: African American Style.

Delicious Heart-Healthy Latino Recipes.

Working with Religious Congregations: A Guide for Health Professionals.

From Heart to Heart: A Bilingual Group Discussion Guide.



Take a look at some excerpts as presented in *From Heart to Heart: A Bilingual Group Discussion Guide*.

How To Start a Group Discussion

And Now for the Show! *Follow This Outline:*

- Welcome and Introduction5 minutes
- Video Presentation25 minutes
- Discussion Series With
Questions and Answers30 minutes
- Review10 minutes
- Evaluation15 minutes
- ScreeningsOptional

HIGHLIGHTS FROM “FOR THE LOVE OF YOUR HEART” VIDEOTAPE

The video portrays the Gomez family as its members make changes in their eating and physical activity habits after the father, Pablo Gomez, suffers a heart attack. It is intended to show participants that making some changes in habits is possible. An off-camera narrator offers suggestions on adopting healthy lifestyles. Dr. Elmer Huerta appears on camera to explain other steps people can take to lower their risk of heart disease.

Key Messages From “For the Love of Your Heart”

More Latinos in the United States die of heart disease than from any other cause.

Many Latinos believe that heart attacks happen suddenly because of bad news or strong emotions. The truth is that a heart attack is the result of disease that has developed over many years. The disease often starts in childhood or adolescence. Taking steps to prevent heart disease is important.



Countdown Checklist: 1st P—People

GETTING STARTED

- ___ Put together a Hearts N' Parks overview packet consisting of FAQs and other general information to share with potential supporters of the process. Review talking points for your conversations with them.
- ___ Orient your organization's decision-makers to Hearts N' Parks. Secure their input and get their approval.
- ___ Make a list of current partners who might be interested in Hearts N' Parks.
- ___ Brainstorm some partnering possibilities from less traditional organizations.
- ___ Hold a Hearts N' Parks orientation for staff. Recruit volunteers interested in working on the project.
- ___ Set up a joint meeting for potential partners. Send out invitations, Hearts N' Parks information sheets, and the agenda for the first meeting.

MOVING FORWARD

- ___ Meet with program staff to describe the various groups of participants and to identify specific targets. Be sure to discuss the 20/80 rule, at-risk groups, and casual participants.
- ___ Hold a brainstorm meeting for staff to identify ways to move Hearts N' Parks forward.
- ___ Ask staff to select resources for Hearts N' Parks efforts.
- ___ Hold a potential partnering meeting (see 4th P for more specifics in this area).
- ___ Tell staff about Tracking Sheet for Activities (page 82).

KEEPING THE BEAT

- ___ Notify the people in your department about current initiatives and activities of Hearts N' Parks:
 - Give management a written report and verbal update on the project.
 - Make a report at a board or council meeting.
- ___ Don't forget to go back and check out your participant groups and ask yourself if you are targeting the following groups:
 - People in various stages of change.
 - At-risk groups.
 - The 80 percent not involved in heart-healthy behaviors.

OUTLINE OF STAFF

Training & Meetings

1. Orientation to Hearts N' Parks

People Involved: Management, supervisors, support, front-line staff, part-time staff, and volunteers not necessarily at the same session, due to size and time constraints.

Time Allotted: 50 minutes.

Goal(s): Expose department members to this new initiative and solicit their support and involvement, as appropriate.

Materials and Resources: Overheads, FAQ handouts, Hearts N' Parks videotape.

Suggested Agenda:

- Welcome and Expression of Support for Hearts N' Parks: the Department Director (5 minutes).
- Warm-up and Mixer: Ask staff to find someone else in the room who practices the same type of heart-healthy physical activity (10 minutes).
- Overview of Hearts N' Parks: Brief explanation of elements of the initiative, including FAQ handout (7 minutes).
- Show Hearts N' Parks videotape (10 minutes).
- Questions and Comments (7 minutes).
- Volunteer Sign-up (7 minutes).
- Closing: Provide attendees with a fun heart-healthy tip (2 minutes).

2. Creating Focus on Hearts N' Parks

People Involved: Program and front-line staff who deliver the programs and services.

Time Allotted: 75 minutes.

Goals:

1. Acquire greater depth of understanding of Hearts N' Parks.
2. Identify ways in which the department can involve participants in Hearts N' Parks.
3. Create staff understanding of differences among participants.

4. Provide staff with programming information for Hearts N' Parks.

Materials and Resources:

- Reproduce "Stages of Change Characteristics" on page 22, as handout or overhead.
- Reproduce program variations, focus, and strategies and techniques from handout or overhead.
- Reproduce *Check Your Weight and Heart Disease I.Q.* and *Check Your Physical Activity and Heart Disease I.Q.* (see Reproducible Section).
- Optional: Complete packets of copies of reproducibles.

Suggested Topics and Activities:

Hearts N' Parks (30 minutes)

- Overview of 5Ps.
- Individual activity: Complete *Check Your Weight and Heart Disease I.Q.* and *Check Your Physical Activity and Heart Disease I.Q.*
- Explain importance of heart-healthy behavior.
- Questions and answers.

People and Programs (30 minutes)

- Review different types and levels of participants.
- Update on "Stages of Change" model.
- Overview program considerations.

Wrap-Up (15 minutes)

- Questions, comments, etc.
- Review of today's outcomes.
- Set stage for next meeting.
- Announce date and time if possible.
- Ask staff to review programming information and come ready to share ideas.
- Pass out reproducibles (optional).

Frequently Asked Questions



1 What kind of training does my staff require?

First and foremost, make sure that your members are motivated to work with Hearts N' Parks by emphasizing the significant role they can play in improving the lives of those they will be working with. A training session for staff that provides an overview of basic CVD, physical activity, and nutrition information that will be taught to program participants will be helpful. A training session in Arlington, Virginia, was carried out as follows:

- Staff members attended three training sessions. The first, led by representatives from the NHLBI and the NRPA, covered the nuts and bolts of the Hearts N' Parks program. The second, about 2 months later and led by representatives of the Arlington Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources (PRCR), focused on cardiovascular disease and the importance of promoting heart-healthy behavior within a recreation setting. PRCR staff had an opportunity to brainstorm activities specific to cardiovascular disease that they could do with their kids.
- During a third session at camp, materials from the Arlington County Parks and Recreation Wellness Lending Library (the WELL) were introduced to all summer day camp staff. The materials contained information and activities for different age groups on many different health topics, including nutrition and physical activity to be used in summer camp.

2 Should I only target people who are at high risk for CVD?

No. Everyone can benefit from learning about heart-healthy behavior, physical activity, and nutrition. Every adult, no matter how apparently healthy, is at some level of risk for CVD. People who are at greater risk will benefit more from Hearts N' Parks than those who are low-risk, but you don't want to exclude potential participants simply because they are low-risk.





HEARTS N' PARKS: 2ND P—PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

Local programs are the lifeblood of Hearts N' Parks. It is through the connection of local programs with participants that heart-healthy information can be shared and lead to heart-healthy behavior. Programs come in many shapes and sizes. Through Hearts N' Parks, you can either create new programs or put new information and activities into existing ones. You can move people from knowledge to action by starting from where they are and supporting them as they move to a heart-healthy lifestyle.

PROGRAM VARIETIES

There can be a number of variations within program offerings. Two of those relate to whether programs are new or existing, and whether or not the focus of a program is specifically upon heart-healthy behavior. This results in a framework for program possibilities:

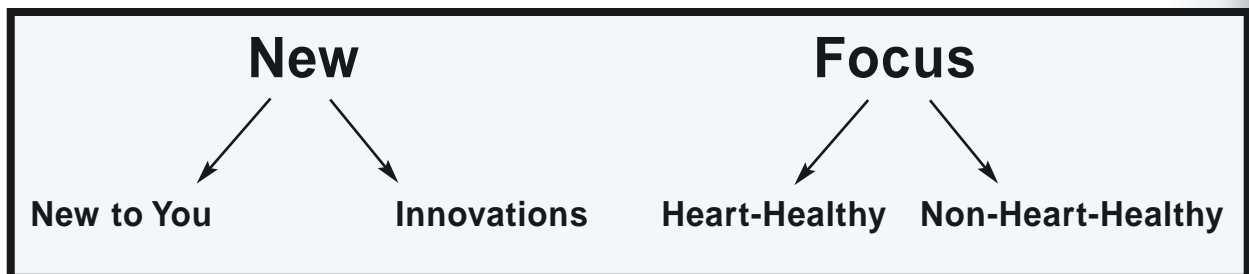
New to You. If you cosponsor a healthy cooking program for the first time with the Cooperative Extension Service, it may not be new to your area but will certainly be new to your department and possibly new to your

target groups. If your department has never offered programs or activities on healthy eating or managing weight and diet, that would be another example.

Innovations. The only limit here is imagination. The Albemarle (North Carolina) Parks and Recreation Department partnered with a local hospital to create a series of evening strolls in various locations in the county. Residents visited places they hadn't been recently while engaging in a physical activity, meeting old or making new friends, and being screened for high blood pressure.

Heart-Healthy. Programs with a major emphasis on physical activity or learning about healthful eating. Examples: aerobics, volleyball, low-fat cooking class.

Non-Heart-Healthy. Programs that do not focus on physical activity skills or participation or nutrition or weight loss. Examples: arts and crafts, day camp, bridge club, etc.





Three science-based health/recreation resources include the curriculum from the Child and Adolescent Trial for Cardiovascular Health (CATCH), *JumpSTART*, and *JumpSTART Afterschool*.

CATCH was a multisite study that demonstrated the effectiveness of school health education for motivating heart-healthy behavior in elementary school age children. CATCH's field tested materials include:

1) a physical education curriculum with lesson plans and a set of more than 350, 5x8" cards showing fun, easy-to-teach activities; 2) heart-healthy classroom curriculum with family components for grades 3, 4, and 5; and 3) an eat smart school cafeteria program guide. The CATCH physical education component offers a blend of moderate to vigorous physical activities, sports adaptations, and suggestions for hula hoops, jump ropes, and parachutes. The CATCH program offers a successful blend of physical education, classroom curriculum, nutrition awareness, student-directed activities, and P.E. equipment designed to promote and maintain cardiovascular health in children, grades K–5.

CATCH Recreation is an adaptation of the original curriculum developed specifically for park and recreation personnel and provides hundreds of youth activities promoting physical activity. A special recreation leaders guide complements the program material and supports the Hearts N' Parks program. All of the CATCH materials can be obtained from Flaghouse at <http://www.flaghouse.com> or at (800) 793-7900.

JumpSTART is a school-based program adapted from CATCH developed by NHLBI and NRPA in collaboration with *Scholastic* magazine that provides teachers with a variety of ways to include physical activity and healthy eating components into their language arts, social studies, math, and science classes. Another component to *JumpSTART* is the back-pack stuffers on heart-healthy behaviors for children to bring home to their parents. The target age group is third through sixth grade. *JumpSTART* is available from NHLBI at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/heart/other/jumpstr.htm>.

JumpSTART Afterschool is a program also developed by NHLBI and NRPA with assistance from the National Recreation Foundation to help children and youth get active, have fun, and be healthy. The booklet (also available in Spanish) includes a series of activities selected to augment current after-school programming. The activities encourage physical activity and recreation as well as heart-healthy eating habits by using creative discovery techniques that are applicable to indoor and outdoor environments. The target age group is third through sixth grade. Information on *JumpSTART Afterschool* is available on the NRPA Web site www.activeparks.org under programs and partners.

STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

Whether your department decides to create new programs or continue existing ones, there are a number of techniques that can be used to make all department programs a part of Hearts N' Parks.

Information and Knowledge Infusion

One approach that the North Carolina pilot sites found particularly effective was to infuse knowledge and activity into existing programs. The pilot sites did this both with programs that

had a heart-healthy focus and those that did not. Some of the ways you can infuse information and build knowledge within programs include:

Existing Programs (heart-healthy focus)

- Have participants in exercise classes monitor their pulse periodically.
- Suggest that participants in summer day camps substitute healthier foods for high-fat snacks.



To give you an idea of the wealth of information available within *JumpSTART* and *CATCH Recreation*:

Snack-vertising (*JumpSTART Afterschool*)

- Objective:* To use persuasive writing techniques to spread nutrition information.
- Benefits:* Reinforces participants' knowledge of heart-healthy food choices.
- Equipment:* Construction paper, posterboard, markers and other art supplies, tape recorder, and video camera.
- Directions:* Have groups of kids think of interesting and fun ways (e.g., billboard, magazine, or TV advertisement) to 'advertise' their snacks, and convince others of their heart-healthy properties.

The Great Alphabet Hunt (*JumpSTART Afterschool*)

- Objective:* Reinforce language arts and spelling.
- Benefit:* Environmental appreciation.
- Directions:* As you walk or jog, look for objects whose first letters spell out the alphabet in order (i.e., acorn, bird, cloud). See how far you can get in a given time or distance.

Go Fitness Fast Games 2 (*CATCH Recreation*)

- Activity:* Elbow Tag *Grade Level:* 3–5
- Equipment:* Four cones, scarves, or objects to identify children that are "it."
- Skills Emphasized:* Fleeing, dodging, chasing, running.
- Organization:* Designate boundaries and reentry task zone; designate one of five kids to be "it"; kids scatter.
- Description:* On signal, children that are "it" try to tag the others. At any time the other children may find a partner and link elbows. For 10 seconds, while elbows are linked, kids are safe from the person chasing them (count out loud). While linked, pairs should continue to walk. When participants are tagged, they go to the reentry task zone and complete the designated reentry task (e.g., 10 jumping jacks or 10 sit-ups).

Go Activity Aerobic Games 5 (*CATCH Recreation*)

- Activity:* Circulation *Grade Level:* 3–4
- Equipment:* Bean bag or similar safe object.
- Skills Emphasized:* Various locomotor movements.
- Organization:* Children form large circle in an open space with bean bag in the center. Divide the class into two teams: half are Team A, the other Team B. Players on each team are numbered 1–15.
- Description:* On signal, all kids walk in the same direction around the circle. Call out a number. The player with the same number on each team runs out and tries to take the bean bag back to their group on the perimeter of the circle. If a player succeeds, that team gets 2 points. If the player that took the bean bag is tagged by an opposing player before getting back to the circle, the other team gets one point. All other players continue to walk in a circle.

- Expose program participants to myths about exercise, such as the need to engage in vigorous activity to have cardiovascular benefit.

Existing Programs (non-heart-healthy focus)

- Have participants complete health quizzes, such as *Check Your High Blood Pressure Prevention I.Q.* or *Check Your Healthy Heart I.Q.*, (in reproducible section), so they can transform information into knowledge about their own health.
- Have instructors begin or end class sessions with a heart-healthy tip from such resources as “Nutrition Tip Sheets” or *Exercise and Your Heart*.
- Teach participants a new skill, such as how to read a food label for fat and sugar content, or how to determine a “moderate” level of physical activity.

Raising the Potential

Another strategy for infusing Hearts N’ Parks into local programs, particularly existing ones, is to raise the potential of programs for helping the project reach its goals. There are a couple of ways to do this. Programs with a captive audience over an extended period of time, such as afterschool, daycare, or latchkey programs, summer camps or playgrounds, adaptive or therapeutic recreation, and senior citizen meal programs and clubs provide opportunities for providing heart-healthy information.

And take advantage of commemorations, such as American Heart Month, National Nutrition Month, or National Cookout Month. These can be used to help people boost their activity levels or learn to prepare healthier meals. Some of the national organizations on the NHLBI partner’s list sponsor such annual events. These events include:

- **February** is American Heart Month.
 - **March** is National Nutrition Month.
 - **May** is National High Blood Pressure Education Month.
 - **September** is National Cholesterol Education Month.
 - **November** is National Diabetes Month.
- The NRPA also has a number of national program partners that sponsor events that could work well for you.
- **May** is USA Tennis Month *and* National Physical Fitness and Sports Month.
 - **July** is Recreation and Parks Month *and* National Cookout Month.

Hands-On Activity

Emphasize “doing.” The value of a healthy eating tip is enhanced with a copy of a related heart-healthy recipe.

Adapt Traditional Activities

Substitute soccer for softball to get more participants actively involved in the game. Frozen tag involves more physical activity than Red Light, Green Light. Serve bite-sized snacks at camp or social meetings. Encourage concessionaires to provide a wider range of heart-healthy snacks, meals, and beverages.

PROGRAM PROGRESSION

Being exposed to a fact sheet about a healthy diet is not the same as knowing how to shop for one. Knowing how to shop for healthier foods is not the same as choosing to eat those foods. People pass through a number of stages from learning about the importance of CVD until they attain a heart-healthy lifestyle. We can help them move along that continuum:



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Signs of Success



Many of the North Carolina communities utilized existing programs that involved participants over a period of time.

Day Camps and Playgrounds

- Mecklenburg County incorporated healthy snacks into its programs.
- Garner Parks and Recreation focused on fitness and reading food labels during one week at Camp Geko.
- Roanoke Rapids taught nutrition basics to children ages 4 through 6 at the FLIP (Fun for Little Interested People) Camp.



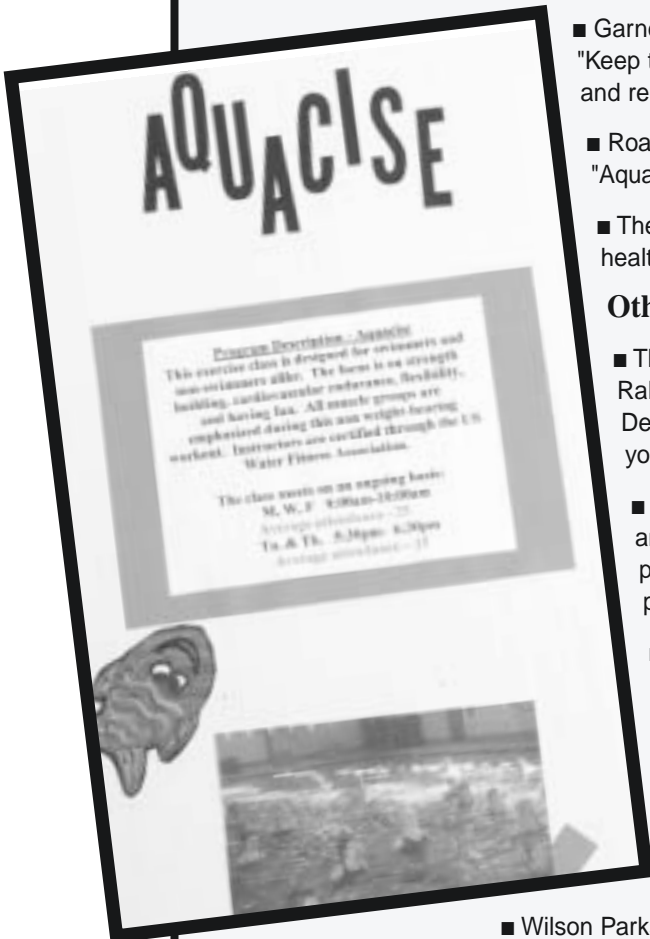
Senior Programs

- Garner Parks and Recreation revamped an existing program, calling it "Keep the Beat-Circle Yourself in Health" and had seniors keep a journal and receive credit for prizes as an incentive.
- Roanoke Rapids incorporated heart-healthy information into its "Aquacise" program for seniors.
- The mall-walking program in Mecklenburg County provided heart-healthy information and activities.

Other Programs

- The Summer Youth Basketball League, a joint venture of the Raleigh Police Department and the Parks and Recreation Department, incorporated physical activity testing and offered the youths fruit and a sports drink.
- Hickory included information and activities at Kindergym, a preschool physical activity program.
- Winston-Salem featured heart-healthy activities as part of its Weed and Seed Summer Youth Academy, with healthy snacks, educational sessions, and instruction in physical activity.

- Wilson Parks and Recreation incorporated information and instruction in both their summer sports day camp and its weightlifting program for adults.



Providing people with information about the value of dietary changes and physical activity may not be enough to persuade them to make changes in how they live. People know that they should be more active or eat healthier meals, but they don't always act on this knowledge.

Offer Opportunities

The goal of Hearts N' Parks is to move people along from having information to acting upon it. Three ways to accomplish this progression are as follows: The first is to provide people with more opportunities to become involved in programs. Think of these as introductory versions of your programs that are designed to attract people who may lack the time, money, confidence, or level of commitment needed to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Possibilities include:

- Offer **A Taste** of one or more of your programs. That is, offer “miniclasses” in the heart-healthy programs currently offered by your department.
- Offer invitations that are **Good for One Free Session**. That is, invite people to attend a heart-healthy class at no charge.
- Hold a **Get Started** series of programs. These could include “getting started” on shopping for healthier food, “getting started” on healthier ways to eat fast foods, or “getting started” on reducing fat eaten during meals.
- Hold a **Special Event**. For example, sponsor a “Get Ready for Summer Fun” event where people can try out the various physical activities offered by your department.
- Hold an **Open House**. At one of your facilities, include sessions on heart-healthy behavior as part of an open house.
- **Reach Out**. Sometimes the people who are most in need of involvement in heart-healthy

Do you know?



There are various ways to infuse information, knowledge, and activity into existing efforts, such as:

Information

Low-fat foods should be included in your daily diet.

Reduce amount of fat and sugar in snacks.

It is important to warm up before physical activity.

Activity

Cooking demonstration and sampling from 4–6 p.m., when parents pick up children.

Serve a healthy snack at camp with a “mini” reminder about why it's good for you.

Ministretching and warm-up lesson at drop-in volleyball.

Skill/Knowledge

Low-fat food tastes good and is easy to prepare.

Can recognize a snack that tastes good and is good for you.

Practice appropriate warm-up techniques.

programs are those who are most difficult to reach by traditional methods. Don't wait for them to come to you, find a way to go to them where they are most comfortable and accessible.

Breaking Barriers

The second way to help people progress from knowledge to action is to help people break down their personal barriers to adopting heart-healthy behavior. These barriers may include a long list of “don'ts,” as in:

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Signs of Success




Some North Carolina communities created new programs as part of the Hearts N' Parks projects:

- Albemarle Parks and Recreation teamed with a local hospital to create “walk about” programs that transported residents to different parts of Albemarle County and provided opportunities for health education and free screening of blood pressure and blood glucose as part of the evening out.
- Staff from the Madison-Mayodan Recreation Department created a special version of Hearts N' Parks for sixth to eighth graders. The program included fun, lifetime physical activity skill opportunities as well as games, such as “design your personal pizza.”
- The Smithfield Parks Department collaborated with the county health department and a fitness center to create a 6-week senior physical activity program that offered screening for blood pressure, cholesterol, and body fat.



Don't have the... *time*

... *money*

... *ability*

Don't know ... *how*

... *if I can*

... *if I'll like it*

Don't want to ... *look/feel silly or stupid*

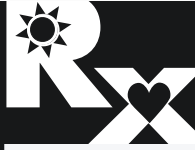
... *invest too much time, money, or effort in something I may not like or be able to do*

Lifestyle Behavior Support

The third way to help people progress from knowledge to action is to help them maintain their new lifestyle. There are ways to do that, such as:

- **Special events** that reinforce social support for people with similar interests and goals.

- **Programs** that help reinforce their progress.
- **Recognition** of milestones achieved or continued participation.
- **Prizes as incentives.** Offer people some kind of small gift or giveaway.
- **Suggest Alternatives.** People sometimes tire of the same activities and the same heart-healthy recipes. Suggest to treadmill fans that they might enjoy cycling or hiking. Distribute new heart-healthy recipes and meal ideas. Fight against boredom and repetitiveness as a reason for sliding back into old habits.
- **“Welcome Back-We Missed You.”** There are always people who slip out of newly acquired patterns. Often they feel bad about it but think they can't start anew. Make sure you try to get them back.



The following excerpt from *The Practical Guide to the Identification, Evaluation and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults* suggests ways to respond to some of the standard reasons why people don't engage in physical activity.

I don't have time to exercise.

Physical activity does take time, but only about 1 hour per week of vigorous activity can greatly benefit your heart, lungs, muscles, and weight. Consider the amount of time you spend watching TV. Many forms of physical activity can be done while watching TV, such as riding an exercise bike or using handweights.

I don't like to exercise.

You have bad memories of doing situps or running in high school, sweating, puffing, and panting. Now we know that you can get plenty of gain without pain. Activities you already do, such as gardening and walking, can improve your health, so just do more of the activities you like.

I don't have the energy to be more active.

Once you become a little more active, you should have more energy. As you progress, daily tasks will seem easier.

Source: *The Practical Guide to the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults*. NIH Pub. No. 00-4084

- **Goal Attainment.** You can help people understand that behavior change isn't the easiest thing to do but that setting measurable goals that are reasonable can help them maintain new behavior.
- **Barrier Bashing.** Continue to provide information and program alternatives to assist in breaking through barriers to physical activity and healthy eating.
- **Social Support Alternatives.** Facilitate the organization of walking clubs, cooking clubs, dining-out clubs, or any other way that people can help one another.

FROM PROGRAMS TO PRACTICES

It is likely that your department has provided information and oriented decision-makers and staff. You've adapted existing programs and created new ones. But organizations must also adopt Hearts N' Parks into their lifestyle.

Some possibilities include:

- **Mission Statement.** Include the health and well-being of department employees as part of the department's mission statement.
- **Vision Statement.** Make a heart-healthy, active community a mainstay of your department's vision for the future.
- **Planning.** Be sure that issues related to heart-healthy behavior are discussed in your department's strategic plan.
- **Communication.** Include statistics, information, and awareness-building messages about community health and physical fitness in annual reports, newsletters, brochures, press releases, and other forms of communication.
- **Personnel.** Staff orientation and staff training should emphasize the importance of heart-healthy behavior.
- **Resources.** Link budget requests, grant proposals, and fundraising efforts to the role of your programs and services in promoting community health.

SOS

Signs of Success



Fitting Activity Into Your Schedule

Try walking before going to work or school. Or maybe you prefer evenings. Even a few minutes of walking counts. Try to build up to 30 minutes a day. You can walk whenever it is convenient for you, or you can take an aerobics class instead. Whatever works for you is fine. There is no one right time of day to exercise. The important thing is that you try to be more active.

Try to think about the little things that you can do to add more activity to your daily life. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator at work, park farther away from the entrance to the mall, or walk instead of driving to work or shopping. These little things add up and are easy to fit into your schedule.

Source: *The Practical Guide to the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults*. NIH Pub. No. 00-4084

- **Policy and Procedures.** Review, and modify if necessary, policies and procedures to ensure safe, convenient, and equitable access to areas, facilities, programs, and services that contribute to individual and community health.
- **Advocate.** Assume the role of advocate for physical activity facilities, such as bike paths, walking or jogging paths, lighted facilities for evening use, and indoor facilities for exercise during bad weather.

SOS

Signs of Success



Arlington County Vision Statement

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources is vital to the enrichment of Arlington as a vibrant and enjoyable community.



Arlington County Mission Statement

We work to make Arlington the happiest, healthiest place to live, work, and play through dynamic programs, public spaces, and collaborations that:

- Provide healthy and fun recreation, sport, and leisure choices.
- Cultivate, maintain, and protect natural and cultural resources.
- Provide opportunities for creative expression.





Programs

Countdown Checklist: 2nd P—Programs

GETTING STARTED

- Involve staff in the identification of heart-healthy and non-heart-healthy programs that might lend themselves to heart-healthy activities.
- Have staff identify resources within those programs that could be used for a Hearts N' Parks focus.
- Identify ways in which program activities could become more “hands-on” heart-healthy or adapted to support more heart-healthy behavior.
- Create a plan adding Hearts N' Parks information and activities to those programs.
- Make plans for staff training and program modifications.

MOVING FORWARD

- Identify high-potential programs, such as after-school, day camp, or senior meals, where Hearts N' Parks might be incorporated.
- Plan specific activities and techniques for these high-potential programs.
- Identify possibilities for incorporating national observances in your program schedule.
- Create a schedule for implementing these programs.

KEEP THE BEAT

- Offer special events/opportunities to introduce people to heart-healthy behavior and programs.
- Ask staff to identify possible barriers to participation in programs and suggest ways to break down those barriers.
- Identify reproducible materials that could be used to encourage people to move from knowledge to action.
- Create recognition or incentive programs to sustain the involvement of participants.
- Offer programs or activities to attract people who lapse from a heart-healthy lifestyle.
- Provide decision-makers in your department with ways in which they can help to make that happen. Share with them the suggestions in “From Programs to Practices.”

STAFF TRAINING/MEETING OUTLINES

Adding Information and Activity

People Involved: Program and front-line staff

Time Allotted: 2 hours

Goals:

1. Identify existing programs where heart-healthy information and activity can be added.
2. Identify resources that can be used for this purpose.
3. Create a schedule and system for doing so.
4. Identify high potential programs for heart-healthy behavior.
5. Brainstorm ways to incorporate heart-healthy activities into these programs.

Materials and Resources:

- List of current programs (Program Worksheet, page 42)
- Program plan form (Program Worksheet, page 42)
- Copy of reproducible materials

Suggested Topics and Activities:

- Review differences between new and existing programs and heart-healthy and non-heart-healthy programs.
- Overview of ways to move knowledge about heart health to existing programs.
- Individual or small group: identify existing programs where heart-healthy information and activity could be added.
- Share list of programs identified.
- Individual or small group: create a plan and schedule for integrating heart-healthy information and activity.
- Group brainstorming: possible high potential programs to be incorporated into Hearts N' Parks.
- Wrap-up: questions and comments.

STAFF TRAINING/MEETING OUTLINES

High Potential Program Possibilities

People Involved: Program supervisors and programmers

Time Allotted: 2 hours

Goals:

1. Identify high-potential programs for involvement with Hearts N' Parks.
2. Identify possible national programs or celebrations for incorporation into the department's offerings.
3. Develop plans and activities for both high potential and national programs.
4. Create a schedule for implementation of these programs.

Materials and Resources: Information from this section

Suggested Topics and Activities:

- Share progress and challenges on incorporation of heart-healthy information into programs.
- Make adjustments and make plans for continuation.

High Potential and Profile Programs

- Group brainstorming: List potential programs for both high potential and profile; refer to information in this section on those two areas, if needed.
- Group decision: On the basis of department criteria—that is, resources, number of people reached, ease of access to target group, etc., decide to place greater-than-average emphasis on heart-healthy behavior in several existing programs.
- Program plans: Identify one or more national programs or celebrations which the department plans to incorporate into its offerings. Develop an action plan.

Wrap-up

- Questions and comments.
- Set a date and time to reconvene to finalize plans for incorporation.



Program Worksheet



Overall Goal: If more than one, indicate priority by designating the first goal as #1 and also check secondary goals.

- ___ Add heart-healthy information and activities to existing programs
- ___ Target high potential or national programs
- ___ Move people from information to action
- ___ Reach potential participants
- ___ Support heart-healthy lifestyle
- ___ Identify possibilities for partnerships
- ___ Utilize opportunities for building public visibility

Program List:

List each of the major programs or services under your supervision.

Mark as follows under the heading **Designation:**

- strong possibility to reach goal(s)
- X possible alternative for goal(s) attainment

List suggestions for possible information, activities, or modifications.

Program	Designation	Possible Activities
----------------	--------------------	----------------------------

Designate programs selected for Hearts N' Parks, along with major goal or focus and types of activities.

Program	Major Goal/Focus	Activities
----------------	-------------------------	-------------------

Designate actions that need to be taken to implement the Hearts N' Parks program. Include due date and person responsible.

Action	By When	By Whom
---------------	----------------	----------------

Frequently Asked Questions



1 We have a tight budget. How can we implement Heart N' Parks without going over budget?

Work to achieve some flexibility in your program so that costly rearranging or replanning is minimized; try to be creative. For example, as part of its Hearts N' Parks program, the Winston-Salem (North Carolina) Parks and Recreation Department partnered with the Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center to provide blood pressure and cholesterol checks for adults in a "Healthy Strider" mall-walking program. The medical center used a storefront in the mall as a place to provide walkers with healthy snacks and information. This joining of resources and facilities enabled both groups to keep costs down while reaching out to a larger segment of the community.

Obtain educational materials and program ideas from the Web and see the 4th P starting on page 65 for information about forming partnerships.

2 How many participants can participate?

There is no set number, but it is better for evaluation purposes to start off with a small group (15–30) and allow the program to grow.





HEARTS N' PARKS: 3RD P—PUBLIC VISIBILITY

“If a tree falls in the forest and there’s nobody there to hear it, does it still make a sound?” That old question highlights the challenge for Hearts N’ Parks. This project doesn’t exist unless people hear about it. The relationship between CVD and heart-healthy programs is worthy of great visibility.

Take up the challenge of raising awareness of cardiovascular disease and the role individuals can play in reducing their disease risk. Now is the best time to raise the visibility of Hearts N’ Parks and to show people in your community how you are working to improve their health.

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

Who needs to know about Hearts N’ Parks? Somewhere between lots of people and everybody.

Given the large audience, you need to use many different strategies for getting the word out. Hearts N’ Parks offers five approaches to greater program visibility:

- Defining Hearts N’ Parks messages
- Modifying the messages
- Moving the messages
- Holding special events
- Working with the media.

Elaboration of these approaches is provided in the following sections.

WRITING HEARTS N’ PARKS MESSAGES

Some people who know a great deal about the causes of CVD will live in your community along with people who are unaware that CVD is a serious health threat or that people can reduce their risk. Other people may be aware of ways they can reduce their risk for CVD who aren’t interested in making any changes in their behavior. The “stages of change” in the “1st P—People” come into play here.

Although the program’s overall message is the value of adopting heart-healthy behavior, the program uses various levels of the message to move people from awareness to action.

At the broadest level, the goal is to raise awareness of the seriousness of cardiovascular disease. The hope is that a progression of messages will result in people participating in activities that support heart-healthy behaviors.



Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States.



Risk factors for heart disease are:

High Blood Cholesterol

High Blood Pressure

Smoking

Diabetes

Being Overweight

and

Lack of Physical Activity.



Fortunately, there are steps you can take to reduce your risk of heart disease.



Two of those actions you can take involve increased leisure-time physical activity and heart-healthy eating.



Your community is involved in a National program, Hearts N' Parks, that addresses heart-healthy eating and physical activity.



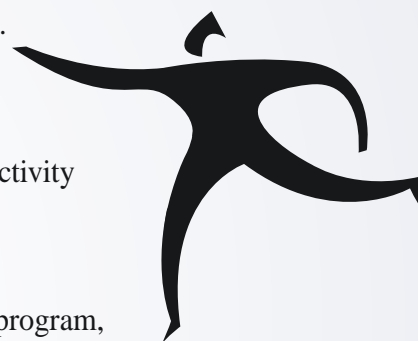
There are individuals or community groups who can play a part in the Hearts N' Parks program and its success.



People can learn more and become involved in physical activity and heart-healthy eating activities at your department.



Types of activities and programs offered along with dates, times and locations.



The table on page 47 shows each stage of change and the corresponding message goal and suggestions.



Do you know?

Stages of Change	Message Goals and Suggestions
Precontemplation	To raise awareness of CVD. "Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States."
Contemplation	To raise awareness of the important role of the individual in relation to the risk factors. " <i>You</i> can make a positive change."
Preparation	To encourage involvement in heart-healthy behavior and encourage individuals to participate in your programs. "These programs are accessible, and activities are easy to start—no experience or skill required."
Action	To tell individuals how to get started and help them stay involved. Introduce other activities and options for them as well as ways to break barriers, etc.
Maintenance	To focus on sustained, continued activity. "Keep up the good work."
Termination	To offer continued access and availability. "We're your partners in healthy lifestyles."
Another stage of change is quite common: relapse. For a variety of reasons, people with the best of intentions stop their involvement. It's important that we don't overlook this natural, human progression.	
Relapse	To give options for restarting healthy habits and behavior. "Don't let periodic lapses become a reason to give up."

MODIFYING THE MESSAGES

Initially, the messages are intended to provide information and create awareness, but over time you want to influence people to move through the stages of change. Strategies for modifying the messages:

Program Titles—Change the names of your programs. Rather than just listing the name of the program—Walking, Ethnic Cooking, etc.—consider adding some of the following phrases:

- Getting Started...(Walking, Aerobics, etc.)
- Time To Try...(Hiking, Biking, etc.)
- How About...(Healthy Food Shopping, etc.).

Program titles for those who have already adopted heart-healthy behavior might focus on words of encouragement:

- Keeping at It (Walking, Aerobics, etc.)
- Moving from Walking to Hiking
- Now On to Healthy Cooking
- Learning More About (Biking, Low-Fat Cooking, etc.).

Program descriptions—These too can be modified. To reach people who are thinking about getting started, the description could address:

- Assistance in overcoming reluctance to change behavior
- Techniques for learning skills
- Methods of making the behavior doable.

Example

"Have you thought about becoming more physically active? How about walking as a way to improve your health and well-being? Join us in an easy walking plan."



The Practical Guide on Overweight and Obesity in Adults offers information that can be used to help people change their behavior.

Set the Right Goals

Setting the right goals is an important first step. Most people trying to lose weight focus on just that one goal: weight loss. The most productive areas to focus on, however, are the dietary and physical activity changes that will lead to that long-term weight change. Successful weight managers select two or three goals at a time that meet the following criteria of useful goals:

Effective goals are (1) specific; (2) attainable; and (3) forgiving (less than perfect). "Exercise more" is a commendable ideal, but it's not specific. "Walk 5 miles everyday" is specific and measurable, but is it attainable if you're just starting out? "Walk 30 minutes every day" is more attainable, but what happens if you're held up at work one day and there's a thunderstorm during your walking time another day? "Walk 30 minutes, 5 days each week" is specific, attainable, and forgiving. In short, a great goal!

To influence people to sustain a heart-healthy behavior, program descriptions could incorporate language on:

- Reinforcing skills
- Making the new behavior manageable
- Keeping activities enjoyable
- Encouraging mutual support.

Example

"Looking for ways to continue your venture into physical activity? How about learning

more about biking OR taking the next step in aerobics OR looking for more tasty, low-fat meal ideas."

MOVING THE MESSAGES

There are a number of ways available to help you reach the intended audiences for Hearts N' Parks messages:

- Existing resources
- Internal opportunities
- Extension strategies.

Resources

The NHLBI has prepared a substantial number of fact and information sheets on heart-healthy activities and heart-healthy eating. You can order these from NHLBI or reproduce many of the sheets in the reproducible section in this guide and distribute them. The NRPA also has materials that can be helpful to your audience.



INFORMATION SHEETS

	Children	Adolescents	Adults
Healthy Eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat Right for a Healthy Heart • Snacks Like These Are Okay • Find the Foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay Young at Heart Menu • Dining Out—How to Choose • Foods in the Fast Lane • Putting Heart Healthy Eating Habits Into Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart Healthy Eating Plan • Help Your Family to Better Heart Health • Cooking the Heart-Healthy Way • Shop to Your Heart’s Content • Dining Out—How to Choose • Stay Young at Heart Menu
Physical Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get Moving Fast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Activity and Heart Disease I.Q. • Get Physical • Guide to Physical Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help Your Family to Better Heart Health • Physical Activity and Heart Disease I.Q. • Guide to Physical Activity
Obesity & Overweight		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Your Weight and Heart Disease I.Q. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines on Overweight and Obesity • Check Your Weight and Heart Disease I.Q. • Heart Healthy Eating Plan
High Blood Pressure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Heart I.Q. • High Blood Pressure Prevention I.Q. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Heart I.Q. • High Blood Pressure Prevention I.Q.
High Blood Cholesterol		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Heart I.Q. • Cholesterol and Heart Disease I.Q. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tips to Help Older Americans Control Cholesterol • Healthy Heart I.Q. • Cholesterol and Heart Disease I.Q.

CONSUMER FRIENDLY MESSAGE

The message below is in the Surgeon General's report on physical activity. It attempts to make people aware that even a small amount of time spent in physical activity is worth the effort. It also reminds people that moderate physical activity can be enjoyable. Consider using this language for a display item targeting current, casual, and potential participants in your program.

Life is short. So is 30 minutes. 30 minutes of "moderate" physical activity a day. A brisk walk. A romp with the kids. A dance break. Hard to believe that so much fun can dramatically reduce your risk of serious disease and early death. Even if it's done 10 minutes at a time. And considering that it decreases stress and increases your energy, you may not only live longer, you'll probably enjoy it more. Physical Activity. A little goes a long way.

Source: *Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General*, DHHS 1996.

SOS

Signs of Success



Exercise boosts our immune system, releases endorphins and serotonin which all help elevate our feeling of well-being and energy level.

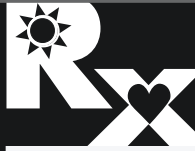
Neenah Parks & Recreation from *Setting the Course*



Grant Park—Sign Board from *Setting the Course*



Bene-E-Fit Bear, Mascot
Incline Village, Nevada Parks and Recreation Department,
from *Setting the Course*



The NHLBI Web site is a good source of information. You can use this excerpt from the site as a model for turning information into heart-healthy activity. (The information included here is not presented in its entirety. You can find it at the NHLBI Web site as part of a set of booklets for *Improving the Cardiovascular Health of African Americans.*)

Move Your Body!

Change your habits by adding activity to your daily routine. Any movement burns calories. The more you move, the better. Try some of these simple activities to get you started today.

Perk up:

Get up 15 minutes earlier in the morning and stretch.
Jog in place.
Ride your stationary bike while watching TV.
Work out along with an exercise video.

Do a quick workout:

Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
Walk to the bus or train stop.
Walk to each end of the mall when you go shopping.
Park your car a few blocks away from your destination and walk.

Have fun:

Play your favorite dance music. Do the old steps you love—add some new moves.
Jump rope or play tag with your kids or grandkids.
Use handheld arm weights during a phone conversation with a friend.

Source: *Energize Yourself! Stay Physically Active*, NHLBI, and NIH Office of Research on Minority Health

INTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

Use the resources in this guide to reinforce the Hearts N' Parks message inside your agency. Try to have the message incorporated into departmental vehicles, such as:

- Flyers, brochures, bulletin boards, sign boards, newsletters, etc.
- Printed forms, such as fax cover sheets, meeting agendas, and registration forms.
- High-tech messages—voice mail, recorded updates, e-mail messages.
- Personal contact—continue to meet face to face with decision-makers, partners, and staff involved in the project.

EXTENDING YOUR REACH

Hundreds of people enroll in your programs—hundreds more pass by your parks and

facilities. Extend your reach by placing messages in places where they can be seen, such as:

- Posters and information near rest rooms and refreshment facilities.
- Fact and tip sheets in high traffic locations.
- Brochures at special events and community occasions.
- Hearts N' Parks video as part of a display or part of a talk to a local civic or service club. (See “Holding Special Events” for more information.)
- In the mail, accompanying local utility bills, paychecks, and brochures and the newsletters of other human services agencies.

Remember to vary the message to reach people with different degrees of knowledge and readiness. By identifying places frequented by at-risk groups, casual participants, or nonparticipants, you can extend your reach even further. Some possibilities might include:

TARGET GROUP	PLACE OF CONTACT
Teens	Area or center where they drop in to play pool, etc. Park where they “hang out” afternoons or evenings.
Parents dropping off children	Sign boards outside building. Message in take-home flyers or forms.
Families	Distribute information at youth sports games. Signs at family picnic spots or child play areas.
Senior citizens	Announcements at social gatherings. Fact sheets at meal programs.

Contact individuals or agencies that may have contact with at-risk individuals and nonparticipants. This may involve providing materials for distribution by a social club, a self-help club, or a church.

HOLDING SPECIAL EVENTS

You can tap into the popularity of existing special events or create some new ones for Hearts N’ Parks. Special events:

- Attract larger than usual numbers of people
- Attract the interest of the media
- May reach people at higher than average risk for CVD
- Can attract volunteers who learn more about CVD and heart-healthy behavior through their involvement
- Are opportunities to bring many community resources together.

Just remember that you don’t necessarily have to create something new. Almost any existing special event can be transformed into a Hearts N’ Parks opportunity.

What is a special event? A special event can last an hour, a day, or a week.

Here are some examples:

- A health and wellness fair
- An awards ceremony
- A ribbon-cutting event for new equipment or building(s)
- A news conference
- A Fourth of July festival.

In addition to each of these being an event by itself, each can be a part of a larger event. For example, at Arlington County, Virginia’s, Hearts N’ Parks launch, a news conference kicked off a full day of heart-healthy activities, including a health and wellness fair where people from local hospitals and other organizations performed blood pressure screenings and provided heart-healthy educational materials.

Remember, combining your activity with another event can be a win-win situation. Perhaps there’s a community awareness day in your town—why not ask to participate in the same way as part of a health and wellness fair? Or, hold your awards ceremony for participants in your Hearts N’ Parks programs during half-time at the local high school sporting event.

Regardless of which activities comprise the event, there are common steps that must be taken to make it successful:

STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

1. Identify your goals, target audiences(s), key messages, and activities. An event takes a lot of time and other resources, and it should be a tool to reach goals, not an end in and of itself.
2. Identify and contact potential partners, cosponsors, and presenters, if appropriate.
3. Assemble a task force or committee for your event. Recruit from within your department or organization, potential partnering organizations, representatives from groups that are connected to your target audiences, community volunteers, etc.
4. Choose a date and location. Find out what else is going on around the time you want to hold your event and plan accordingly. You might be able to turn what would otherwise be a competing event into a partnership! (If you plan to have a legislator, local sports figure, or other celebrity participate, you may need to choose a date and location that best meets his or her needs.)
5. Promote your event to encourage attendance and media coverage.
6. Coordinate logistics.
7. Promote your event afterwards.

Documenting the event with photographs or videotape may be useful for future promotions. So you need to factor in the logistics for doing so, such as hiring a photographer. Keep in mind that you should obtain signed consent forms from individuals whose image or voice are recorded. Parents or guardians must provide consent forms for minors. This guide contains a sample consent and waiver form, as well as a sample cover letter in appendix C.

Thinking at least one step ahead is key. Use the Prototype Plan for Launching Your Program in appendix C, especially the timeline and check list to help stay on track.

Using Baltimore's SOS program as a model, the Medical University of South Carolina Blood Pressure Pilot Project conducted a similar program during a football game at a small, relatively rural, high school with a significant percentage of African American

students. Because the school's football games typically draw people from the entire community, the program was able to reach a sizable percentage of the population.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Media coverage of Hearts N' Parks raises the visibility of your agency and helps to set the stage for recruiting partners or sponsors.

Successful media outreach is a multifaceted effort. First, identify your target audience and tailor your message accordingly. Remember that the audience is not the news media but their readers, listeners, and viewers. Reporters, editors, and producers are your messengers, but you must show them why your message is important. To do so, you must tailor your messages to key audiences and use an appropriate "hook" or angle to interest the media.

Here's a media strategy checklist:

- ✓ **Define your goal.** Are you trying to recruit participants to programs, draw attendance at an event, inform potential partners or sponsors?
- ✓ **Think about which audiences you want to target.** If your goal is to recruit program participants, do you want to reach children or adults? Do you want to reach individuals of certain ethnic or cultural backgrounds or from a specific socioeconomic class or neighborhood?
- ✓ **Develop an appropriate message.** Try to identify ONE key message and ONE call to action. The key here is to not try to communicate several concepts at once—that approach can backfire. For example:

Key message: “Hearts N’ Parks is an innovative, nationwide initiative that aims to reduce the growth in the number of obese people and the risk of coronary heart disease.”

Call to action: “Help us launch this exciting and prestigious program in our community by attending [YOUR ORGANIZATION’S SPECIAL EVENT, ETC.]”

Key message: “Two ways to reduce your risk of heart disease are to participate in regular physical activity and to eat heart-healthy foods.”

Call to action: “Register now to discover easy ways to be more active and eat healthfully by calling or visiting [YOUR ORGANIZATION].”

- ✓ **Create a targeted media list.** Be sure that your list is up-to-date and covers all media you are interested in contacting.





Another resource for incorporating special events is *The Sports Guide: NHLBI Planning Guide for Cardiovascular Risk Reduction Projects at Sporting Events* found in the NHLBI Educational Materials Catalog. NHLBI materials are available by contacting the NHLBI Information Center at (301) 592-8573 or online at <http://email.nhlbihin.net>. The catalog provides ideas related to various sports.

Baseball/Softball	Strike Out Stroke Foul Out Far Home Run for Heart Health
Basketball	Slam Dunk Stroke Hoops for Healthy Hearts
Soccer	Kick Out Stroke Score a Goal for Physical Activity
Football	Touchdown on Fat Down on Stroke
Boxing	Knock Out Stroke Weigh-In Light
Car Racing	Watch Your Pressure Finish First in the Health Lane
Bowling	Strike Out Stroke Strikes and Spares for a Healthy Heart
Wrestling	Take Down Stroke
Demolition Derby	Demolish Stroke
Tennis	Love Physical Activity Net a Healthy Heart
Swimming	Dive into a Healthy Lifestyle
Track	Run for Life

SOS

Signs of Success



Strike Out Stroke (SOS) Week in Baltimore, Maryland, was a collaborative project involving the Baltimore Orioles, Community Health Assessment and Monitoring Programs, Bon Secours Hospital, the University of Maryland Medical School, and the NHLBI. This program targeted high-risk individuals through community events at barbershops, libraries, farmers' markets, community basketball courts, pharmacies, and grocery stores, and culminated at a Baltimore Orioles baseball game. The events were advertised through TV and radio PSAs, banners at the ballpark, and video screen announcements. Events included blood pressure screening, risk assessment quizzes on stroke and heart disease, and educational material hand-outs on a variety of health topics. In addition, young adults and adolescents from the community were taught CVD risk reduction and how to measure blood pressure.



Do you know?

Consider the following questions and suggestions when forming your media strategy:

1. What are the best ways to reach your target audiences?
2. What newspapers do they read? What radio stations do they listen to?
3. Check the list of media contacts used by your agency, as well as any related agencies, partners, etc., to determine if you are missing any media outlets.
4. If you are holding a special event, don't forget to notify calendar editors, including those on community Web sites.
5. How will you distribute your materials—by fax, by mail, by e-mail?
6. Make sure your list includes all the information you need to reach your targeted media.
7. Whenever possible, note media deadlines for submitting information.

✓ **Prepare the tools you need to inform the media effectively.** These include news releases, fact sheets, brochures, or other background information. If you're planning an event, you might also need a media advisory (a "save the date" announcement), as well as a press kit with the above-mentioned tools plus an agenda, short bios of speakers, and copies of their speeches. Don't forget to include the five "W"s—what, when, where, who, and why—in the new release. Also, you'll need to identify the people in your

department or agency who are best able to serve as media contact or spokesperson.

- ✓ **Construct a timetable of outreach events and activities.** See sample Checklist and Timeline for Special Events and Prototype Plan for Launching Your Program in appendix C.
- ✓ **Decide how you will measure the success of your outreach efforts.** How many people participated in your program or event? How many newspapers, TV stations, etc., reported on your program as a result of your outreach?

Resources



Materials for working with the media are found in this chapter and in the appendix

At the end of the chapter:

Proclamation by community officials—
Arlington's promotional flyer

In the appendix:

Sample Pitch Letter for Media (appendix C)
Story Ideas and Media Tips (appendix C)

Encouraging Media to Cover Your Event
(appendix C)

Sample Media Advisory for Hearts N' Parks
Launch at Local Site (appendix C)

Sample News Release (appendix C)

Background sheet—Hearts N' Parks (appendix F)

Background sheet—Get Moving for a Healthy
Heart (appendix F)

Background sheet—Eat Right for a Healthy
Heart (appendix F)

SOS

Signs of Success



Excerpt of newspaper article from Roanoke Rapids:

By Robert DeAngelo, Herald Staff Writer

ROANOKE RAPIDS-What's better for you, an apple or a bowl of deep-fried pork rinds? Carrot sticks or a triple-scoop, marshmallow-laden hot fudge sundae? Walking a mile or getting a thumb cramp from channel surfing?

Those were pretty easy, but the Roanoke Rapids Parks and Recreation Department is hoping to increase awareness of heart-healthy habits in children and adults this week during their Hearts N' Parks/Keep the Beat campaign.

Roanoke Rapids is one of 11 communities in the state selected as a test site for the program, which seeks to educate both young and old on healthy eating plans along with moderate physical activity programs.

"We're trying to promote heart-healthy behavior," said Allen Overby, who is helping coordinate the program locally. "We want to emphasize that a plan of physical activity and nutrition is important throughout someone's entire life."

Arlington County Hearts N' Parks "Kickoff":

In the summer of 2000, the Arlington County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources in Arlington, Virginia, kicked off the second year of Hearts N' Parks in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. A special launch event held on July 18 featured the Surgeon General, Dr. David Satcher, Olympic Figure Skating Champion Michael Weiss, NHLBI Director Dr. Claude Lenfant, and others at a press conference. Activities included healthy food demonstrations; physical activity demonstrations including tennis, volleyball, and jumping rope; sidewalk chalk art; and a performance by the "Merry Makers," a senior citizen music and dance troupe.





Here's a way to keep up with the latest in heart-health research and NHLBI activities:

Bookmark the NHLBI Web site, www.nhlbi.nih.gov, and check the site regularly. (See especially the "What's New" and "News & Press Releases" sections.) You can also subscribe to the

NHLBI Health Information Network which provides members with information and educational opportunities applicable to everyday activities. For example, let's say NHLBI posts a news release about a new study showing that teens as a group are becoming increasingly overweight. You might send out a news release or a letter to the editor that summarizes the research (because NHLBI is a Federal agency, you can copy an excerpt verbatim)—be sure to cite your source—and explain how your program offers opportunities to help teens lose weight (or better yet, how effective your program is in helping them lose weight).

MEDIA CONTACT IS ONGOING

It's important to capture media attention when launching a new project such as Hearts N' Parks. It is equally important to try to keep the message and activities of Hearts N' Parks in the public eye. How do you go about doing that? Some things you can do:

- Provide the media with information on new heart-healthy programs or services that you are offering. Announce new partnerships with other organizations. Keep your media contact and spokesperson informed about any new developments in your program.
- Ask local officials to proclaim your city, town, or county a Hearts N' Parks community and invite the media to cover it. Include a copy of the proclamation with your news release.
- Include Hearts N' Parks materials at every appropriate public event. Try to keep your materials recognizable with a standard design or logo.
- Stay on top of medical research related to Hearts N' Parks and tell the media about it. Use only reputable sources of information, such as the NHLBI.
- Pitch ideas for a feature article to select media. The focus of the feature could be a program participant who has been exceptionally successful or who has overcome unique challenges, a volunteer who has contributed significantly, a corporate sponsor that has generously contributed to the community's well-being, or the history or evolution of park and recreation programs in your area.

- Expand your contacts with the media so information about Hearts N' Parks and heart-healthy behavior is featured in various sections of the newspaper—e.g., sports, lifestyle, weekend, or activity section—as well as radio stations that attract different groups of listeners. Take note of reporters—including freelancers—who cover related stories and add their names to your list of media contacts.
- Try to find media that appeal to at-risk individuals or nonparticipants you want to reach. Identify new media possibilities by reading neighborhood or small weekly newspapers and listening to different radio stations.
- Invite members of the media to become partners with the Hearts N' Parks effort in your community. Local TV and radio stations as well as newspapers often adopt special causes to show their support for the community.

Do you know?



Ways to make your activities newsworthy:

Provide a local angle on this national story; editors use local stories far more often than out-of-town stories.

Provide details on the impact of your agency's activities on local people, businesses, or quality of life.

Ensure visual appeal. Visuals include photos (preferably "action" shots of a key individual in action), maps, graphs or charts, and visual identifiers (e.g., logos) of your agency.

Timely distribution of up-to-date information that is respectful of media deadlines.

Keep in mind, however, that more does not always equal better. Reporters constantly receive story ideas, and repeated attempts to gain media coverage can backfire. When you contact reporters, be sure you have an idea they might be interested in—and make their job easier by providing them with all the information they need.

NEWS RELEASES

Much of the news that is printed or broadcast is from news releases. Your release may be the first—and perhaps only—information a reporter receives about your program. It should be written as if a reporter wrote it, because it may be printed or broadcast verbatim. Or a reporter may use only portions of the release or supplement it with additional information from you, your program partners, interviews with key people, or their own sources.

Here are some hints for writing a news release:

- Write a headline that sells the story.
- Prepare a lead paragraph with the five Ws—who, what, when, where, and why (or how).

- Incorporate accurate information from reputable sources, with the most important details in the first few paragraphs.
- Use quotations that bring the story to life from influential people in the community as well as participants. You might compose draft quotes that are approved by the people for whom the quotes are written. This is a fairly common procedure and may be preferred by the people being quoted.

In addition, prepare a professional-looking news release by:

- Keeping it to no more than two pages. You can provide additional material through fact sheets, interviews, etc.
- Presenting it on a letterhead with the name and phone number of your agency's contact person.
- Proofing it to ensure that it is error-free.

SAMPLE: ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA'S, HEARTS N' PARKS

This text from the Arlington, Virginia, program is an example of the kind of information you could use for your program's flyer. Consider adding a logo or clip art to make your program's flyer more colorful.

What is Hearts N' Parks?

Hearts N' Parks is an exciting new national program sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The goal of the program is to create model community-based programs to increase the number of children and adults who engage in heart-healthy behaviors.

Why Arlington?

Arlington County's Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources is honored to be hand-selected as a pilot site. Arlington was selected because the NHLBI and the Surgeon General's Office recognize the many ways that community parks and recreation programs positively affect the well-being of people. We are proud to offer programs that demonstrate Arlington as A Hearts N' Parks Community!



What is the Arlington Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources doing to promote Hearts N' Parks?

Kids in the *elementary after school and playground camp programs*, as well as mature adults in the *senior adult programs*, are participating in more physical activities while learning about the importance of a heart healthy diet.

The Hearts N' Parks logo will be found on trail maps, mile markers, and other promotional materials for programs and facilities that offer heart-healthy activities.



The *Recreation and Leisure* class catalog will promote a series of heart-healthy classes in the fall of 2000.



SAMPLE: (CONTINUED)

Thomas Jefferson Community Center and Barcroft Sport and Fitness Center will be flagship sites for Hearts N' Parks, offering a safe and affordable place to be active.

What can Arlingtonians do to promote heart-healthy behaviors?

These simple tips will help control body weight, prevent/control obesity, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol, which are major risk factors for cardiovascular disease:

- Get regular physical activity—You need to engage in only about 30 minutes of moderate-level activity, preferably, all days of the week.
- Choose a diet that is low in saturated and total fat and cholesterol.



- Follow an eating plan that balances caloric intake with your level of physical activity. This is the key to maintaining a healthy body weight, or even losing weight if you are overweight.

Where can I find more information about the Hearts N' Parks program in Arlington?

Please call _____
at _____.

Where can I find more information about the Arlington County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources?

For information about the Arlington County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources, please visit our Web site at <http://www.co.arlington.va.us>. Pick up a copy of the latest Recreation and Leisure catalog at your local library or community center. Call 703-228-5920 to request information to be mailed.





Public Visibility

Countdown Checklist: 3rd P—Public Visibility

GETTING STARTED

Messages

___ At a staff meeting, expose people to the Hearts N' Parks message and encourage them to take action according to their roles within the department.

Media

___ Create or revise a list of media contact names and numbers.

___ Identify media tools you'll need—such as a media advisory, news releases, background sheets. Create a schedule, then draft and distribute these items.

___ Set up a date and time for community officials to proclaim your community a Hearts N' Parks Community, then arrange for media coverage.

MOVING FORWARD

Messages

___ Change your messages by modifying program titles and descriptions.

___ Form a small group of staff who are willing to identify internal opportunities for spreading the message and then do so.

Media

___ Extend your reach by partnering with local organizations or businesses and promoting Hearts N' Parks to their constituents.

___ Think of different story ideas with a local angle or human interest approach and forward them to your media contacts. These should be targeted; do not send the same pitch letter to several media outlets.

___ Expand your reach by contacting the people who write for the sports or lifestyle sections of local newspapers.

KEEPING THE BEAT

Messages

___ Continue to tell your message; don't assume that everyone has received it.

___ Begin a new round of distributing information about the risks for CVD.

___ Change your message to support people who have taken action and need to maintain this way of life.

Media

___ Create a new special event or infuse a Hearts N' Parks emphasis into an existing special event. Invite the media to cover the event and become involved.

___ Check the NHLBI Web site and alert local media contacts to new findings. Provide them with a local angle if you can.

Frequently Asked Questions



1 Why do we need to involve the media?

Media support is crucial because it provides a way to reach the people of your community. Good media coverage can assist your program by attracting participants and outside partners.

2 What's a good first step to getting media exposure?

Using the example in the resource guide, write a news release that highlights the major details of your program (date, time, place, purpose, who's involved) and submit it to local newspapers and radio stations. When you submit the release, invite the paper or radio station to send a reporter to your program's launch.

3 What if our efforts to generate publicity don't result in a good turnout for the program?

If you've tried all possible ways to inform your community (radio spots, news releases, contacting media, putting up posters, handing out flyers, etc.), try encouraging participants to tell their friends and families about the program. Simple word-of-mouth tends to link people with shared interests. Also, find out how those involved became aware of the program. That should help you understand which communication methods are effective.

Whatever you do, don't give up. Change your approach if you have to—create a new slogan, make new posters, or hold a special event at a time when no other major events are happening.



HEARTS N' PARKS: 4TH P—PARTNERING

Consider pursuing partnerships. One of the powerful aspects of Hearts N' Parks is its potential to make the most of existing community resources AND to extend the reach of important information to your community. Partnering goes a long way toward making that a reality.

THE PARTNERSHIP ADVANTAGE

Partnering is powerful because it holds the potential for making things happen that:

- Could **not** have happened with one agency acting on its own
- Would **not** have happened as efficiently or successfully if partners had not joined together.

It's never too soon to start thinking about partnering. Partners can be a big help to moving a project forward because they can provide:

- Access to a target audience you might not currently reach
- Greater credibility for your message or program
- Additional resources, either tangible or intangible
- Added expertise
- Potential cosponsorship of programs and events.

PARTNERSHIP POSSIBILITIES

Every community possesses a unique richness of resources. Explore the resources that might serve as possible partners in Hearts N' Parks.

They might include:

- Public departments and agencies, such as health departments, school districts, police departments, fire departments, etc.
- Health-related agencies, hospitals, visiting nurses, emergency services
- Nonprofit agencies, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, local chapters of AARP
- Churches and religious groups
- Affiliates of national organizations—American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, etc.
- Private sector—grocery stores, sporting goods stores, fitness centers
- Neighborhood and community groups
- Service clubs, such as Rotary, Lions, etc.

The best prospective partners are those who share a common interest in your mission. Partners are those who can bring something to the process that you or other partners are not capable of providing.

Take a moment to:

- Brainstorm the names of individuals and agencies that might be interested in being a part of this effort.
- Think of organizations or groups you might not have been involved with previously, such as hospitals, grocery stores, the health department, or police and fire departments.
- Ask other staff or your current partners for additions to your potential partner list.

SOS

Signs of Success

Most of the partnerships in North Carolina involved hospitals, healthcare and fitness centers, and health departments. There were also partnerships with local restaurants and businesses, police departments, a mayor's council for substance abuse, and USA Tennis. A few examples:

- The Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department in Charlotte, operated many adult and youth programs, ranging in duration from 8 to 10 weeks. The "Walk for Life" senior walking program culminated with a walk in which participants tested their endurance by walking several miles from Charlotte to the local outlet mall. For the 1,800 youths involved in summer day camp programs, the department partnered with USA Tennis to focus on the health benefits of participating in lifelong sports like tennis. The youths participated in a healthy lunch program that challenged them to "go around the world in 80 days by sampling various cuisines." Winners were awarded prizes and given coupons for active places to visit, such as bowling alleys and skating rinks. Sponsorship with local Subway sandwich shops was part of the Hearts N' Parks partnering mix.



- The Winston-Salem Parks and Recreation Department partnered with the Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center to provide blood pressure and cholesterol checks for adults in the "Healthy Strider" mall-walking program. The hospital used a storefront in the mall to provide walkers with healthy snacks and information. This program was 4 weeks long and had about 40 participants.

- The Smithfield Parks and Recreation Department established a partnership with the Johnston County Health Department and the Looking Good Fitness Center to provide a 6-week senior exercise program.

The Health Department conducted blood pressure, cholesterol, and body fat screenings for participants. Participants were also given information about health, fitness, and nutrition as part of the Hearts N' Parks program.



- In Raleigh, the summer Youth Basketball League, a joint venture of the Raleigh Police Department and the Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department, gave approximately 25 teens the opportunity to learn about health and fitness while having fun. Hearts N' Parks provided an opportunity to include good nutrition and physical activity as part of the program with guest speakers, such as a personal trainer and a football player. The Parks and Recreation Department arranged for fruit and a healthy beverage to be served after basketball games through a partnership with the local bottling company.



- Lindsey Dunevant, Director of the Albemarle Parks and Recreation Department, called Karen Brown at the Stanley Memorial Hospital and received an enthusiastic "yes" to partnering before he attended the first Hearts N' Parks meeting. These partners went on to develop a 1-month "Walk About" program for adults. The program included walks with health education professionals, screenings for blood pressure and blood glucose, stress management seminars, healthy eating classes, and strength training.





SIGNS OF SUCCESS (CONTINUED)

- The Town of Fletcher Parks and Recreation Department partnered with a variety of community organizations to give day camp participants the opportunity to hear from experts in nutrition and exercise. Partners included a local fitness club, the Henderson County Partnership for Health, the American Red Cross, the Cooperative Extension Service, and the Henderson County Health Department. Partners and staff gave talks, conducted demonstrations, and led games, activities, and exercises that emphasized the importance of a heart-healthy lifestyle.
- The Madison-Mayodan Recreation Department teamed with a local restaurant that provided nutritional information about items on its menu to children in the Hearts N' Parks program. The children ate at the restaurant, and staff used the nutritional information to talk about making healthy food choices when eating out.



GETTING STARTED

Creating new relationships or reinforcing existing partnerships can generate strong interest in Hearts N' Parks. But you can't build upon this interest until you ask people to join you.

Be the change agent for healthy behavior in your community and call a meeting to recruit the many valuable assets from within your community.

Be the one to:

- Mail a letter to potential partners explaining the program and asking about their interest. Be sure to include the Hearts N' Parks information and fact sheets.
- Schedule a meeting with potential partners. Be sure to make use of the Hearts N' Parks

video and suggested agenda for that first meeting.

TYPES OF PARTNERING OPPORTUNITIES

There are lots of partnering opportunities, including:

Communication: Information and insight sharing conducted formally at a monthly or annual meeting or informally through networking and phone trees.

Coordination: Programs and services offered to either address an important community issue or avoid replication of services and resources.

Cooperation: Exchange of resources of some kind—building, staff, publicity, equipment, or access to different target groups.

Resources



Resources to help you get started include:

- Additional Resources for Your Hearts N' Parks Program (appendix D)
- Sample Invitation Letter with suggested enclosures (at the end of the chapter)
- Sample Agenda for Initial Meeting (at the end of the chapter)

Do you know?



There are steps and suggestions for creating and working with partners as follows:

- Involve representatives of partnering organizations as early as possible in the planning process.
- Provide them with the Hearts N' Parks mission, strategies, and materials in a readily usable format.
- Give partners advance notice so they can rework their program schedules around the new initiatives.
- Determine what types of resources or assistance they might need; aside from just money, consider training, information, or other forms of assistance.
- Provide them with contacts and linkages to the NHLBI and the NRPA so they realize the potential value of Hearts N' Parks for their organizations.
- Keep initial efforts manageable; don't take on too much too soon.
- Create a way to gently remind people of their responsibilities.
- Develop a feedback mechanism so activities can stay on track and adjustments can be made quickly.

Collaboration: Usually a combination of some or all of the above. The partners share information, communicate between themselves, coordinate programs and efforts, and share resources and responsibility for addressing the common purpose that brought them together.

Now is a good time to decide who your partners in Hearts N' Parks may be and to determine what types of partnering alternatives you will jointly pursue.

MOVING FORWARD

A twofold approach to making the most of existing resources includes a *Program/Service Assessment* and an *Outcomes/Opportunity Action Framework*.

Program/Service Assessment

Before your agency and your partners decide to create new programs, you need to look at those currently being offered. Conduct a quick assessment of heart-healthy related offerings or programs that could incorporate such activities. Determine whether all aspects of heart-healthy behavior are being addressed and that all members of the community have access to such

programs. You should look at your programs to find out if they have the following characteristics:

- All age groups
- Provide for men, women, and children
- Are offered at various locations
- Are offered at different days and times
- Are affordable
- Provide ease of access to all
- Take account of the need for personal safety.

The following checklist, **Program/Service Assessment of Basic Elements and Offerings**, can be completed by your agency and your partners. It will give you an initial picture of what is happening or not happening in terms of heart-healthy behavior in your community. It will also serve as a good starting point for the next phase, when you identify desirable outcomes.

Remember that elements such as affordability, ease of access, and perceived comfort and safety levels need to be discussed. They cannot be addressed easily through a checklist.

Program/Service Assessment of Basic Elements and Offerings

Step 1: Current Programs and Services Offered (number programs for easy reference below)

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 1. | 6. | 11. |
| 2. | 7. | 12. |
| 3. | 8. | 13. |
| 4. | 9. | 14. |
| 5. | 10. | 15. |

Step 2: Review Programs on the basis of which target groups and community locations are addressed by the programs listed in **Step 1**. Be sure to classify the programs according to whether they focus on providing a heart-healthy activity or only have *some elements* related to heart-healthy behavior. This chart allows you to see what elements you are including or missing. Some programs may be entered in more than one category.

Place an asterisk (*) by program name to indicate occasional programs.

Program Name or Number _____	Focus		Elements of	
	Physical Activity	Heart-Healthy Eating	Physical Activity	Heart-Healthy Eating
Children: Male Female				
Teens: Male Female				
Adults: Male Female				
Seniors: Male Female				
At-Risk Groups (specify) _____ _____				
Non-Participants (specify) _____ _____				
Location (specify areas or neighborhoods) _____ _____				

Program/Services Assessment Outcomes/Opportunity Framework

The completion of this assessment is intended to identify desirable outcomes and opportunities for Hearts N' Park initiatives. The Outcomes/Opportunity Action Framework form does just that. It serves as a framework to move forward.

Review the results of your assessment with your staff and your partners to identify gaps and duplications. By not replicating similar programs, you can save time, energy, and money. By offering programs at different times and locations for different groups of people, you may break through a number of other barriers as well.

People:

Groups who do NOT have regular, ongoing opportunities for physical activity:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Groups who do NOT have regular, ongoing opportunities to learn about heart-healthy nutrition:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Groups who are at high risk for CVD and are not participating in current programs:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Programs:

Successful programs with a heart-healthy focus that could be expanded to reach more people:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Programs with potential for adding or enhancing heart-healthy elements for current participants:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Programs without a heart-healthy focus that could be expanded to include heart-healthy physical activity or information about a heart-healthy diet:

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

Heart-healthy information and strategies that are NOT sufficiently targeted and could be expanded: (check as many as apply)

- Information: Importance of CVD
 Risk factors for CVD
 Personal role in reducing risk
- Activity: Physical activity
 Heart-healthy eating

Opportunity/Action Areas:

Identify programs or services, existing or new, that present either an opportunity for motivating heart-healthy behavior or areas where new programs should be created.

Target Group Program	Expansion of Existing Program	Creation of New Program



Do you know?

As in any human interaction, misunderstandings can arise in partnerships. These may include:

Participation

- Participation dominated by one group or person
- Participation by partner(s) is unenthusiastic
- Attendance and involvement are sporadic

Personal

- Personality clashes or ideological differences among partners
- Inability to compromise
- Unrealistic expectations
- Real or perceived loss of authority by one or more partners

Philosophy

- Disagreements over values, methods, or actions
- Past history of differences
- Organizational policies do not lend themselves to cooperative efforts

Practicalities

- Activities or resources put too large a burden on one agency

If you acknowledge these challenges and address them, chances of long-lasting partnering are increased.

MOVING TO ACTION

Two techniques for keeping partnership projects on track include a Partnership Plan and a Tracking Mechanism.

A partnership plan enables all participants to agree on the specifics of the project; a tracking mechanism provides a way to monitor achievement of goals.

Partnership Project Plan

How formal and official you choose to be may relate to the size of the cooperative effort or the needs of the various partners. Use the following guidelines and information to create this plan.

Hearts N' Parks



Partnership Project Plan

Overall Purpose of Hearts N' Parks Partnering:

To bring together existing community resources and assets to improve the overall health and quality of life for residents of the community through increased information and access to physical activity and healthy eating.

Brief Description of Cooperative Program or Project:

Participating Partners (list names of all involved):

Desired Outcome(s) of the Program/Project (can include a focus on a particular group or set of information or behavior):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Major Activities/Action Needed for Program/Project:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.



Partnership Project Plan (continued)

Needed Resources: Partner(s) Providing the Resource:

Access to People

Training

Communication

Expertise

Facility

Funding

Staff

Actions for Implementation:

Action/Step

By Whom

By When

How Tracked

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Tracking.....→

Name of Project:

Proposed Action Steps (include proposed completion date):

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

Please take a few moments and reflect as to how these specific activities or actions related to your Hearts N' Parks project are progressing. Consider the categories below in describing the progress of these activities:



Tow Truck-
"Stalled, no movement"



Snail-
"Moving at a very slow pace"



Car in Motion-
"Moving right along"



Rocket Ship-
"Really taking off"

Once you select the appropriate visual category, see if you can detect the underlying reason or cause for either the challenge or success of this part of the project. On the basis of that identification, please describe a suggested action.

1. Needed Action Step #1 (specify):

Category Designation:

Reason/Cause:

Suggested Action:

4. Needed Action Step #4 (specify):

Category Designation:

Reason/Cause:

Suggested Action:

2. Needed Action Step #2 (specify):

Category Designation:

Reason/Cause:

Suggested Action:

5. Needed Action Step #5 (specify):

Category Designation:

Reason/Cause:

Suggested Action:

3. Needed Action Step #3 (specify):

Category Designation:

Reason/Cause:

Suggested Action:

6. Needed Action Step #6 (specify):

Category Designation:

Reason/Cause:

Suggested Action:

Do you know?



Partnering is truly a group venture and the unofficial guidelines for group dynamics suggest that there are four phases of group behavior as follows:

- Forming—coming together
- Norming—establishing a framework
- Storming—encountering difficulties and disagreements, and
- Performing—making the project come to life.

It is likely that your partnership experience will move through most, if not all, of these phases. Some suggestions for each of the phases include:

Forming

Make the most of your opportunity to be a community change agent. Make a list of all those who might be interested in the goals of Hearts N' Parks and invite them to an initial meeting.

Helpful Hints:

- Try to include all potential partners at the first meeting.
- Send out information on Hearts N' Parks before the first meeting.
- Have a written agenda and a list of desired outcomes for the first meeting.

Norming

Allow time for the individuals representing the various partners time to get to know one another. The more everyone understands the mission and strengths and different approaches of members of the group, the better.

Helpful Hints:

- Move the location of the meetings around to each of the partners to provide a sense of ownership and inclusion.
- Try to involve all members of the group so as to not overshadow or leave out those who are less vocal or direct than others.
- Take the time to work out the ways in which the group wants to communicate with one another and function as a group.

Storming

This is potentially the most important phase. Disagreements are bound to arise. If addressed, working through this phase can improve the final outcome.

Helpful Hints:

- Refer partners to the original plan and see if changes or adjustments are in order; don't blame when you can reframe.
- Have a concise agenda and planned outcomes for each meeting so members don't get sidetracked.
- Use a tracking mechanism to address problems and offer suggested alternatives.

Performing

When moving from planning to action, be sure that all partners are clear about the goals of the project and the role they will play. Since you are likely to have media coverage at this point, be sure to recognize the roles, involvement, and impact of your partners.



Countdown Checklist: 4th P—Partnering

GETTING STARTED

- ___ Review list of current and past partners for possible involvement with Hearts N' Parks.
- ___ Ask staff and current partners to suggest names of possible partners.
- ___ Set a date for initial meeting and invite potential partners to attend.
- ___ Hold initial meeting and determine level of interest and possible involvement.

MOVING FORWARD

- ___ At second meeting, expand the number of partners and garner a more definite level of support; suggest conducting an assessment to determine areas of possible cooperation.
- ___ At the third meeting, review the assessment to determine program or service opportunities.
- ___ Decide upon one or more specific partnering ventures, such as joint staff training, cosponsoring a special event, etc.
- ___ Agree on partnership plan.

KEEP THE BEAT

- ___ Plan methods of communication and networking.
- ___ Update the tracking mechanism regularly.
- ___ Remind yourself and your partners to acknowledge challenges or difficulties right away so that they can be addressed.
- ___ Make a strong effort to thank and give recognition to Hearts N' Parks partners.
- ___ Review the success of initial partnerships and plan additional partnerships.

Sample Invitation to Possible Partners (department letterhead)

Date

Name of Contact Person

Organization

Address

Dear _____:

Our department is involved in a Hearts N' Parks program sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health and the National Recreation and Park Association. The purpose of the program is to improve the overall health and quality of life of our community by promoting heart-healthy eating and physical activity.

A major component of the program is effective and efficient use of community resources. Recognizing your organization's involvement in the community, we would like to invite you to learn more about this program and to explore the possibility of collaborating with us to achieve these goals.

A number of organizations and agencies within our community are being invited to attend a meeting on

Date and Time

Location

We hope that you or a representative from your organization can attend.

Enclosed is a fact sheet about "Hearts N' Parks" as well as "Health Statistics About Cardiovascular Disease." If you have any questions, please give me a call at (fill in your phone number). We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Sincerely,

Sample Agenda for Initial Partnering Meeting

1. **Call to order** (department head, if possible or appropriate)
2. **Self Introductions of Participants and Organizations Represented**
3. **Overview of Hearts N' Parks** (program coordinator)
 - Expanded purpose of program
 - Examples of activities from North Carolina and Arlington pilot sites
 - Use of new and existing programs and services
4. **Roles in Partnership**
 - Communication
 - Coordination
 - Cooperation
 - Collaboration
5. **Where do we go from here?** (group participation)
 - Determine level of interest.
 - Identify other potential partner suggestions.
 - Arrange next meeting date and time; invite potential partner to host.
 - Identify information to be prepared for next meeting.
6. **“On time” adjournment**

Frequently Asked Questions



1 Does a partnership have to be approved by Hearts N' Parks?

No, but keep the NRPA and the NHLBI informed about who your partners are and how your program develops.

2 Can we enter into a partnership with an organization whose purposes are not of a heart-healthy nature?

Yes, but the reason for having a partnership is that partners will share resources and work together to promote each other's programs. You don't want to be in a partnership if it doesn't benefit your program or sends the wrong message. Don't run the risk of getting your message confused with that of a partner.



HEARTS N' PARKS: 5TH P—PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance indicators are the hidden treasure of Hearts N' Parks. At the end of the first season, the North Carolina professionals involved with Hearts N' Parks said it was one of the biggest draws for their involvement with the project. Everything you need to gather performance indicators is included in the Community Mobilization Guide. This chapter and appendices A and B contain performance measures for children (less than 10 years old), adolescents (11–17 years old), and adults (more than 18 years old) that assess their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors about physical activity, heart-healthy eating, and the risk factors related to coronary heart disease. We've also included directions for administering and scoring the measures.

Your ability to demonstrate the impact of your programs on the health of your community is a big plus. The Hearts N' Parks program provides directions, model surveys, and plenty of suggestions to help you measure that impact.

Performance indicators enable you to:

- Document the factual results of your programs.
- Determine if your programs and services are making a difference to your community.
- Provide information for decision-makers, funding sources, and the public.
- Suggest how to improve your programs.
- Reinforce the efforts of staff.

TYPES OF INDICATORS

The Hearts N' Parks program utilizes two types of performance measurements. The first type is the **activity indicators** that measure what has been done by the program: numbers of brochures distributed, programs sponsored, participants served. These are often tracked by age group, gender, and ethnicity. This involves tracking, for example, the number of people who received a fact sheet on how physical activity reduces the risk of CVD, sampled food at a healthy cooking demonstration, or attended the “How To Start a Walking Program” clinic.

Tracking of activity could also include other elements of Hearts N' Parks, such as the number of community organizations attending an initial Hearts N' Parks partners meeting or the number of news articles about Hearts N' Parks in local newspapers.

SOS



Signs of Success

According to data collected at the North Carolina Hearts N' Parks sites in Summer 1999, youth participants showed significant improvements in their knowledge about healthy eating and their intention to eat a healthier diet (7 percent and 9 percent improvements, respectively). Scores for healthy eating improved slightly.

Youth participants also indicated that, on average, they learned four new kinds of physical activity and got better at six different activities.

In the adult program, the biggest improvement occurred in healthy-eating habits, which improved by 6 percent. Improvement was also made in participants' desire to follow dietary guidelines (a 5 percent increase). Adult participants also reported that, on average, they felt that they were in better health by the end of the program.

Do you know?



Collecting, tracking, and sharing these statistics as part of your Hearts N' Parks initiative helps the NHLBI discover the effectiveness of park, recreation, and leisure-related community service agencies' efforts in reaching people and building awareness for heart-healthy behavior.

Organizations such as yours benefit from:

- Enhanced **recognition!**
- Added **credibility!**
- The potential for new **partnerships, sponsorships, and funding!**

GETTING STARTED

There are a number of things to think about and choices to be made in planning to conduct performance measurements. Consider selecting one youth program and one adult program for purposes of measurement until your department becomes more comfortable with the process.

Decisions about the programs to be measured can be based on a number of factors.

Program Considerations:

A natural starting point might be to select a

program that lends itself to both the incorporation of heart-healthy activities and suitability for conducting pretests and posttests.

People Considerations:

You might decide to measure whether the program changed the attitudes and behavior of, say, overweight males between the ages of 20 and 50. You might decide to use a group for whom you can easily secure permission for involvement in measurement or whose involvement lends itself to the pretest and posttest measurement schedule.

Appendix A contains the **Program Design and Development Tracking Sheet**. The following information moves through the decisions that need to be made.

CONDUCTING THE ASSESSMENT

You know at this point which programs are going to be measured. Make sure program staff incorporated heart-healthy elements into their scheduled program activities. Just take a few minutes to check these activities necessary to ensure the value of this process.

Selecting and Using Assessment Tools

Be sure to select assessment tools that are appropriate for the specific group whose outcomes are being measured. See the measures included in appendix A for guidance.

Example: Giving children a survey that they are unable to comprehend would influence the results OR giving people an instrument measuring knowledge of blood pressure when you want to measure food shopping habits would be useless.

Pretests and Posttests. To measure changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behavior, it is necessary to measure them before the program starts and after the program ends. A second followup 6 months or after completion of the program, is of even greater value to see if changes continue over time.

Example: Youth enrolled in a summer camp program complete the Physical Activity pretest on the first day of camp and then the posttest on the last day of camp. OR participants in a senior exercise program complete the Food and Eating Habits survey during the first week of class and then again at the end of the 10 weeks.

Size of Sample. It is not necessary to survey all participants in a program. Select a manageable number to be surveyed who are representative of the program population. Suppose your

community has six after-school programs. Rather than survey all children in each program, survey 20 percent of the participants in each program or all participants in two of the six programs.

The Need for Consistency. The approaches and timing of the pretests and posttests should be as consistent as possible. Things you should try to keep the same include instructions to participants about completing surveys as well as the time and day if tests are administered to more than one group with similar members. If staff at one day camp helped children complete their food forms and staff at other day camps did not, the results may differ. If two groups of senior citizens are not given the test on the same day and the second group takes the test after a news story on heart disease, that too could change the results.

Tracking Participants. The tests track changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Assign each individual a number to help ensure privacy; use the same number on both pretest and posttest.

Informed Consent. You must obtain the informed consent of participants in the tests. If your participants are under 18, you must seek informed consent from their parents.

Example: As part of the day camp registration parents were sent a letter indicating that their child would be part of this program, asked to sign a consent form and given a phone number to contact the department if they had any questions or objections. Adults are asked to sign a form indicating their understanding of what they will be asked to do as part of this process and their agreement.

Resources



In appendices A and B are several items to help you conduct assessments.

They include:

- Survey instruments: “What’s Your Food, Physical Activity and Heart Health I.Q.” for children, adolescents, and adults
- Answer keys for the surveys
- Score sheets for the surveys
- Log sheets to record participant identification numbers
- Tracking sheets
- Sample permission letter
- Sample permission form



The following are activities and resources that you might use as part of the programming aspect to help people better understand heart-healthy behavior.

Possible Outcomes:

- Increase their knowledge of leisure-time physical activity
- Increase their skill levels in leisure-time physical activity
- Improve their attitude towards physical activity
- Increase their level of physical activity
- Increase their knowledge of healthy eating
- Increase their skill level related to healthy eating
- Improve their attitude towards healthy eating
- Increase their level of healthy eating

Appropriate Reproducibles:

- See Resources chart, Information Sheets on page 49. These materials are found in the reproducible section of this guide.

Do you know?



Your department can take various steps to increase the accuracy of outcome measurements:

Program Group and Comparison Group. Outcomes measurement in community recreation programs usually involves one group—for example, all adults who attend a swimming program.

To improve the accuracy of your assessment results, create a comparison group and involve one of those program groups in the heart-healthy information and activities. The other program group called the comparison group is not exposed to the healthy information and activities.

Example: Your department sponsors after-school programs at several local elementary schools. Some of the programs receive the special heart-healthy activities and some of them do not, but both groups take pretests and posttests.

Self-Selected Groups. Most participants in recreation programs are self-selected, meaning that they themselves made the decision to become involved or, in the case of children, have parents who made that decision for them. This means that your measurements cannot necessarily be generalized to a larger population, such as all senior citizens or all Hispanic women.

Example: Teens who regularly show up at your department's midnight basketball program may be different from other teens in the neighborhood who choose not to be a part of this program.

Random Selection. You can also improve the generalizability of your assessment by randomly selecting the participants whose outcomes will be measured. In this way, participation in the program is determined by chance, ensuring that those tested are more representative of the larger population.

Example: Slips of paper with the names of 50 adults in a senior lunch program are placed in a bowl; the first 20 names randomly selected are invited to participate in a fitness program. If you can't select participants randomly, you may be able to systematically select program sites. That will allow you to avoid selecting sites whose outcomes might bias the results because these sites are more conveniently located for participants or because more program staff members have a greater interest in operating the program.

Multiple Measures. Another way to boost the rigor of your assessment is to use all of the measures in the sample surveys.

ANALYZING AND REPORTING RESULTS

Instructions for administering and scoring your participants' performance assessments are provided on pages 91 and 92. Answer keys and scoring sheets are found in appendix B.

- Be sure that you've selected the right instruments—children, for example, should take tests designed for children in their age bracket.
- Be sure that you've selected the right scoring sheets.

After you've scored each individual test, add up the scores of all participants and divide by the number of participants. This will give you the **average score** for the group. It may help you to write all the scores on one page, total them, then divide by the number of scores.

DISPLAYING THE RESULTS

The scoring sections have been grouped according to knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding healthy eating and physical activity. Why not create related posters or trifold bulletin boards?

- After you've scored the pretests, display the group scores on a bulletin board and challenge participants to improve their scores when they take the posttest.
- After you've scored the posttests, display the scores next to the pretest scores.
- Congratulate participants and site personnel on a job well done if scores improve, even if the improvement is small.
- If you don't see improvement at posttest, check your scoring. Maybe you've made a simple error. If not, encourage participants to do better next time.

Utilize graphic resources in the guide or download clip art from the Web to highlight the scores.





Countdown Checklist: 5th P—Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators

GETTING STARTED

- Ask program staff to use tracking sheets to record distribution of program information to participants and of activities engaged in by participants.
- During training, identify programs that will be involved in the performance measurement process.
- Hold training for staff who will be involved in performance measurement.
- Determine the elements to be measured in each program so the programs can be planned accordingly.

MOVING FORWARD

- Develop program schedules that include adequate time for pretests and posttests.
- Coordinate the program schedule and the pretest and posttest dates with the presentation of information and activities that are being measured.
- Appoint someone to make sure that program activities and testing schedule stay on target.
- Hold an orientation meeting for staff who will deliver the program and administer the pretest and posttest.
- Appoint someone to be responsible for analysis of the tests.
- Ask that information on program implementation be forwarded to the program coordinator so it can be shared with staff, partners, and the NHLBI.

KEEP THE BEAT

- Use the information from measurement indicators to create greater visibility for your efforts and to make program modifications.
- Identify other programs or services whose outcomes will be measured.
- Share results of measurement indicators with staff, partners, decision-makers, the media, and the public.

OUTLINE OF STAFF TRAINING FOR *Performance Measurement*

People Involved: Program supervisors and other staff whose programs have been selected for outcomes measurement.

Time Allotted: 2 hours

Goals:

1. Create an understanding of the performance measurement process and its elements.
2. Review the measurement instruments.
3. Identify informational materials and program activities that support program goals and desired outcomes.
4. Address questions and concerns.

Materials and Resources (Appendix A):

- Pretest and posttests (appendix A)
- Permission letters/forms (appendix A)
- Program Design and Development Tracking Sheet (appendix A)
- Directions (“Recommendations for Administering the Pretests and Posttests” is a good resource for staff training.) (pages 91 and 92)

Overheads or Handouts:

- FAQ—activity and outcome indicators (at the end of this chapter, page 93)
- Program Design and Development Tracking Sheet (appendix A)
- “Conducting the Assessment” (this chapter, page 84)
- “Do You Know?” information boxes (this chapter, page 86)

Suggested Topics and Activities:

Overview of Outcomes Measurement Process (45 minutes):

- Why outcomes
- Difference between activity measures and outcomes measures
- Measurement requirements
- Improving the accuracy of the results

OUTLINE OF STAFF TRAINING FOR

Performance Measurement (continued)

Staff Tasks (45 minutes):

- Permission letters and forms
- Tracking sheets
- Timing of pretest and posttest
- Directions for conducting tests
- Identify or reinforce the program activities that relate to the outcomes being measured

Break (10 minutes):

Creating a program and schedule (40 minutes):

- Selecting appropriate information
- Designing and delivery of activities and exercises
- Coordinating activities and testing

Role play test administration (10 minutes):

- Read instructions
- Pass out materials
- Take the tests

Questions, Comments, Suggestions (10 minutes)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADMINISTERING HEARTS N' PARKS

Pretests and Posttests

- 1. It is important to administer pretests before the program begins.**

You should allow about 45 minutes for a group to complete the questionnaire. It is also important that adult participants not consult one another, and that children not share answers. Try to find a place for the assessment that is quiet and allows a reasonable amount of space between participants.

If you do not want to conduct a single 45-minute assessment, administer sections of the questionnaire at separate times for, say, 20 minutes each (for example, nutrition section one day, physical activity the next). If you do so, make sure that all sections are completed within a few days. Don't let the time between the start and finish of a test span more than a week.

- 2. Emphasize to participants that the purpose of questionnaires is not to evaluate them personally.**

Explain that their identities and answers will remain confidential and that the results will be displayed only as group results. Try not to refer to them as "tests."

- 3. Use a log sheet to keep track of every person who completes a pretest and posttest.**

It is important to evaluate participants by matching pretest and posttest results. Assign IDs that are consistent in format and anonymous for each test-taker. A Hearts N' Parks log sheet is provided to keep track of participants' names and IDs (so that you can be sure to match up names and numbers for pretest and posttest). Keep this log sheet private.

- 4. If administering a questionnaire becomes unmanageable because of the number of participants, you may be better off using a small sample.**

If possible, let the sample consist of 40 to 50 test-takers per age group.

If you decide to select a sample, you have a few choices:

If you administer multiple programs, select one with a sufficient number of participants (more than 20) to take part in the pretest and posttest.

You can create a random sample by having all participants pick numbers out of a hat to determine which ones will complete the instruments. Make sure that the same people selected for the pretest are the ones who take the program posttest. (Don't do a separate hat drawing for the posttest.)

If your program is small (less than 30 in an age group), it is important to have every participant complete a pretest and posttest.

- 5. Note the ID blanks on the first page of the tests and make sure cover sheets are attached to questionnaires.**

The cover sheet indicates whether the test is to be taken before the program begins or after it ends. Participants' IDs are to be written on these sheets so that pretests and posttests can be matched up.

The pretest and posttest formats for the adult and adolescent tests are identical, but different cover sheets are provided (to distinguish the adults' and adolescents' questionnaires as pretests or posttests). Attach the appropriate cover sheet.

Children's pretests and posttests are slightly different in format so the pretests and posttests have a different cover sheet.

Using different colors of paper for the pretest and posttest can help prevent mix-ups.

- 6. If you conducted a program that did not discuss the causes of high blood pressure or how to control high cholesterol, participants need not complete those sections of the pretest and posttest.**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADMINISTERING HEARTS N' PARKS

Pretests and Posttests (continued)

7. Scoring and Displaying Group Scores.

Score sheets and answer keys are provided for each type of questionnaire. Follow the directions on the score sheets and use the answer keys to record test scores. Add the scores together for everyone in the same group, and

then divide by the number of test-takers to determine the group's mean score on each section. You may break down scores by section to focus on knowledge, attitude, behavior, etc., or to look specifically at heart-healthy eating or physical activity.

Example: Adolescent Questionnaires—Participants' Scores

Nutrition knowledge scores:

$$7+7+6+10+11+9+9+8+12+9=88 \div 10=8.8$$

Mean score for the group (n=10 participants) is **8.8 out of 12.**

Overweight/obesity knowledge scores:

$$5+9+6+9+9+8+7+6+8+5=72 \div 10=7.2$$

Mean score for the group (n=10) is **7.2 out of 9.**

Attitude toward healthy eating scores:

$$24+32+30+22+29+36+35+21+25+27=281 \div 10=28.1$$

Mean score for the group (n=10) is **28.1 out of 40.**

Overweight/obesity attitude scores:

$$22+26+25+30+29+24+23+23+20+22=244 \div 10=24.4$$

Mean score for the group (n=10) is **24.4 out of 32.**

Healthy eating behavior scores:

$$4+5+4+7+5+5+6+5+7+4=52 \div 10=5.2$$

Mean score for the group (n=10) is **5.2 out of 8.**

Healthy eating intentions scores:

$$4+3+2+5+3+6+4+3+3+5=38 \div 10=3.8$$

Mean score for the group (n=10) is **3.8 out of 7.**

Consider creating a display of group scores on a poster or bulletin board to highlight improvements made by participants in the program. Highlighting group improvements could serve to motivate participants toward continued good health.

Do not display or discuss individual scores openly. However, if an individual asks about his/her scores, you should discuss them with him/her in private.

Frequently Asked Questions



1 What is the purpose of using the performance measures and how would I use the information once I got it?

Performance measures are the best way of tracking the progress of participants. A record of progress can be a good motivator for further progression and an indicator of program success to be shared with the program's management and partners, as well as with the media. Likewise, quantitative performance measurements can be used as evidence of improvement to be displayed on fact sheets and posters that generate excitement about progress gained by participants in the community.

The success of the Hearts N' Parks program, as well as your own specific program, relies heavily on the ability of the NRPA and the NHLBI to evaluate participants' development. These questionnaires help to show not only how participants' knowledge and habits have progressed, but also what specific parts of the program are in need of modification, and where some programs may need help relative to others.

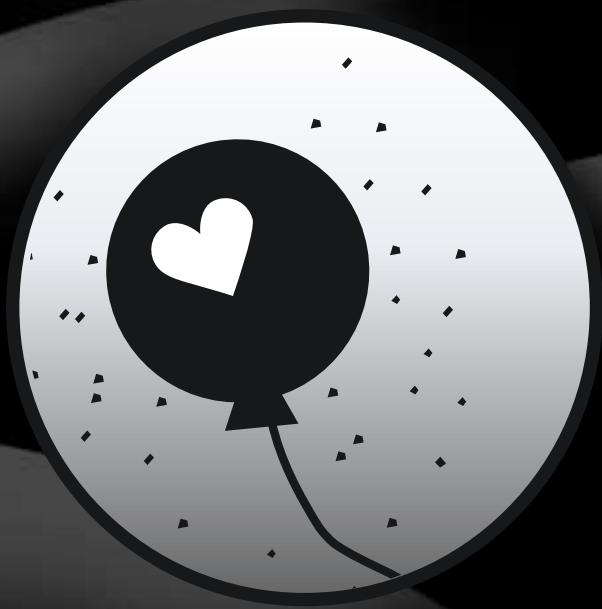
2 What if I don't have time to have my participants fill out questionnaires?

The central purpose of the program is to help people learn how to live more heart-healthy lives, not to take questionnaires. Program coordinators should schedule time for filling out questionnaires so that valuable learning and activity times are not missed for the sake of completing the questionnaires.

3 How are activity indicators different from outcome indicators?

An *activity indicator* refers to Hearts N' Parks activities conducted by your department.

An *outcome indicator* measures the impact of these activities on participants.



HEARTS N' PARKS: CELEBRATING AND SHARING

We urge you to take advantage of the guidance, recommendations, and examples in this guide. It will be a valuable tool for both establishing and maintaining a successful Hearts N' Parks program. Refer to it often and make copies of it for your staff.

This chapter provides recommendations for *celebrating* the completion of your first Hearts N' Parks program, ways of *sharing* the program's accomplishments with partners and the community, and suggestions for *sustaining* the program in the future.

CELEBRATING

Completing the Hearts N' Parks program at your agency deserves recognition. Enjoy a job well done! Take the time to celebrate everyone's contributions, progress, and successes (including your own). Also, remember to celebrate what you've learned and the challenges you've met during the program. Participants, program staff, and partners all deserve recognition.

- A closing get-together or wrap-up event is a great way to celebrate and applaud the efforts and accomplishments of your three principal groups: participants, program staff, and partners.
 - **Participants:** Encourage invitees to bring along family members and friends. Have a heart-healthy potluck feast. Pass out honorary stars or ribbons to kids, and pins to adults, as a way of praising the efforts of all participants.
 - **Personnel:** Let them know that their contributions were valuable. Award certificates of appreciation. Consider creating an entertaining video diary of *Hearts N' Parks Behind the Scenes* to show at the wrap-up event.

- **Partners:** Express your appreciation to your partners. Thank them personally and in writing for their support. Encourage them to stay involved so that the program can grow and improve over time.

- Throughout the program, take photos of your participants, program staff, and partners in action. Then post the photos to provide recognition of their commitment and service. This type of postprogram promotion can help sustain interest in and awareness of the program and its lessons before the next program begins.

SHARING

Sharing the program's achievements is an important way of forming and sustaining a positive perception of the program, enabling it to flourish in the long term.

- **Media:** Sharing program achievements with the media is a very important task. Contact media outlets to let them know the program has been completed. If they provided any news about your program when it began, they will probably be interested in doing a followup piece. Discuss with them the highlights of your program, how many participants you had, and what types of achievements were made. Consider telling them about some aspect of the program or providing an anecdote that would make an interesting news story.
- **Focus Groups:** Conduct an informal "focus group" of participants, partners, and staff to share thoughts about the program. Encourage everyone to tell about their experiences with the program. Keep the mood upbeat, but don't be shy about discussing challenges that came up. Solicit suggestions about how the program can be improved.

- **Displays:** Create a display piece that chronicles the program with photos and highlights along with information about when it will take place again. Place the display where members of the community will see it, such as your community center’s entrance or on a community bulletin board at a store, college, or public library.
- **Followup:** Update interested parties on program activities and participant progress. Remember to highlight their contributions to the program.
 - Contact the families of participants to let them know how much you appreciated getting to know their family member and to share the program’s activities. Express the hope that they will continue to be involved in the program and will encourage others to join.
 - If you had a partner organization or program, send a letter of appreciation to its president or chairperson. If the recent partnership was successful, express willingness to work together in the future. Make a few suggestions about possibilities and let them know that you’re willing to help out.
 - Acknowledge the contribution of your agency’s director or senior management. Their support and interest are necessary to maintain the program. Share the results of performance assessments with partners, program staff, participants, and the community, if you can. Changes measured by these tests will help everyone feel proud of the program. It will also raise the visibility of your agency.
- Refer to 3rd P—Public Visibility for suggestions about “moving the messages.” See how you can employ these ideas to share the Hearts N’ Parks message with community members who are not yet involved with the program.

Celebrating and sharing are important conclusions to your Hearts N’ Parks program. Afterward, take a breather. Enjoy your success, but remember that Hearts N’ Parks is an ongoing pursuit for your agency as well as your community.

SUSTAINING

Sustaining is the final piece of Hearts N’ Parks. Because you’ve designed the program based on your community’s needs and your agency’s abilities, continuing it will be easy. To keep participants, program staff, and partners interested, use the suggested tools to change, expand, and improve the program.

- Use **performance assessments** as a tool for evaluating and improving your program. They provide the means by which Hearts N’ Parks officials at both local and national levels can identify shortcomings and overcome them, as well as bring successes to light. This kind of evidence allows you to promote Hearts N’ Parks as an effective long-term program for making your community more heart-healthy.
- **Solicit feedback** from everyone involved about continuing the program. How would they do it? What would they change? What new activities could be incorporated into the program? Do they have ideas about reaching a new audience? Once you’ve solicited feedback, ask them for help to enact their ideas and suggestions.
- Be **visible** in your community. March in community parades. Offer to speak about the program at schools and club meetings.
- Take on the challenge of a **new program**. Once you’ve finished your first Hearts N’ Parks program, consider making changes to it. Not only will this help you reach a new group of participants, it will also keep your current participants, program staff, and partners motivated.

Finally . . .

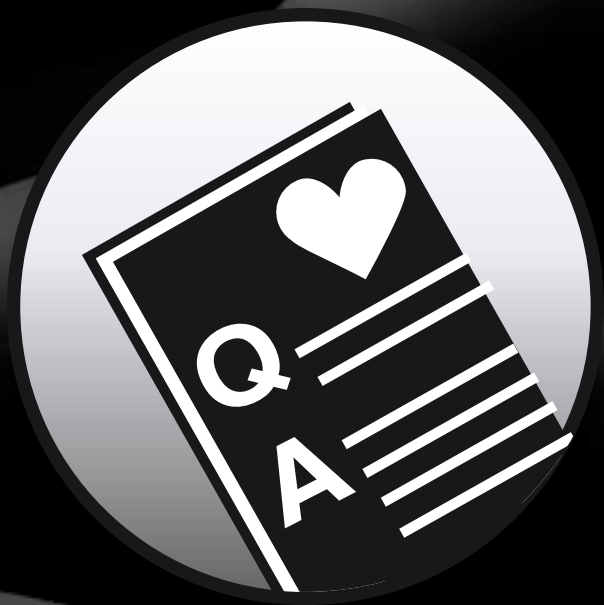
Remember that the goal of Hearts N' Parks is to increase the number of children and adults who engage in heart-healthy behavior. Cardiovascular disease is the #1 killer in the United States, and lifestyle changes incorporating heart-healthy behavior are the most important step toward prevention.

Heart-healthy behavior can prevent the development of cardiovascular disease and reduce its severity for those who already have it. Heart-healthy behavior includes a diet low in calories, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium, and rich in fruits and vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, and whole grains in combination with regular physical activity.

Hearts N' Parks provides the tools to get the heart-healthy message out to those who want to hear it and those who need to hear it. The program's ideas and suggestions are designed to be easy to implement and fun to do. Use these tools and share them with your colleagues.

Good Luck and Have Fun!





**Program Design and Development:
Tracking Sheet**...to record information about
each of your Hearts N' Parks programs.

Log Sheet...to assign and track participants'
identification numbers.

Consent Forms...to inform parents and other
participants of the program's intent.

Performance Questionnaires...to assess
changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices
regarding heart-healthy eating and physical activity
of children, adolescents, and adults.

- **Prequestionnaires** are used to measure baseline
information of participants before the program begins.
- **Postquestionnaires** are used to measure any
changes possibly due to the program's content.

(See directions on reverse side.)

Appendix



How to use the Performance Questionnaires

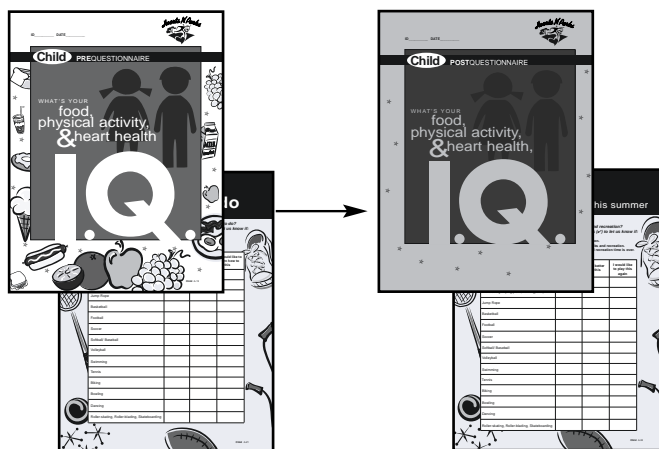
The questionnaires are **grouped by age first**, then by whether they are **pre- or postquestionnaires**.

For example:

1 Child



1. Give one copy of the prequestionnaire to each participant prior to beginning the program.
2. Give one copy of the postquestionnaire after completing the program.



2 Adolescent and Adult



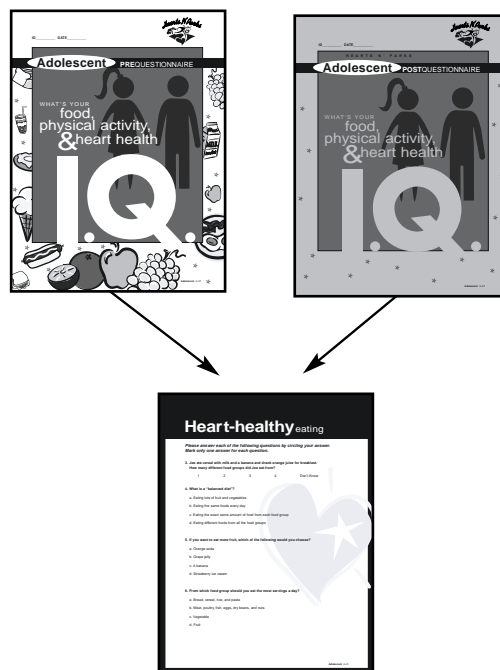
For adolescents and adults, the pre- and postquestionnaires are identical. Therefore, only **one set of questions is provided** along with the appropriate pre- and postquestionnaire cover sheets.

At the beginning of your program, assess the performance of adolescents and adults by doing the following:

1. Reproduce the questionnaire and use the prequestionnaire cover sheet.
2. Give one copy of the prequestionnaire to each participant.

At the end of your program, assess changes by doing the following:

1. Reproduce the same questionnaire and use the postquestionnaire cover sheet.
2. Give one copy of the postquestionnaire to each participant completing the program



Please refer to the *Community Mobilization Guide: 5th P* for more information on how to administer Performance Indicator Instruments.



PROGRAM DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

Tracking Sheet

Use this tracking sheet to record information about each one of the Hearts N' Parks programs that uses performance indicators.

Site Name
and Location: _____

Program
Name: _____

If you are running multiple programs under a common name, please specify which one this is:

1. Number of participants at start of program: _____ Start Date: _____

2. Number of participants at completion: _____ Completion Date: _____

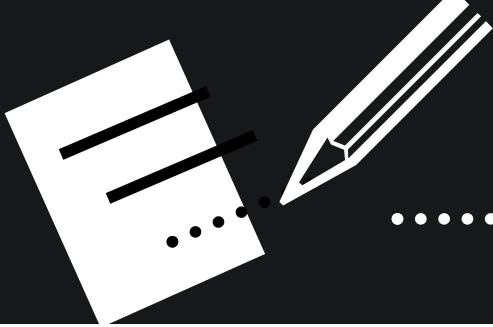
3. Total length of program (in weeks and days): _____

Names and Date(s) of Pretest: _____

Names and Date(s) of Posttest: _____

4. How many days per week did your program run? _____

5. How many hours per day did it run on average? _____



6. People Served: (check all that apply)

- Children
- Young Adults
- Older Adults
- Special Population (specify): _____
- Adolescents
- Adults
- At-Risk Group (specify): _____

Approximate Numbers: Male _____ Female _____

7. Permission Secured:

- Parental information letter _____
- Participant release form _____
- Other: _____

8. Recreational Objectives: (based upon your department or program goals)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

9. Target Areas:

- Physical Activity
- Nutrition
- Both

10. Change Level: (please check all that apply)

- Knowledge
- Skill
- Attitude
- Behavior

11. Outcomes - On the basis of the decisions made above, please select the appropriate outcomes:

- Increase participants' knowledge of leisure-time physical activity
- Increase participants' skill levels in leisure-time physical activity
- Improve participants' attitudes towards physical activity
- Increase participants' levels of physical activity
- Increase participants' knowledge of healthy eating
- Increase participants' skill levels related to healthy eating
- Improve participants' attitudes towards healthy eating
- Increase participants' level of healthy eating

12. Specific Program Activities Designed to Support the Outcomes:

- a. _____ Date: _____
- b. _____ Date: _____
- c. _____ Date: _____
- d. _____ Date: _____
- e. _____ Date: _____
- f. _____ Date: _____
- g. _____ Date: _____
- h. _____ Date: _____

13. How many coordinators helped run the program? _____

14. Program/Testing Coordination:

Staff Orientation & Training for Program Activities
Date(s): _____ By whom: _____

Staff Orientation & Training for Pre- and Posttesting
Date(s): _____ By whom: _____

15. Please list the different types of materials (i.e., educational, instructional, and activity-based materials) used in your program or distributed to participants:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____
- g. _____
- h. _____



Introductory Letter

Send this letter home to parents of the children in your Hearts N' Parks program. It will introduce Hearts N' Parks and obtain both their support of the program as well as their permission for their child to participate.

[On Agency Letterhead]

Dear Parent,

Did you know that the prevalence of overweight and the trends in overweight for children and adolescents in the U.S. population is on the rise and is the highest it has ever been? Did you know that recent data shows a decline in vigorous amounts of physical activity in the nation's youth?

Participation in leisure time physical activity and changes in heart-healthy eating have the potential for improving the health and well-being of our children. To better meet this potential, the _____ [fill in the name of the department] has joined with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) in cooperation with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the National Institutes of Health to implement a Hearts N' Parks program in our community.

As part of this process, your child will be asked to complete short quizzes from the NRPA with questions about heart-healthy behaviors and new physical activities they have learned during their recreation program with us. We welcome your cooperation with this project. If you have any questions or would like to learn more information about this project, please feel free to contact us at the Park and Recreation Department. Our project coordinator is _____ [insert name] and can be reached at _____ [insert phone number].

We have enclosed a permission slip for you to sign and return, allowing your child to participate in the Hearts N' Parks program.

Thanks so much, and we look forward to providing your child with a safe, healthy, and fun experience.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

[Office]



Consent Form for Parents

Thank you for joining us in the Hearts N' Parks program being conducted by the _____ (name of site) in cooperation with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

I, [your name], understand that my child will be asked to answer questions related to his/her knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding heart-healthy eating and physical activity. All of his/her answers will be kept confidential and his/her individual scores will not be reported to anyone. Only group scores will be used to gain some understanding of whether the Hearts N' Parks program impacted the group's knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors in regard to heart-healthy eating and physical activity. In addition, my child's name will not appear on any of the tests that he/she completes.

I also understand that if my child is uncomfortable answering any of the questions, he/she is free to not answer them. Refusing to answer any questions will in no way affect my child's participation in any of the programs.

Signature

Date



Consent Form for **Adults**

Thank you for joining us in the Hearts N' Parks program being conducted by the _____(name of site) in cooperation with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

I, [your name] , understand that I will be asked to answer questions related to my knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding heart-healthy habits of nutrition and physical activity. All of my answers will be kept confidential and my individual scores will not be reported to anyone. Only group scores will be used to gain some understanding of whether the Hearts N' Parks program impacted my group's knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors in regard to heart-healthy eating and physical activity. In addition, my name will not appear on any of the tests that I complete.

I also understand that if I am uncomfortable answering any of the questions, I am free to not answer them. Refusing to answer any questions will in no way affect my participation in any of the programs.

Signature

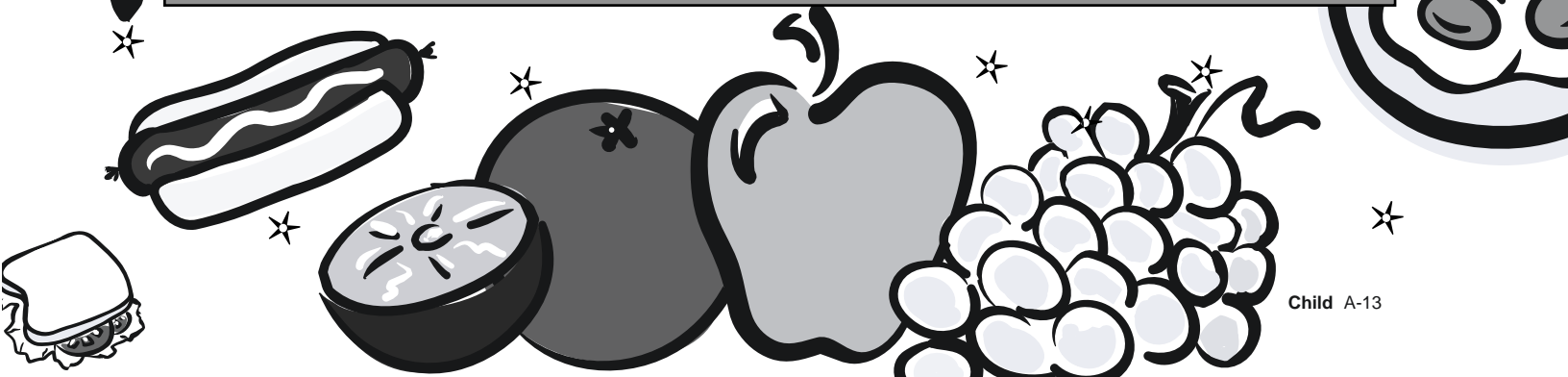
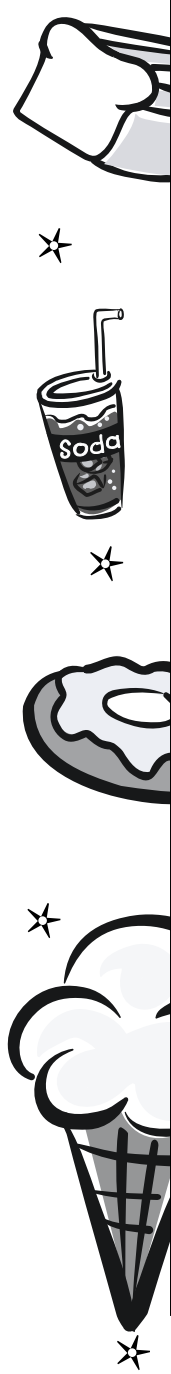
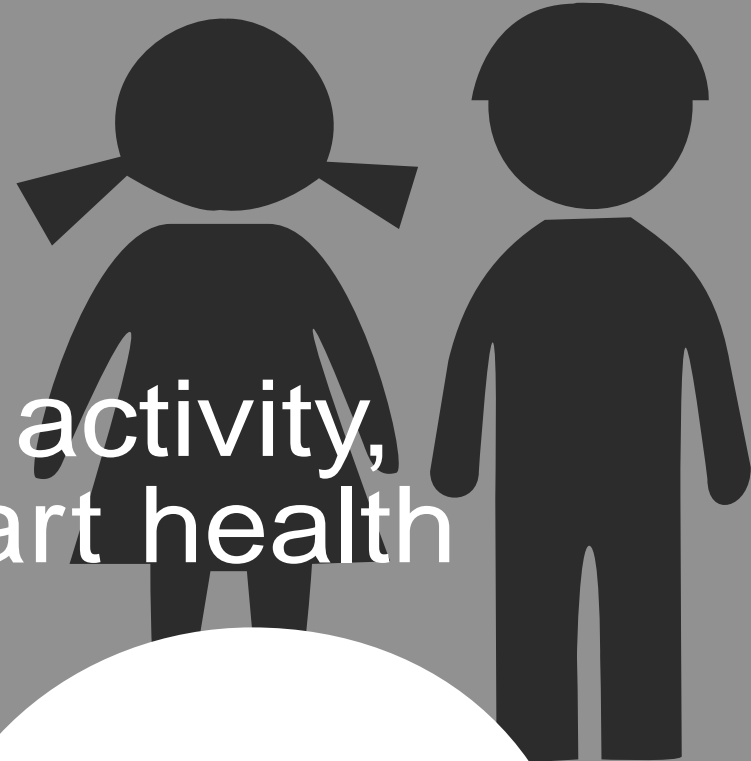
Date

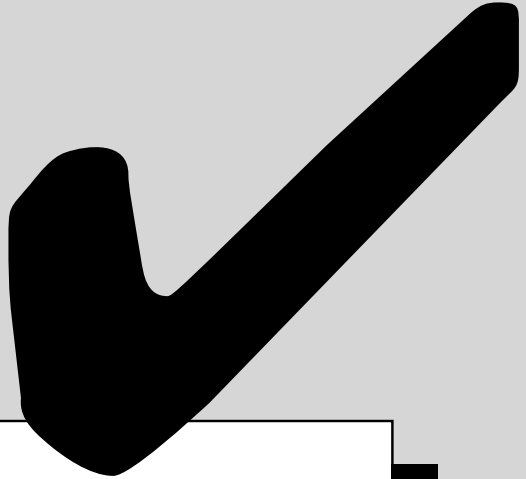


ID _____ DATE _____

Child PREQUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT'S YOUR
food,
physical activity,
& heart health





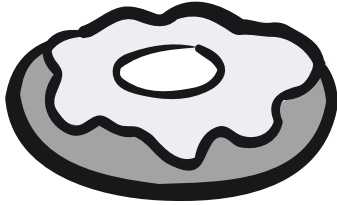
Check the correct box!

1. Are you a... Boy or Girl ?

2. Your age is...
 a. under 6 years old
 b. 6 or 7 years old
 c. 8 or 9 years old
 d. 10 or 11 years old

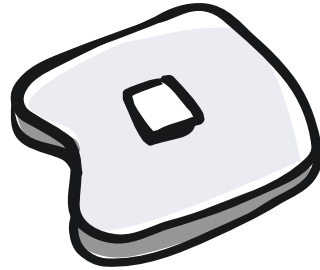
Which food is better for your health?

Instructions: Circle one of the two foods that you think is better for your health.



1.

Doughnut

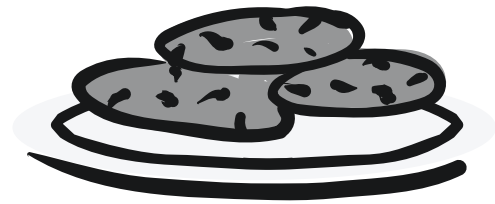


Toast



2.

Orange

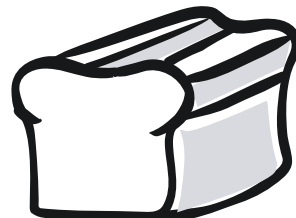


Cookies

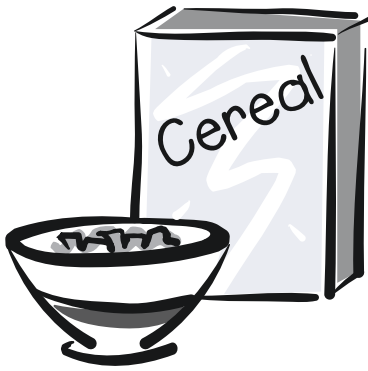


3.

Whole Wheat Bread



White Bread



4. Cold Cereal



Eggs and Bacon



5. Regular Milk



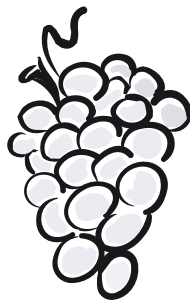
Low-fat or Fat-free Milk



6. Green Salad



French Fries



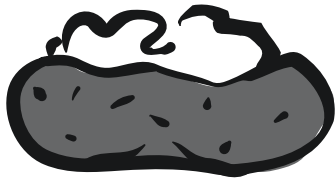
7. Grapes



Candy Bar

What foods do you eat most of the time?

Instructions: Circle one of the two foods that you eat most often.



1. Baked Potato



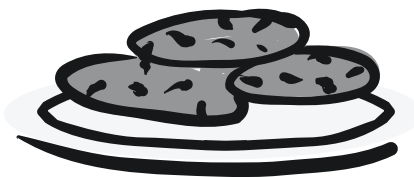
French Fries



2. Fruit Juice



Soda



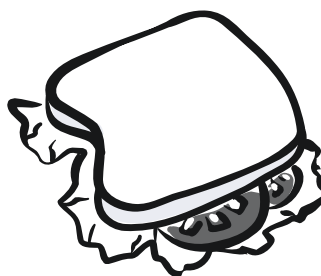
3. Cookies



Apple



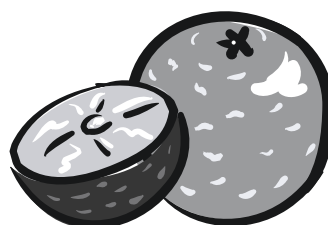
4. Hot Dog



Sandwich with Lettuce & Tomato



5. Chocolate Cake



Orange



6. Ice Cream



Fresh Fruit Popsicle



7. Regular Milk

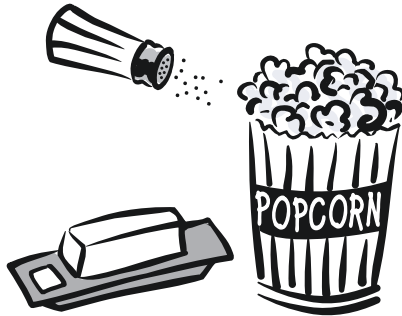


Low-fat or Fat-free Milk

What would **you** do?

Instructions: Answer each question by choosing one of the two foods.

1. If you were at the movies, which one would you pick?

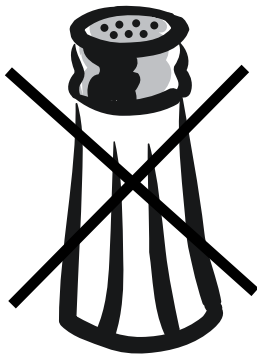


Popcorn with salt and butter



Popcorn without salt and butter

2. If you were going to eat your lunch, which would you do?



Eat the food without adding salt



Shake salt on the food before eating

3. Which food would you put on your hamburger?



Ketchup



Tomato

4. Which would you pick to drink?



Regular Milk

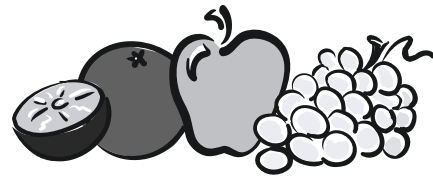


Low-fat or Fat-free Milk

5. Which food would you eat for a snack?

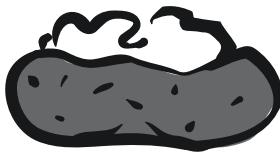


Candy Bar



Fresh Fruit

6. Which food would you choose for dinner?

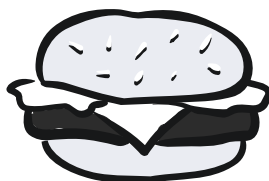


Baked Potato



French Fries

7. Which would you order if you were going to eat at a fast food restaurant?



Hamburger



Green Salad

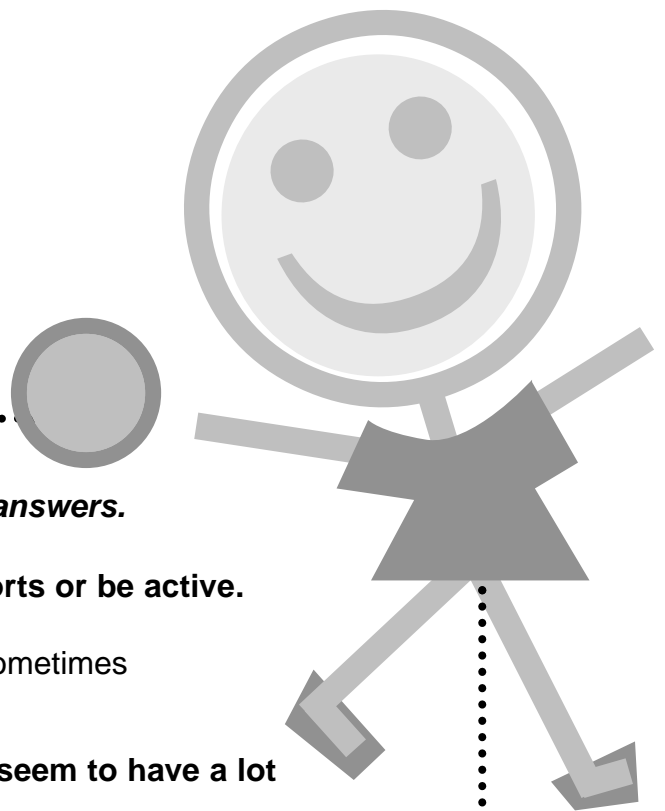
Things I like and things I do

*What kinds of things do you like to do or would like to learn how to do?
For each of the activities below, please put check marks (✓) to let us know if:*

- This is something you LIKE to do.
- This is something YOU'VE DONE in the past week.
- This is something you would like to LEARN how to do.

	I like to do this	I've done this in the past week	I would like to learn how to do this
Games (tag, hopscotch, 4-square, dodgeball, kickball, etc.)			
Exercises (jumping jacks, running, etc.)			
Jump Rope			
Basketball			
Football			
Soccer			
Softball/Baseball			
Volleyball			
Swimming			
Tennis			
Biking			
Bowling			
Dancing			
Rollerskating, Rollerblading, Skateboarding			

Physical Activity and You!



*Please circle your answers.
Remember there are no right or wrong answers.*

1. I would rather watch TV than play sports or be active.

Yes

No

Sometimes

2. People who play sports or are active seem to have a lot of fun doing it.

Yes

No

Sometimes

3. How do you feel about your ability to kick a ball hard and hit a target, like soccer?

😊 Great

😐 Okay

☹ Not Good

4. How do you feel about your ability to run a long way without stopping?

😊 Great

😐 Okay

☹ Not Good

5. How do you feel about your ability to hit a ball with a bat, like softball?

😊 Great

😐 Okay

☹ Not Good

6. How do you feel about your ability to play many different games and sports?

😊 Great

😐 Okay

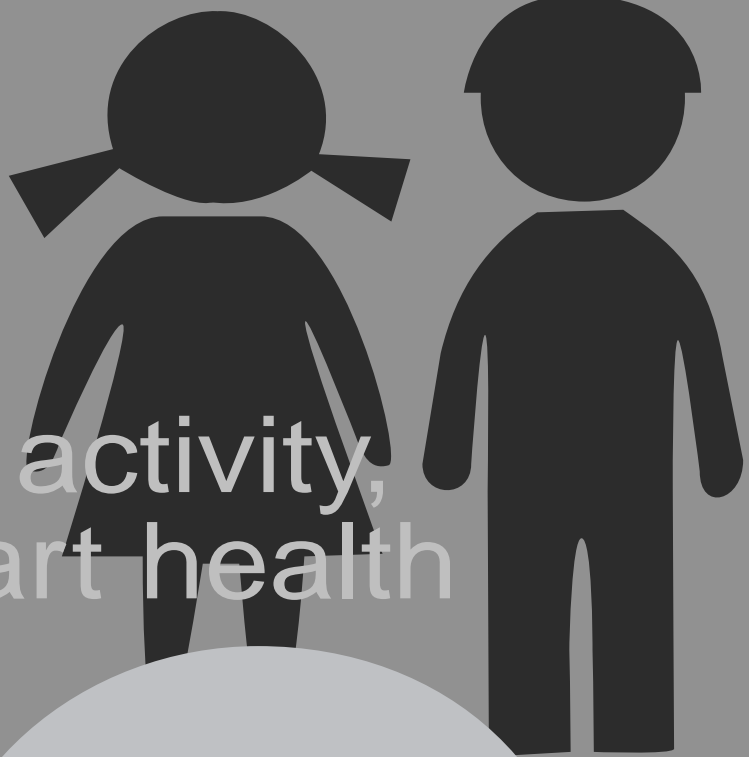
☹ Not Good

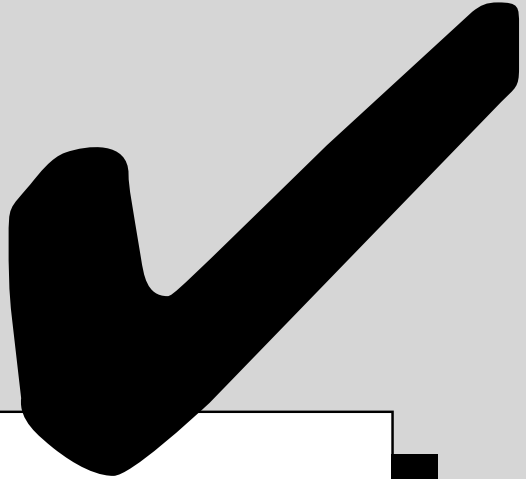


ID _____ DATE _____

Child POSTQUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT'S YOUR
food,
physical activity,
& heart health





Check the correct box!

1. Are you a...

Boy or Girl ?

2. Your age is...

a. Under 6 years old

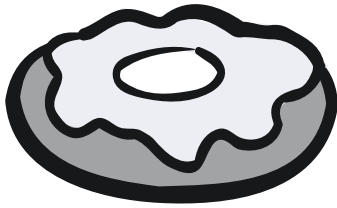
b. 6 or 7 years old

c. 8 or 9 years old

d. 10 or 11 years old

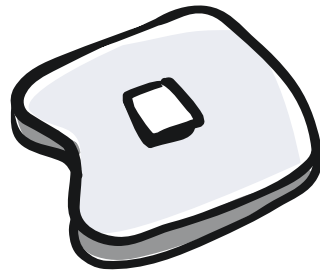
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Instructions: Circle one of the two foods that you think is better for your health.



1.

Doughnut

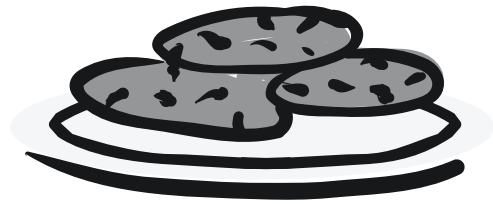


Toast



2.

Orange

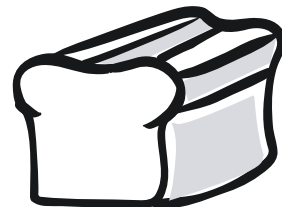


Cookies

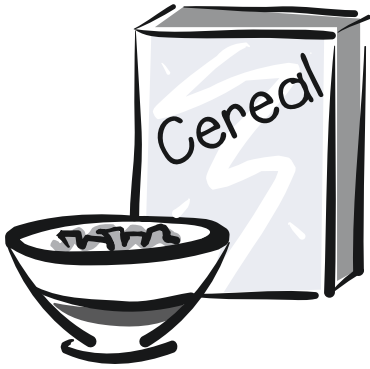


3.

Whole Wheat Bread



White Bread



4. Cold Cereal



Eggs and Bacon



5. Regular Milk



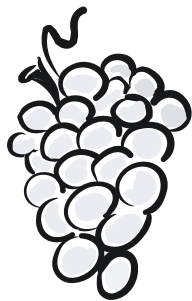
Low-fat or Fat-free Milk



6. Green Salad



French Fries



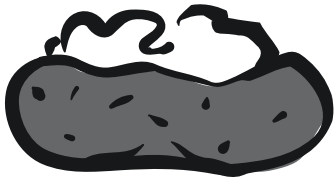
7. Grapes



Candy Bar

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Instructions: Circle one of the two foods that you eat most often.



1. Baked Potato



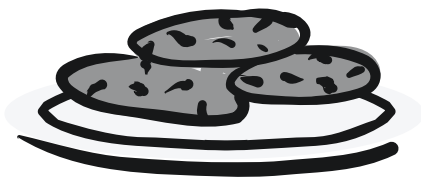
French Fries



2. Fruit Juice



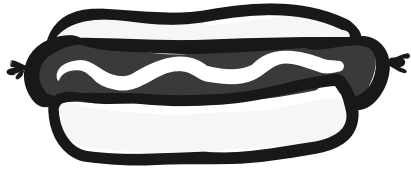
Soda



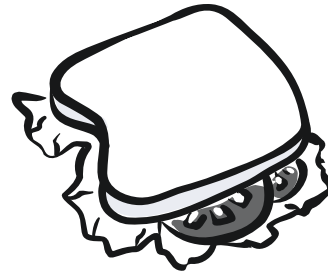
3. Cookies



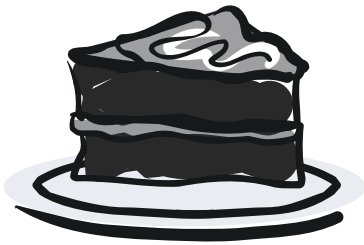
Apple



4. Hot Dog



Sandwich with Lettuce & Tomato



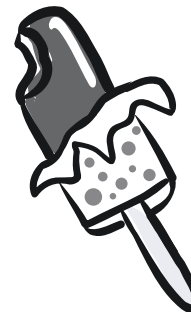
5. Chocolate Cake



Orange



6. Ice Cream



Fresh Fruit Popsicle



7. Regular Milk

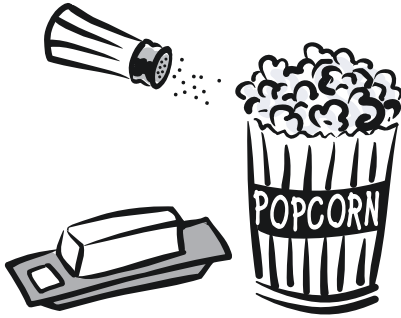


Low-fat or Fat-free Milk

What would **you** do?

Instructions: Answer each question by choosing one of the two foods.

1. If you were at the movies, which one would you pick?

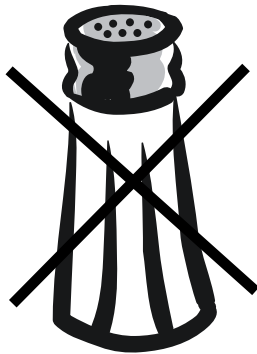


Popcorn with salt and butter



Popcorn without salt and butter

2. If you were going to eat your lunch, which would you do?



Eat the food without adding salt



Shake salt on the food before eating

3. Which food would you put on your hamburger?



Ketchup



Tomato

4. Which would you pick to drink?



Regular Milk

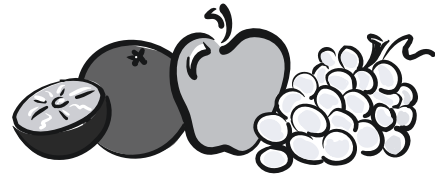


Low-fat or Fat-free Milk

5. Which food would you eat for a snack?



Candy Bar



Fresh Fruit

6. Which food would you choose for dinner?

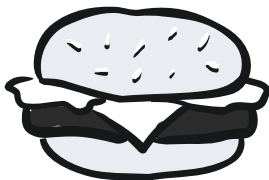


Baked Potato



French Fries

7. Which would you order if you were going to eat at a fast food restaurant?



Hamburger



Green Salad

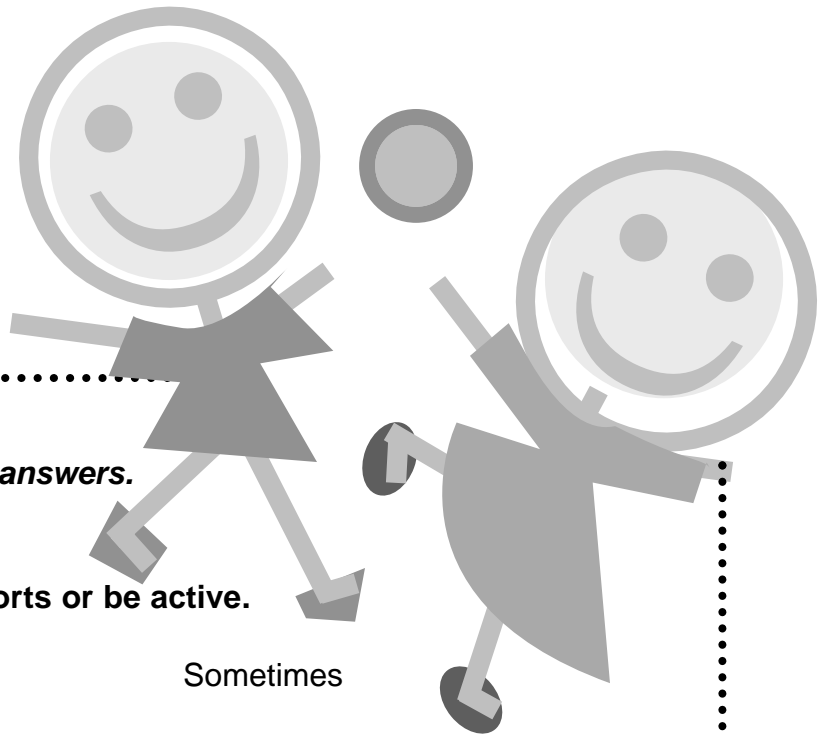
Things I learned and did this summer

*What kinds of things have you been doing with parks and recreation?
For each of the activities below, please put check marks (✓) to let us know if:*

- This is something NEW you LEARNED here at parks and recreation.
- This is something you GOT BETTER at during your time with parks and recreation.
- This is something you'd like to PLAY AGAIN after your parks and recreation time is over.

	Something new I learned	I got better at this	I would like to play this again
Games (tag, hopscotch, 4-square, dodgeball, kickball, etc.)			
Exercises (jumping jacks, running, etc.)			
Jump Rope			
Basketball			
Football			
Soccer			
Softball/Baseball			
Volleyball			
Swimming			
Tennis			
Biking			
Bowling			
Dancing			
Rollerskating, Rollerblading, Skateboarding			

Physical Activity and You!



Please circle your answers.

Remember there are no right or wrong answers.

1. I would rather watch TV than play sports or be active.

Yes

No

Sometimes

2. People who play sports or are active seem to have a lot of fun doing it.

Yes

No

Sometimes

3. How do you feel about your ability to kick a ball hard and hit a target, like soccer?

☺ Great

☹ Okay

☹ Not Good

4. How do you feel about your ability to run a long way without stopping?

☺ Great

☹ Okay

☹ Not Good

5. How do you feel about your ability to hit a ball with a bat, like softball?

☺ Great

☹ Okay

☹ Not Good

6. How do you feel about your ability to play many different games and sports?

☺ Great

☹ Okay

☹ Not Good

Adolescent PREQUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT'S YOUR
food,
physical activity,
& heart health

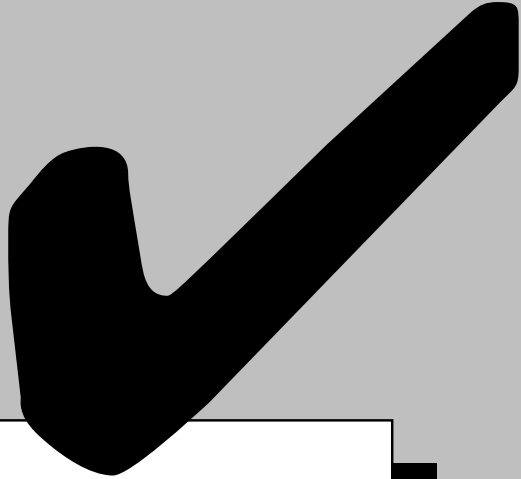


ID _____ DATE _____

Adolescent POSTQUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT'S YOUR
food,
physical activity,
& heart health





Check the correct box!

1. Are you a...
 Boy or Girl ?

2. Your age is...
 a.12 or 13
 b.14 or 15
 c.16 or 17
 d.18 or over

Heart-healthy eating

Please answer each of the following questions by circling your answer. Mark only one answer for each question.

3. Joe ate cereal with milk and a banana and drank orange juice for breakfast. How many different food groups did Joe eat from?

1

2

3

4

Don't Know

4. What is a “balanced diet”?

- a. Eating lots of fruit and vegetables
- b. Eating the same foods every day
- c. Eating the exact same amount of food from each food group
- d. Eating different foods from all the food groups

5. If you want to eat more fruit, which of the following would you choose?

- a. Orange soda
- b. Grape jelly
- c. A banana
- d. Strawberry ice cream

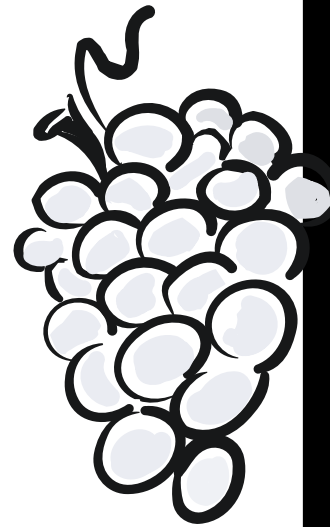
6. From which food group should you eat the most servings a day?

- a. Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta
- b. Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dry beans, and nuts
- c. Vegetable
- d. Fruit

7. Which food is better for your health?

For each question, circle which one of the two foods is better for your health.

- a. Doughnut Toast
- b. Orange Cookies
- c. Whole Wheat Bread White Bread
- d. Cold Cereal Eggs and Bacon
- e. Regular Milk Low-Fat or Fat-free Milk
- f. Green Salad French Fries
- g. Grapes Candy Bar
- h. French Fries Baked Potato



8. Please indicate whether you think the following statements are true or false by circling T or F after each one.

	True	False
a. Polyunsaturated fat has the same number of calories as saturated fat.	T	F
b. The single most important change most people can make to lose weight is to avoid sugar.	T	F
c. Being overweight puts you at risk for heart disease.	T	F
d. Lowering sodium or salt in the diet does not always lower high blood pressure to normal.	T	F
e. If you are overweight, losing weight helps lower your high blood cholesterol and high blood pressure.	T	F
f. The best way to lose weight is to eat fewer calories and be physically active.	T	F
g. Overweight children are very likely to become overweight adults.	T	F
h. Skipping meals is a good way to cut down on calories.	T	F
i. Foods high in complex carbohydrates (starch and fiber) are good choices when you are trying to lose weight.	T	F

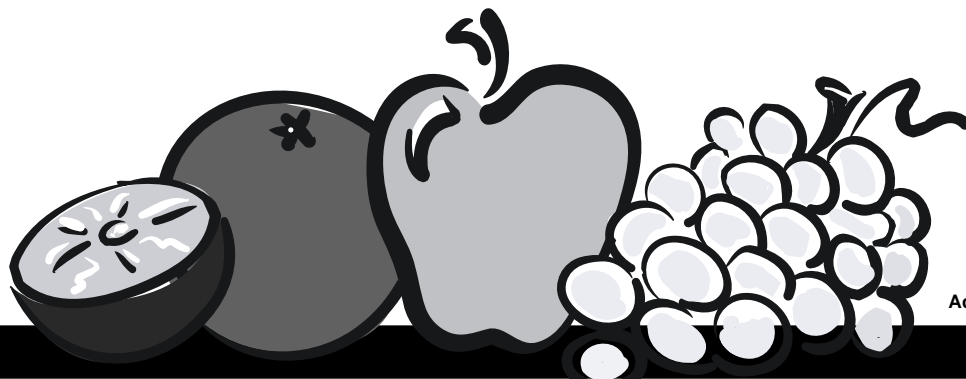


9. For this question, circle the answer that best describes your opinion of each of the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. I like the taste of new foods.	4	3	2	1
b. I like having fruits around for snacks.	4	3	2	1
c. I like the taste of foods that are good for me.	4	3	2	1
d. I like to choose snacks lower in fat.	4	3	2	1

10. If I eat healthy every day...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. My friends will like me.	4	3	2	1
b. My family will be proud of me.	4	3	2	1
c. My friends will want to eat over at my house.	4	3	2	1
d. My friends will start eating a healthy diet too.	4	3	2	1
e. I will enjoy eating as much as before.	4	3	2	1
f. I will have more energy than I do now.	4	3	2	1



11. For the following statements about food and eating, please indicate whether you are in agreement or disagreement by circling your response in the appropriate box.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. With my schedule, it's impossible to eat right.	1	2	3	4
b. There's too much stress in my life for me to handle managing my weight.	1	2	3	4
c. I just can't let food go to waste.	1	2	3	4
d. I eat more when I'm alone than when I eat around others.	1	2	3	4
e. When I've done something good, I reward myself with food.	1	2	3	4
f. I eat more on the weekends.	1	2	3	4
g. If I'm craving food, my body must need it.	1	2	3	4
h. Some people are meant to be fat.	1	2	3	4

12. What foods do you eat most of the time?

Circle which one of the two foods you eat most often.

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Baked Potato | French Fries |
| b. Fruit Juice | Soda |
| c. Cookies | Apple |
| d. Hot Dog | Sandwich with Lettuce and Tomato |
| e. Chocolate Cake | Orange |
| f. Ice Cream | Fresh Fruit Popsicle |
| g. Sweet Roll | Whole Wheat Roll |
| h. Regular Milk | Low-fat or Fat-free Milk |



13. What would you do?

Answer each question by circling one of the two food choices.

a. If you were at the movies, which one would you pick?

Popcorn with salt and butter

Popcorn without salt and butter

b. If you were going to have lunch right now, which would you do?

Eat food without adding salt

Shake salt on your food

c. Which food would you put on your hamburger?

Ketchup

Tomato

d. Which would you pick to drink?

Regular Milk

Low-fat or Fat-free Milk

e. Which food would you eat for a snack?

Candy Bar

Fresh Fruit

f. Which food would you choose for dinner?

Baked potato

French Fries

g. Which would you order if you were going to eat at a fast food restaurant?

Hamburger

Salad



Physical Activity

1. In the past week, how many days were you active for at least 20 minutes in sports activities that made you sweat and breathe hard, such as basketball, jogging, swimming laps, tennis, fast bicycling, or similar aerobic activities?

Record the number of days per week (0–7) in the space below.

___ days

2. In the past week, how many days did you do exercises to strengthen or tone your muscles, such as pushups, situps, or weight lifting?

Record the number of days per week (0–7) in the space below.

___ days

3. Which one of the following activities do you do the most from the time school gets out until you eat dinner?

Be sure to check only one.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watch television | <input type="checkbox"/> Play a sport or exercise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play outside | <input type="checkbox"/> Do homework |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk on the phone to friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Play video or computer games |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read, but not for school | <input type="checkbox"/> Baby-sit children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work at a job | <input type="checkbox"/> Practice a musical instrument |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cook | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above |

4. During the past 12 months, how many sports teams were you on (like a soccer or basketball team, but not including physical education or gym classes)?

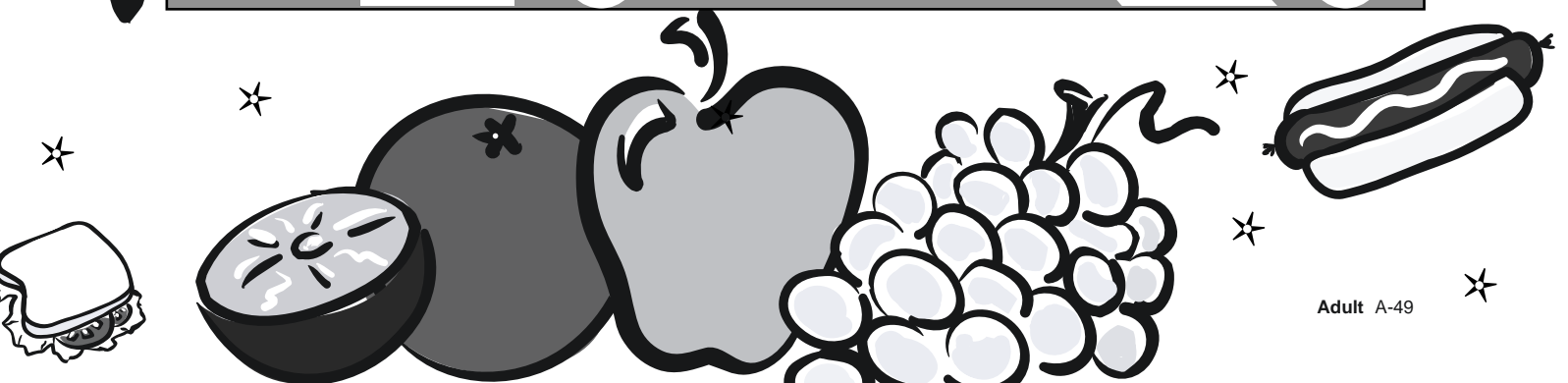
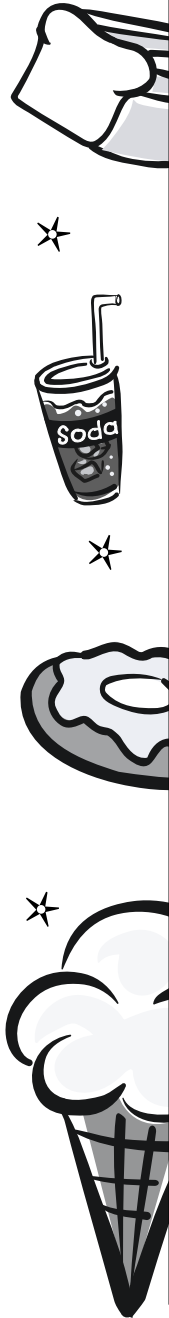
___ teams

5. In general, do you think you get too much physical activity, not enough physical activity, or about the right amount of physical activity?

Too much About right Not enough

Adult PREQUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT'S YOUR
food,
physical activity,
& heart health





ID _____ DATE _____

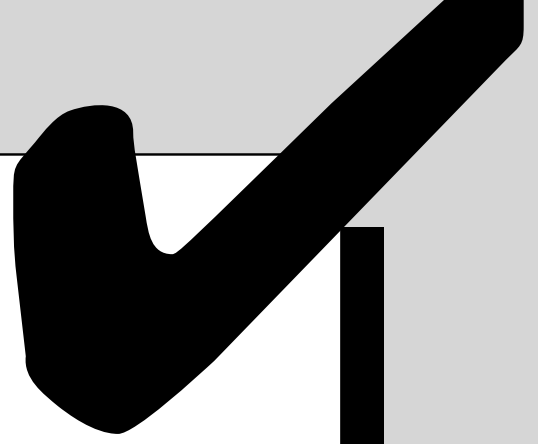
Adult POSTQUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT'S YOUR
food,
physical activity,
& heart health



Please tell us a little about yourself.

Check the correct box!



1. Your gender: 1 - Male 2 - Female

2. What is your age group?

- 1 - Under 21
- 2 - 21 – 30
- 3 - 31 – 40
- 4 - 41 – 50
- 5 - 51 – 60
- 6 - 61 – 70
- 7 - Over 70

3. Are you...

- 1 - White
- 2 - African American or Black
- 3 - Hispanic
- 4 - Asian or Pacific Islander
- 5 - American Indian or Alaska Native
- 6 - Other (specify: _____)?

4. What is your highest level of education?

- 1 - Less than High School
- 2 - High School Graduate
- 3 - Some College
- 4 - College Degree
- 5 - Some Graduate School
- 6 - Graduate Degree

Heart-healthy eating

5. For each of the foods below, indicate if the item would count as a serving of a fruit or vegetable.

a. Half cup of orange juice?	Yes	No	Don't Know
b. Half cup of lettuce?	Yes	No	Don't Know
c. Half cup of steamed broccoli?	Yes	No	Don't Know

6. From which food group should you eat the most servings a day?

- 1 – Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta
- 2 – Vegetable
- 3 – Fruit
- 4 – Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dry beans, and nuts
- 5 – Milk, yogurt, and cheese
- 0 – Don't know

7. Which of these is the best choice for a low-fat diet? *(circle just one)*

- 1 – Whole milk
- 2 – Low-fat yogurt
- 3 – Cheese
- 4 – Fat-free milk
- 0 – Don't know

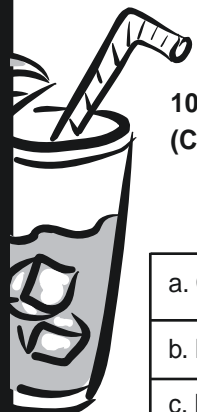
8. Which is the best snack choice for a low-fat diet? *(circle just one)*

- 1 – Cookies
- 2 – Fruit roll-ups
- 3 – Pie
- 4 – Ice cream
- 0 – Don't know



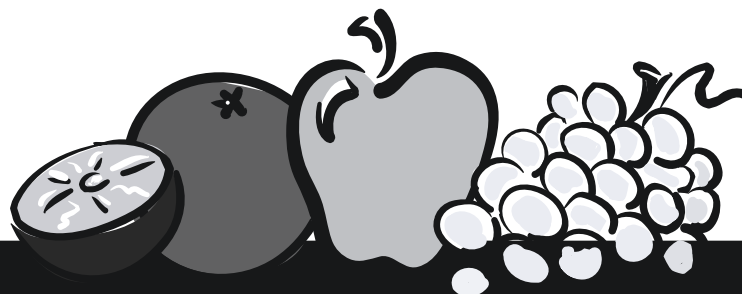
9. Please indicate whether you think the following statements are true or false by circling T or F after each one.

	True	False
a. Polyunsaturated fat has the same number of calories as saturated fat.	T	F
b. The single most important change most people can make to lose weight is to avoid sugar.	T	F
c. Being overweight puts you at risk for heart disease.	T	F
d. A reduced intake of sodium or salt does not always lower high blood pressure to normal.	T	F
e. If you are overweight, losing weight helps lower your high blood cholesterol and high blood pressure.	T	F
f. The best way to lose weight is to eat fewer calories and be physically active.	T	F
g. Overweight children are likely to become overweight adults.	T	F
h. Skipping meals is a good way to cut down on calories.	T	F
i. Foods high in complex carbohydrates (starch and fiber) are good choices when you are trying to lose weight.	T	F



10. To you personally, how important is each of the following choices? (Circle one on each line.)

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Too Important	Not at all Important
a. Choosing a diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables.	4	3	2	1
b. Eating a variety of foods.	4	3	2	1
c. Maintaining a healthy weight.	4	3	2	1
d. Choosing a diet low in fat.	4	3	2	1
e. Choosing a diet with plenty of breads, cereals, rice, and pasta.	4	3	2	1
f. Eating at least two servings of dairy products daily.	4	3	2	1



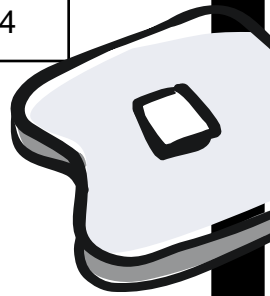


11. Please indicate how much you tend to agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. With my schedule, it's impossible to eat right.	1	2	3	4
b. There's too much stress in my life for me to handle managing my weight.	1	2	3	4
c. I just can't let food go to waste.	1	2	3	4
d. I eat more when I'm alone than when I eat around others.	1	2	3	4
e. When I've done something good, I reward myself with food.	1	2	3	4
f. I eat more on the weekends.	1	2	3	4
g. If I'm craving food, my body must need it.	1	2	3	4
h. Some people are meant to be fat.	1	2	3	4

12. Please indicate the term that most closely describes your habits when you eat the following foods.
(Circle one on each line. If you do not eat any of the foods listed in an item circle "X".)

	Almost Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N/A
a. Eat turkey bologna <i>instead</i> of regular bologna?	4	3	2	1	0	X
b. Use fat-free milk or 1% milk <i>instead</i> of 2% or whole milk	4	3	2	1	0	X
c. Eat low-fat cheeses when you eat cheese?	4	3	2	1	0	X
d. Eat ice milk, frozen yogurt, or sherbet <i>instead</i> of ice cream?	4	3	2	1	0	X
e. Use low-calorie <i>instead</i> of regular dressing?	4	3	2	1	0	X
f. Have fruit for dessert?	4	3	2	1	0	X
g. Eat fish or poultry <i>instead</i> of meat (e.g., beef, pork, or lamb)?	4	3	2	1	0	X



Physical Activity

Moderate physical activity includes activities such as walking, gardening, and heavy house cleaning. For moderate activity to be regular, it must add up to a total of 30 or more minutes per day and be done at least 5 days per week. For example, you could take a 30-minute walk or take a 10-minute walk, rake leaves for 10 minutes, and climb up stairs for 10 minutes—adding up to a total of 30 minutes of time.

Please circle Yes if the statement applies to you, or No if it doesn't.

1. I currently participate in moderate physical activity.	Yes	No
2. I intend to increase my participation in moderate physical activity in the next 6 months.	Yes	No
3. I currently engage in regular moderate physical activity.	Yes	No
4. I have been participating in moderate physical activity regularly for the past 6 months.	Yes	No
5. In the past, I have been regularly physically active in moderate activities for a period of at least 3 months.	Yes	No

For the following two statements, circle the number that corresponds to your answer.

6. During the past 7 days, how many times did you engage in physical activity to try to lose weight or keep from gaining weight?

0 – I have never done this
1 – I have done this but not
in the last 7 days

2 – 1 to 2 times
3 – 3 to 6 times
4 – 7 or more times

7. On how many of the past 7 days did you do any kind of physical activity in a place such as a “Y”, sports league, dance class, recreational center, or any other community center?

0 – None
1 – 1 – 2 days
2 – 3 – 4 days
3 – 5 – 7 days

8. How likely are you to say each of the following statements? (Circle one answer on each line)

	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Somewhat Unlikely	Very Unlikely
a. I'm just too tired after work to engage in physical activity.	1	2	3	4
b. I've been thinking about being more physically active, but I just can't seem to get started.	1	2	3	4
c. I'm getting older so physical activity can be risky.	1	2	3	4
d. I'm not physically active because I have never learned the skills for any sport.	1	2	3	4
e. I don't have access to jogging trails, swimming pools, bike paths, etc.	1	2	3	4
f. Physical activity takes too much away from my other commitments – like work, family, etc.	1	2	3	4
g. I'm embarrassed about how I will look when I engage in physical activity with others.	1	2	3	4
h. It's easier for me to find excuses not to be physically active than to go out and do something.	1	2	3	4
i. I really can't see learning a new sport at my age.	1	2	3	4
j. My free time during the day is too short to include physical activity.	1	2	3	4
k. My usual social activities with family or friends do not include physical activity.	1	2	3	4
l. I'm too tired during the week and I need the weekend to catch up on my rest.	1	2	3	4
m. I'm afraid I might injure myself or have a heart attack.	1	2	3	4
n. If we had exercise facilities and showers at work, then I would be more likely to engage in physical activity.	1	2	3	4

9. The following statements are either true or false. Please choose your response by circling T or F.

	True	False
a. Regular physical activity can reduce your chances of getting heart disease.	T	F
b. It doesn't take a lot of money or expensive equipment to become physically fit.	T	F
c. Exercise programs do not require a lot of time to be very effective.	T	F
d. You should always consult a doctor before starting a physical activity program.	T	F
e. There are many risks and injuries that can occur with exercise.	T	F
f. Most people get enough physical activity from their daily routine.	T	F
g. You don't have to train like a marathon runner to become more physically fit.	T	F
h. People who need to lose some weight are the only ones who will benefit from regular physical activity.	T	F
i. The older you are, the less active you need to be.	T	F
j. People who have had a heart attack should not start any physical activity program.	T	F
k. All exercises give you the same benefits.	T	F
l. To help you stay physically active, include a variety of activities.	T	F

10. Fit Score

In the past 7 days, how much time did you spend on each of the following activities?
 Write in the number of hours for each one, rounding to the nearest half-hour
 (1/2, 1, 1 1/2). Add your totals for each day in the last row.

Activity	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Organized or Team Sports (e.g., basketball, tennis, racquetball, softball, etc.)							
Bicycling							
Dancing / Aerobics							
Walking / Hiking							
Golf							
Heavy Household Chores							
Pushups / Situps							
Rollerskating / Blading							
Jogging / Stairs / Treadmill							
Snow Skiing (winter sports)							
Swimming (water sports)							
Bowling							
Weightlifting							
Other Physical Activities; Specify: _____							
DAILY TOTALS							

FIT SCORE GRAND TOTAL: _____

11. Sit Score

In the past 7 days, how much inactive time did you spend at work, reading, watching TV programs, using a home computer, or watching videotapes and movies on TV or in a theater? In each space, write the number of hours for each activity, rounding to the nearest half-hour. Add your totals at the bottom.

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
At work (nonmanual labor)							
Reading							
Watching TV							
Using the computer							
Watching movies							
DAILY TOTALS							

SIT SCORE GRAND TOTAL: _____

Possible causes of high blood pressure

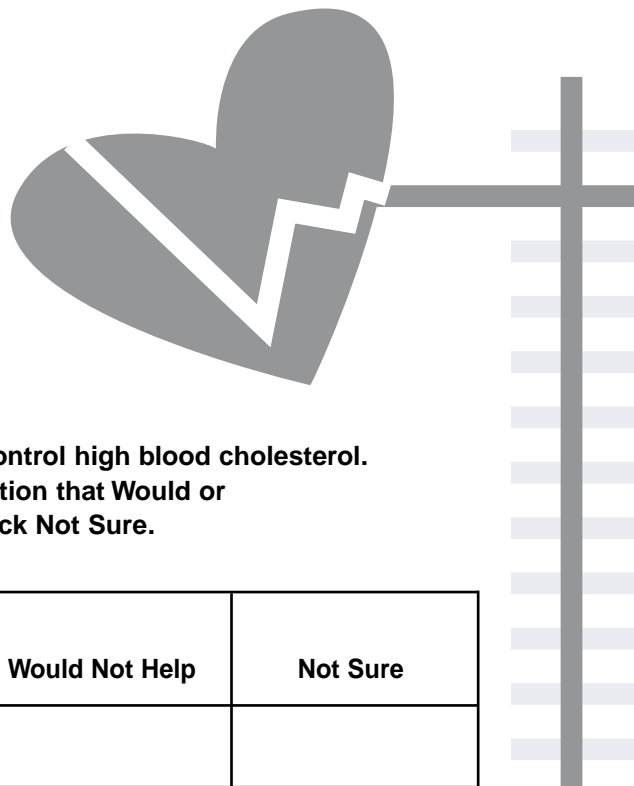
Listed below are some things that have been said are possible causes of high blood pressure (HBP). For each of those listed, please check whether you think it is a Cause or Not a Cause, or else check Not Sure.

	Cause of HBP	Not a Cause of HBP	Not Sure
1. Being overweight			
2. Heredity—it runs in the family			
3. Eating too much salt			
4. Race or ethnic group			
5. Worrying, tension, strain			
6. Eating fatty foods			
7. Smoking			
8. Drinking too much alcohol			
9. Regular hard exercise			
10. Being underweight			
11. Being pregnant			
12. Not getting enough exercise			
13. Old age			
14. Stress			



Actions

to control high blood cholesterol



Listed below are some actions that people might take to control high blood cholesterol. For each of these actions, please check whether it is an action that **Would** or **Would Not Help** control high blood cholesterol, or else check **Not Sure**.

	Would Help	Would Not Help	Not Sure
1. Getting regular exercise			
2. Eating less salt			
3. Eating less sugar			
4. Eating more soluble fiber			
5. Using fat-free milk or low-fat dairy products			
6. Eating less cheese			
7. Eating fewer eggs			
8. Eating more fish			
9. Eating less sausage, bacon, and luncheon meats			
10. Eating less saturated fat			
11. Losing weight if you are overweight			
12. Using soft or liquid margarine instead of butter			

Answer Keys...to illustrate the correct answers, shaded in gray, to the child, adolescent, and adult questionnaires

Scoring Sheets...to add up the total score for the pre- and postquestionnaires of each child, adolescent, and adult participant. One sheet is used to score the participant's prequestionnaire and another copy of the same sheet is used to score the postquestionnaire

Appendix



Answer Key (PRE & POST)

Child QUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT'S YOUR
food,
physical activity,
& heart health



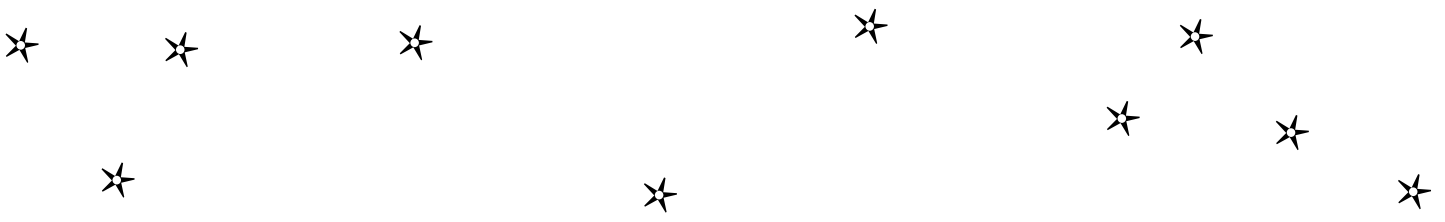
****Correct and positive answers are shaded in gray****

Which food is better for your health? (KNOWLEDGE)

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | Doughnut | Toast |
| 2. | Orange | Cookies |
| 3. | Whole Wheat Bread | White Bread |
| 4. | Cold Cereal | Eggs and Bacon |
| 5. | Regular Milk | Low-fat or Fat-free Milk |
| 6. | Green Salad | French Fries |
| 7. | Grapes | Candy Bar |

What foods do you eat most of the time? (BEHAVIOR)

- | | | |
|----|----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. | Baked Potato | French Fries |
| 2. | Fruit Juice | Soda |
| 3. | Cookies | Apple |
| 4. | Hot Dog | Sandwich with Lettuce and Tomato |
| 5. | Chocolate Cake | Orange |
| 6. | Ice Cream | Fresh Fruit Popsicle |
| 7. | Regular Milk | Low-fat or Fat-free Milk |



What would you do? (*INTENTION*)

1. If you were at the movies, which one would you pick?

Popcorn with salt and butter

Popcorn without salt and butter

2. If you were going to eat your lunch, which would you do?

Eat the food without adding salt

Shake salt on the food before eating

3. Which food would you put on your hamburger?

Ketchup

Tomato

4. Which would you pick to drink?

Regular Milk

Low-fat or fat-free milk

5. Which food would you eat for a snack?

Candy Bar

Fresh Fruit

6. Which food would you choose for dinner?

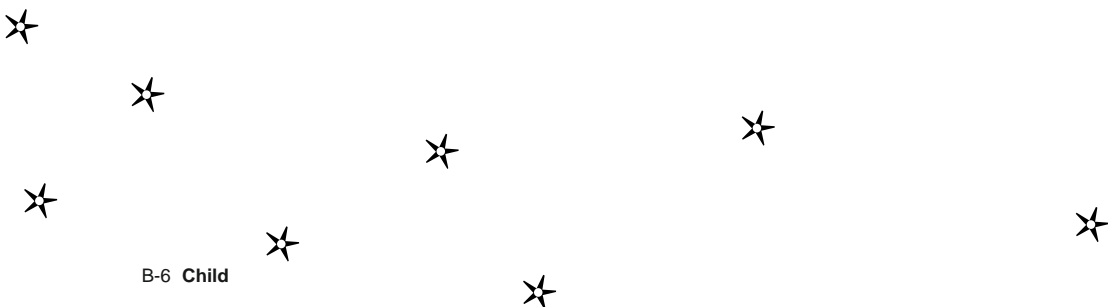
Baked Potato

French Fries

7. Which would you order if you were going to eat at a fast-food restaurant?

Hamburger

Salad





Things I like and things I do (PRETEST)

**Record total check marks for each column in the score sheet. There are no right or wrong answers here.

Things I learned and did this summer (POSTTEST)

**Record total check marks for each column in the score sheet. There are no right or wrong answers here.

Physical activity and you (ATTITUDE)

1. I would rather watch TV than play sports or be active.

Yes - 0 points

No - 2 points

Sometimes - 1 point

2. People who play sports or are active seem to have a lot of fun doing it.

Yes - 2 points

No - 0 points

Sometimes - 1 point

3. How do you feel about your ability to kick a ball hard and hit a target, like soccer?

Great - 2 points

Okay - 1 point

Not Good - 0 points

4. How do you feel about your ability to run a long way without stopping?

Great - 2 points

Okay - 1 point

Not Good - 0 points

5. How do you feel about your ability to hit a ball with a bat, like softball?

Great - 2 points

Okay - 1 point

Not Good - 0 points

6. How do you feel about your ability to play many different games and sports?

Great - 2 points

Okay - 1 point

Not Good - 0 points

ID# _____

DATE _____

Children Pre Score Sheet

Personal: 1. Gender: _____ 2. Age Group: _____

Use one score sheet for each participant.

Give one point for each correct answer; and one or two points (as specified in Answer Key) for each 'positive' answer, i.e., an answer demonstrating healthy nutrition or physical activity. Consult answer key to complete this score sheet.

Knowledge (Which Food Is Better For Your Health?)		Behavior (What Foods Do You Eat Most of the Time?)		Intention (What Would You Do?)	
1.	5.	1.	5.	1.	5.
2.	6.	2.	6.	2.	6.
3.	7.	3.	7.	3.	7.
4.		4.		4.	
Knowledge Total: _____ Out of 7 possible points		Behavior Total: _____ Out of 7 possible points		Intention Total: _____ Out of 7 possible points	

Things I Like and Things I Do			Attitude (Physical Activity and You)	
I like to do this	I've done this in the past week	I would like to learn how to do this	1.	4.
			2.	5.
			3.	6.
_____	_____	_____	Attitude Total: _____ Out of 12 possible points	
Out of 14	Out of 14	Out of 14		

ID# _____

DATE _____

Children Post Score Sheet

Personal: 1. Gender: _____ 2. Age Group: _____

Use one score sheet for each participant.

Give one point for each correct answer; and one or two points (as specified in Answer Key) for each 'positive' answer, i.e., an answer demonstrating healthy nutrition or physical activity. Consult answer key to complete this score sheet.

Knowledge (Which Food Is Better For Your Health?)		Behavior (What Foods Do You Eat Most of the Time?)		Intention (What Would You Do?)	
1.	5.	1.	5.	1.	5.
2.	6.	2.	6.	2.	6.
3.	7.	3.	7.	3.	7.
4.		4.		4.	
Knowledge Total: _____ Out of 7 possible points		Behavior Total: _____ Out of 7 possible points		Intention Total: _____ Out of 7 possible points	

Things I Learned and Did This Summer			Attitude (Physical Activity and You)	
Something new I learned	I got better at this	I would like to play this again	1.	4.
			2.	5.
			3.	6.
_____	_____	_____	Attitude Total: _____ Out of 12 possible points	
Out of 14	Out of 14	Out of 14		

Answer Key (PRE & POST)

Adolescent QUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT'S YOUR
food,
physical activity,
& heart health



****Correct and positive answers are shaded in gray****

Heart-healthy eating

**3. Joe ate cereal with milk and a banana and drank orange juice for breakfast.
How many different food groups did Joe eat from?**

1 2 3 4 Don't Know

4. What is a “balanced diet”?

- a. Eating lots of fruit and vegetables
- b. Eating the same foods every day
- c. Eating the exact same amount of food from each food group
- d. Eating different foods from all the food groups

5. If you want to eat more fruit, which of the following would you choose?

- a. Orange soda
- b. Grape jelly
- c. A banana
- d. Strawberry ice cream

6. From which food group should you eat the most servings a day?

- a. Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta
- b. Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dry beans, and nuts
- c. Vegetable
- d. Fruit

7. Which food is better for your health?

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Doughnut | Toast |
| b. Orange | Cookies |
| c. Whole Wheat Bread | White Bread |
| d. Cold Cereal | Eggs and Bacon |
| e. Regular Milk | Low-fat or Fat-free Milk |
| f. Green Salad | French Fries |
| g. Grapes | Candy Bar |
| h. French Fries | Baked Potato |

8. Overweight/Obesity Knowledge

	True	False
a. Polyunsaturated fat has the same number of calories as saturated fat.	T	F
b. The single most important change most people can make to lose weight is to avoid sugar.	T	F
c. Being overweight puts you at risk for heart disease.	T	F
d. Lowering sodium or salt in the diet does not always lower high blood pressure to normal.	T	F
e. If you are overweight, losing weight helps lower your high blood cholesterol and high blood pressure.	T	F
f. The best way to lose weight is to eat fewer calories and be physically active.	T	F
g. Overweight children are very likely to become overweight adults.	T	F
h. Skipping meals is a good way to cut down on calories.	T	F
i. Foods high in complex carbohydrates (starch and fiber) are good choices when you are trying to lose weight.	T	F

For 9–11 below, use the number that is circled on the questionnaire to represent the number of points on the score sheet. Add up points of all answers in each section.

9. Attitude Toward Healthy Eating - Four Agree/Disagree Questions

10. Attitude Toward Healthy Eating: “If I eat a healthy diet every day...”—Six Agree/Disagree Questions

11. Overweight/Obesity Attitude - Eight Agree/Disagree Questions

12. What Foods Do You Eat Most Of The Time? (Eating Behavior)

- | | | |
|----|----------------|----------------------------------|
| a. | Baked Potato | French Fries |
| b. | Fruit Juice | Soda |
| c. | Cookies | Apple |
| d. | Hot Dog | Sandwich with Lettuce and Tomato |
| e. | Chocolate Cake | Orange |
| f. | Ice Cream | Fresh Fruit Popsicle |
| g. | Sweet Roll | Whole Wheat Roll |
| h. | Regular Milk | Low-fat or Fat-free Milk |



13. What Would You Do? (Eating/Intention)

a. If you were at the movies, which one would you pick?

Popcorn with salt and butter

Popcorn without salt and butter

b. If you were going to have lunch right now, which would you do?

Eat food without adding salt

Shake salt on your food

c. Which food would you put on your hamburger?

Ketchup

Tomato

d. Which would you pick to drink?

Regular Milk

Low-fat or Fat-free Milk

e. Which food would you eat for a snack?

Candy Bar

Fresh Fruit

f. Which food would you choose for dinner?

Baked Potato

French Fries

g. Which would you order if you were going to eat at a fast food restaurant?

Hamburger

Salad





Physical Activity

1. In the past week, how many days were you active for at least 20 minutes in sports activities...? (Between 0 - 7)

Give one point for an answer of 4 or more days

2. In the past week, how many days did you do exercises to strengthen or tone your muscles, such as pushups, situps, or weight-lifting?

Give one point for an answer of 4 or more days

3. Which of the following activities do you do the most from the time school gets out until you eat dinner?

One point for either answer: Play a sport or exercise Play outside

4. During the past 12 months, how many sports teams were you on?

0 teams - 0 points 1 team - 1 point 2 or more teams - 2 points

5. In general, do you think you get too much physical activity, not enough physical activity, or about the right amount of physical activity?

Too much - 0 points About right - 1 point Not enough - 0 points



Adolescent Pre and Post Score Sheet

Personal: 1. Gender: _____ 2. Age Group: _____

Use one score sheet for each participant. Using the answer key as a guide, complete the score sheet by giving points for correct or 'positive' answers.

Heart-Healthy Eating

Nutrition Knowledge (1pt each)		Overweight/ Obesity Knowledge (1 pt each)		Attitude Toward Healthy Eating (1-4 pts each)		Overweight/ Obesity Attitude (1-4 pts each)	Healthy Eating Behavior (1 pt each)	Healthy Eating Intentions (1 pt each)
3.	7c.	8a.	8f.	9a.	10b.	11a.	12a.	13a.
4.	7d.	8b.	8g.	9b.	10c.	11b.	12b.	13b.
5.	7e.	8c.	8h.	9c.	10d.	11c.	12c.	13c.
6.	7f.	8d.	8i.	9d.	10e.	11d.	12d.	13d.
7a.	7g.	8e.		10a.	10f.	11e.	12e.	13e.
7b.	7h.					11f.	12f.	13f.
						11g.	12g.	13g.
						11h.	12h.	
POINT TOTAL:		POINT TOTAL:		POINT TOTAL:		POINT TOTAL:	POINT TOTAL:	POINT TOTAL:
12 possible		9 possible		40 possible		32 possible	8 possible	7 possible

Physical Activity

Level of Physical Activity
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
POINT TOTAL:
6 possible

Answer Key (PRE & POST)

Adult QUESTIONNAIRE

WHAT'S YOUR
food,
physical activity,
& heart health



****Correct and positive answers are shaded in gray****

Heart-healthy eating

5. Serving of a fruit or vegetable?

a. Half cup of orange juice?	Yes	No	Don't Know
b. Half cup of lettuce?	Yes	No	Don't Know
c. Half cup of steamed broccoli?	Yes	No	Don't Know

6. From which food group should you eat the most servings a day?

- 1 - Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta
- 2 - Vegetable
- 3 - Fruit
- 4 - Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dry beans, and nuts
- 5 - Milk, yogurt, and cheese
- 0 - Don't know

7. Which of these is the best choice for a low-fat diet? (circle just one)

- 1 - Whole milk
- 2 - Low-fat yogurt
- 3 - Cheese
- 4 - Fat-free milk
- 0 - Don't Know

8. Which is the best snack choice for a low-fat diet? (circle just one)

- 1 - Cookies
- 2 - Fruit roll-ups
- 3 - Pie
- 4 - Ice cream
- 0 - Don't Know

9. Overweight/Obesity Knowledge - T/F

	True	False
a. Polyunsaturated fat has the same number of calories as saturated fat.	T	F
b. The single most important change most people can make to lose weight is to avoid sugar.	T	F
c. Being overweight puts you at risk for heart disease.	T	F



d. A reduced intake of sodium or salt does not always lower high blood pressure to normal.	T	F
e. If you are overweight, losing weight helps lower your high blood cholesterol and high blood pressure.	T	F
f. The best way to lose weight is to eat fewer calories and be physically active.	T	F
g. Overweight children are likely to become overweight adults.	T	F
h. Skipping meals is a good way to cut down on calories.	T	F
i. Foods high in complex carbohydrates (starch and fiber) are good choices when you are trying to lose weight.	T	F

10. Attitude Toward Healthy Eating - “To you personally, how important is each of the following choices?” Record all answers on the score sheet.

11. Overweight/Obesity Attitude - “Please indicate how much you tend to agree or disagree with each statement.” Record all answers on the score sheet.

12. Eating Behavior/Habits - Record all answers on the score sheet.

Physical Activity

Give one point for each Yes answer.

1. I currently participate in moderate physical activity.	Yes	No
2. I intend to increase my participation in moderate physical activity in the next 6 months.	Yes	No
3. I currently engage in regular moderate physical activity.	Yes	No
4. I have been participating in moderate physical activity regularly for the past 6 months.	Yes	No
5. In the past, I have been regularly physically active in moderate activities for a period of at least 3 months.	Yes	No

6. During the past 7 days, how many times did you engage in physical activity to try to lose weight or keep from gaining weight?

Use the number that is circled (0-4) to represent the number of points on the score sheet.



7. On how many of the past 7 days did you do any kind of physical activity in a place such as a “Y”, sports league, dance class, recreational center, or any other community center?

Use the number that is circled to represent the number of points on the score sheet.



8. Attitude Toward Physical Activity - Likely/Unlikely

Record all answers on the score sheet.

9. Physical Activity Knowledge – T/F



	True	False
a. Regular physical activity can reduce your chances of getting heart disease.	T	F
b. It doesn't take a lot of money or expensive equipment to become physically fit.	T	F
c. Exercise programs do not require a lot of time to be very effective.	T	F
d. You should always consult a doctor before starting a physical activity program.	T	F
e. There are many risks and injuries that can occur with exercise.	T	F
f. Most people get enough physical activity from their daily routine.	T	F
g. You don't have to train like a marathon runner to become more physically fit.	T	F
h. People who need to lose some weight are the only ones who will benefit from regular physical activity.	T	F
i. The older you are, the less active you need to be.	T	F
j. People who have had a heart attack should not start any physical activity program.	T	F
k. All exercises give you the same benefits.	T	F
l. To help you stay physically active, include a variety of activities.	T	F

10. and 11. Fit/Sit Scores – Totals are already on the questionnaire.

For the next two sections, give one point for each correct answer as listed below.
Give 0 points for wrong answers or “Not Sure” answers.

Possible causes of high blood pressure

1. Being overweight	Cause
2. Heredity--it runs in the family	Cause
3. Eating too much salt	Cause
4. Race or ethnic group	Cause
5. Worrying, tension, strain	Not a Cause
6. Eating fatty foods	Not a Cause
7. Smoking	Cause
8. Drinking too much alcohol	Cause
9. Regular hard exercise	Not a Cause
10. Being underweight	Not a Cause
11. Being pregnant	Cause
12. Not getting enough exercise	Cause
13. Old age	Cause
14. Stress	Not a Cause

Actions to control high blood cholesterol

1. Getting regular exercise	Would Help
2. Eating less salt	Would Not Help
3. Eating less sugar	Would Not Help
4. Eating more soluble fiber	Would Help
5. Using fat-free milk or low-fat dairy products	Would Help
6. Eating less cheese	Would Help
7. Eating fewer eggs	Would Help
8. Eating more fish	Would Help
9. Eating less sausage, bacon, and luncheon meats	Would Help
10. Eating less saturated fat	Would Help
11. Losing weight if you are overweight	Would Help
12. Using soft or liquid margarine instead of butter	Would Help



Adult Pre and Post Score Sheet

Personal: 1. Gender:____ 2. Age Group:____ 3. Race:____ 4. Education:____

Use one score sheet for each participant.

Give one point for each correct answer; and 1-4 points (as specified in Answer Key) for each 'positive' answer, i.e., an answer demonstrating healthy nutrition or physical activity. Consult answer key to complete this score sheet.

Heart-Healthy Eating						
Nutrition Knowledge (1 pt each)	Overweight/ Obesity Knowledge (1 pt each)		Attitude Toward Healthy Eating (1-4 pts each)	Overweight/ Obesity Attitude (1-4 pts each)		Eating Behavior (0-4 pts each)
5a.	9a.	9f.	10a.	11a.	11e.	12a.
5b.	9b.	9g.	10b.	11b.	11f.	12b.
5c.	9c.	9h.	10c.	11c.	11g.	12c.
5d.	9d.	9i.	10d.	11d.	11h.	12d.
6.	9e.		10e.			12e.
7.			10f.			12f.
8.						12g.
POINT TOTAL:	POINT TOTAL:		POINT TOTAL:	POINT TOTAL:		POINT TOTAL:
6 possible	9 possible		24 possible	32 possible		28 possible see note below

Note: For every part of question 12 on Eating Behavior that the respondent answered "x" (for not applicable"), subtract 4 from the total possible number of points.



Physical Activity								
Level of Physical Activity (0-4 pts each)	Attitude Toward Physical Activity (1-4 pts each)		Physical Activity Knowledge (1 pt each)		Knowledge: Causes of High Blood Pressure (1 pt each)		Knowledge: Actions to Control High Blood Cholesterol (1 pt each)	
1.	8a.	8h.	9a.	9g.	1.	8.	1.	7.
2.	8b.	8i.	9b.	9h.	2.	9.	2.	8.
3.	8c.	8j.	9c.	9i.	3.	10.	3.	9.
4.	8d.	8k.	9d.	9j.	4.	11.	4.	10.
5.	8e.	8l.	9e.	9k.	5.	12.	5.	11.
6.	8f.	8m.	9f.	9l.	6.	13.	6.	12.
7.	8g.	8n.			7.	14.		
POINT TOTAL:	POINT TOTAL:		POINT TOTAL:		POINT TOTAL:		POINT TOTAL:	
12 possible	28 possible		12 possible		14 possible		12 possible	
FIT SCORE: _____					SIT SCORE: _____			



Media Materials and Miscellaneous Forms

...to assist in planning for media involvement in your Hearts N' Parks program. Includes a prototype plan for launching the program to the media, timelines and checklists, tips on how to encourage the media to participate in the event, pitch letter to the media, story ideas, sample news advisory and press release, and consent waiver forms.

Appendix



Prototype plan

for launching your program

Situation: *Healthy County Department of Parks and Recreation* is taking steps to become a Hearts N' Parks community. Staff members are developing a plan to launch this initiative.

GOALS

1. To announce the launch of Hearts N' Parks in Healthy County.
2. To inform community members about upcoming Hearts N' Parks activities.
3. To inform local policymakers about participation in Hearts N' Parks.
4. To encourage partnerships with other community organizations and potential sponsors.
5. To increase the number of children participating in recreational programs.

TARGET AUDIENCES

1. Local newspapers, radio and TV stations, corporations, and organizations that have approved private communication vehicles.
2. Local media, clubs and other organized groups, community calendar editors.
3. Local policymakers.
4. Community organizations and businesses.
5. Schools, day care centers, parenting groups, and businesses that are geared toward children in the community. Media that reach these groups.

KEY MESSAGES

1. Healthy County is becoming a Hearts N' Parks community.
2. Planned activities as part of Healthy County's Hearts N' Parks initiative will include [LIST].
3. Hearts N' Parks is an innovative, nationwide initiative that aims to reduce the growing trend of obesity and the risk of coronary heart disease in the United States.
4. By becoming a Hearts N' Parks partner, local organizations and businesses can demonstrate their commitment to the well-being of citizens of Healthy County, share resources for implementing worthwhile programs, and gain exposure for their own programs and services.
5. The sooner we can teach our children how to prevent heart disease, the faster we can reduce their risk.

SPECIAL EVENT

1. Hold special event to launch Hearts N' Parks. Agenda to include a news conference featuring prominent community leaders and policymakers including a representative of the community, activities for children, exhibits or screenings by local organizations and businesses, sponsorship opportunities (such as paying for T-shirts).
2. To maximize coverage by the media, request official proclamation by policymakers, and hold event during National Recreation and Park Month or relevant "health holiday."
3. Invite local hospitals, day care centers, pharmacies, and radio or TV stations to join your task force and/or participate in the event.

Timeline and Checklist

6 to 8 weeks prior to the event

- Request permit and reserve park area by town square. Weather contingency plan to include ordering canopy for space. Work with adjacent city offices to identify available space for individual interviews with the media if needed.
- Invite speakers.
- Request proclamation from local government officials.
- Order brochures on heart disease, information on risk factors, banners, and T-shirts.

4 to 6 weeks prior to the event

- Prepare and send calendar announcement.
- Assign responsibilities to staff and volunteers. Hire photographer, contractor to provide staging area, sound system, etc.
- Invite guests, including policymakers, county agencies, wellness directors at area health-care facilities, prominent business people, leaders in the community.

2 to 4 weeks prior to the event

- Prepare the following media tools: media advisory, news release, backgrounders on the Healthy County Hearts N' Parks program, speakers list for news conference. Copy backgrounders included in Resource Guide on Eat Right and Get Moving.
- Discuss media list with county communications office, and review and update for special event. Target local media that reach community-at-large, policymakers (newsletters, etc.), parents and caregivers of children, local businesses.

1 to 2 weeks prior to the event

- Send media advisory.
- Update Web site.
- Send event schedule, list of responsibilities, and directions to the site to staff and volunteers. Also provide copies of all materials to county communications staff, administrative staff, and others who might receive inquiries about the event.
- Gather biographic information from speakers for media and for the moderator's introductions. Provide information to help speakers with their remarks.
- Supplies you will need on-site: pens, sign in sheets (for media), business cards, brochures on Healthy County Park and Recreation programs.

1 week prior to the event

- Confirm space, volunteers, and equipment.
- Distribute letter and consent form to parents of children who will be participating through their regular programs.
- Call key media to encourage them to attend.
- Collate media kits.

1 to 2 days prior to the event

- Resend media advisory to entire media list.
- Keep calling media targets.
- Gather and pack supplies.
- Arrange for designated staff person to field calls on the day of the event; update outgoing voice mail message.

At the event

- Greet media when they arrive. Ask them to sign in, so you can track who attended.
- Give every media person who attends a press kit to take back to their office. It will help them round out the story.
- Introduce media representatives to your spokespersons for interviews.

After the event

- Follow up on any special requests made during the event by the media, speakers, etc.; for example, reporters might ask for a bio or "head shot" photo of a specific speaker, or they might have asked for data or other information that was not readily accessible. (To expedite your response, call your office and have someone else process the request while the event is still happening.)
- Send press kits to reporters who expressed interest but did not attend, because it may still result in coverage, or they may come to your next event.
- Check for coverage in newspapers, on TV and radio, and on the Internet.
- Obtain contact sheets or prints from the photographer and order photos for your internal publications, as well as to send to partners or sponsors, speakers, special guests, etc.
- Write article about the event for your organization, and encourage partners and sponsors to do the same.
- Send thank-you notes to the reporters who attended. Tell them that you enjoyed working with them and that you hope to continue to serve as a resource for their reporting.
- Send a letter to the editor of your daily newspaper to publicly thank your volunteers for making the event a success and ask the editor to consider it for publication.
- And, of course, thank your sponsors, partners, and volunteers directly.

Timeline and Checklist for Special Events

As soon as possible

- Identify your goals, target audience(s), and key messages.
- Develop an agenda for the event, identify potential speakers, and prepare a budget and timeline to include promotion of the event and logistics (e.g. renting space or equipment).
- Identify and contact potential partners and cosponsors.
- Assemble a task force or committee for building your event.

6 to 8 weeks prior to the event

- Reserve space. If your event is likely to draw media, be sure to identify a quiet space for individual interviews.
- Invite speakers.
- Request proclamation from local government officials.
- Order educational materials, signs or banners, awards, and T-shirts or other give-away items you will need.

4 to 6 weeks prior to the event

- Identify community calendar contacts and their deadlines, and distribute your media advisory or calendar announcement.
- Recruit event volunteers, staff, and contractors (such as audiovisual technicians if needed, photographer, caterer, etc.), and assign specific responsibilities.
- Arrange for equipment (if not provided by the site). Equipment might include, for example, tables (with draping) for health screenings or exhibits, easels for signs, a podium, a stage or “riser,” microphone(s), and a sound system. For a news conference or event with a celebrity, you might also need a “mult box” - a device that allows broadcast media to record directly from the sound system.
- Create guest list and invite guests.

2 to 4 weeks prior to the event

- Determine what media tools you will need and prepare them. These include, for example, media advisory, news release, backgrounders or fact sheets, agenda, etc.
- Update or develop your media list (see “Working with the Media”).

1 to 2 weeks prior to the event

- Send media advisory.
- Update your Web site.
- Send event schedule, list of responsibilities, and directions to the site to staff and volunteers. Also provide copies of all materials to anyone who will be responding to inquiries before, during, or after the event.
- Assist speakers with their remarks; be sure to gather brief biographical information for the moderator to use to introduce speakers.
- Check on the status of the materials you've ordered and make checklist of supplies you'll need on-site. Examples: pens, sign-in sheets, business cards, brochures, or other information about your program or department.

1 week prior to the event

- Confirm space, volunteers and equipment.
- If you will be photographing, videotaping, or otherwise recording the event, then distribute consent forms. If children will be participating, signatures from their parents or guardians will be needed. (Note: No consent forms are required for news coverage.)
- Make follow-up calls to key media to confirm their receipt of the advisory and to encourage them to attend.
- Collate media kits.

1 to 2 days prior to the event

- Resend the advisory to your entire list.
- Keep calling your media targets.
- Gather and pack supplies.
- Make any necessary arrangements for responding to calls while you are at the event. Brief office staff, update your outgoing voice mail message, distribute your cell phone number, and/or inform office staff as to whether you will be calling in to check messages.

→ **At the event**

- Greet media when they arrive. Ask them to sign in, so you can track who attended.
- Give every media person who attends a press kit to take back to their office. It will help them round out the story.
- Introduce media representatives to your spokespersons for interviews.

→ **After the event**

- Follow up on any special requests made during the event by the media, speakers, etc.; for example, reporters might ask for a bio or “head shot” photo of a specific speaker, or they might have asked for data or other information that was not readily accessible. (To expedite your response, call your office and have someone else process the request while the event is still happening.)
- Send press kits to reporters who expressed interest but did not attend, because it may still result in coverage, or they may come to your next event.
- Check for coverage in newspapers, on TV and radio, and on the Internet.
- Obtain contact sheets or prints from the photographer and order photos for your internal publications, as well as to send to partners or sponsors, speakers, special guests, etc.
- Write article about the event for your organization, and encourage partners and sponsors to do the same.
- Send thank-you notes to the reporters who attended. Tell them that you enjoyed working with them and that you hope to continue to serve as a resource for their reporting.
- Send a letter to the editor of your daily newspaper to publicly thank your volunteers for making the event a success and ask the editor to consider it for publication.
- And, of course, thank your sponsors, partners, and volunteers directly.

Congratulations
on a job well done.

Now on to the next event...

Encouraging Media to cover your event

In many cases, sending a news advisory is not enough to get a reporter to attend your event. Following up with key media beforehand may mean the difference between coverage and no publicity.

Here are tips on encouraging the media to participate:

1. Prioritize your calls; review your media list and identify the reporters who are most important to you. Call them first.
2. Try to speak directly to a reporter. Don't be shy. Keep calling, even if you leave a voice mail message.
3. Be prepared to resend the news advisory to individuals several times; they will likely say they didn't receive the information, even if they did.
4. If you are asking staff or volunteers to assist in follow-up calls, prepare a script and a list of possible questions and answers.

If you are asking staff or volunteers to assist in follow-up calls, prepare a script and a list of possible questions and answers.

To reporters who say...

Yes: Work with them to arrange an interview with your spokesperson. Ask if there's anything special they might need from you — for example, a camera crew may need access to an electrical source or to a “mult box” that will provide them with sound directly from any microphones you might be using. Record them on a log of expected media attendance with notes on when they will be there, whom they are sending, and whether they will want interviews or other special assistance.

Maybe: Put them on your callback list and call again in the final days before the event to encourage them to attend. You might want to add a section to your media log for possible attendees.

No: Ask if they can suggest someone else on the staff who might be interested in the story. Tell them you'd like to send them a press kit after the event, in case they become interested in the program or topic.





Sample Pitch Letter for Media

Dear [NAME of Editor],

A growing number of Healthy County residents—from children to seniors—are overweight and physically inactive. As a result, these individuals are at increased risk for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, and other serious conditions.

Healthy County Department of Parks and Recreation (HCDPR) is taking steps to counteract this serious problem by becoming a Hearts N' Parks community. Hearts N' Parks is an innovative program developed jointly by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the National Institutes of Health, and by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) to reduce the growing trend of obesity in the United States and to lower Americans' risk of coronary heart disease. The program encourages Americans of all ages to aim for a healthy weight, follow a heart-healthy eating plan, and engage in regular physical activity. HCDPR is the first Hearts N' Parks community in our State, and one of XX across the United States.

Joining with such prestigious partners as the NHLBI and NRPA enables Healthy County to bring quality, measurable public health programs to our community with minimal resources. For example, Healthy County now offers heart-healthy cooking and snack preparation classes for seniors and singles, and our existing programs have been augmented with special activities on eating well and being active. In addition, we're working with Healthy County Mall to display weight-loss materials and to publicize free consultations with our staff for creating and following a personalized eating and exercise plan.

Heart disease is the leading killer among all Americans; it affects XXXX percent of Healthy County residents. As a Hearts N' Parks community, Healthy County Department of Parks and Recreation hopes to make a significant and long-lasting contribution to Healthy County. For story ideas on the HCDPR Hearts N' Parks programs, please see the attached sheet, or contact [NAME] at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

Hearts N' Parks and the Healthy County Parks and Recreation



Story Ideas and Media Tips

Help us spread the word that Healthy County is a Hearts N' Parks community!

Here are a few story ideas to consider:

- With the fast pace of today's society, more and more people are eating away from home – at greater cost to their wallet and their waistline. Through Healthy County Parks and Recreation's Hearts N' Parks program, singles are learning quick and easy ways to prepare heart-healthy meals at home.
- Ask 5-year-olds why they jump rope, and they'll probably say because it's fun. Ask Caroline Jones, and she'll tell you how jumping rope will help her avoid having a heart attack when she's older. Caroline is building lifelong skills to help her prevent heart disease...just one example of how Healthy County Parks and Recreation is bringing important heart-healthy information and activities to the community through the Hearts N' Parks program.
- Forget expensive diet programs. Healthy County Parks and Recreation offers personalized weight-loss programs that put you on the right track to a healthy weight. Participants receive journals to help track their progress, and they consult with local trainers and nutrition specialists. (Let us know if you'd like to profile one of our participants' ongoing success.)
- It's family pizza night, and your seventh-grader requests broccoli on his pizza. What's up? If your child is enrolled in the Healthy County Parks and Recreation after-school program, he's learning how to make good nutritional choices when ordering or making meals. Nutritionists from Healthy County Health Department recently spoke to participants,

who were then asked to design their personal pizza. Future activities include a trip to the grocery store following a learning session on nutrition labels. It's all part of the Parks and Recreation Department's commitment to making Healthy County a Hearts N' Parks community.

- New rewards for mall walkers. Seniors in the Healthy County Parks and Recreation mall-walking program now have additional incentives for meeting their fitness goals. As part of the Hearts N' Parks initiative, Community Hospital has partnered with the Parks and Recreation Department to provide screenings and information on topics such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and cholesterol—a new topic is highlighted each week. In addition, area stores have donated gift certificates as rewards for those who meet program goals.

For more information on Healthy County Parks and Recreation and the Hearts N' Parks program, please call [NAME] at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

You can also find general information about Hearts N' Parks at these Web sites:

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

(http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/heart/obesity/hrt_n_pk/index.htm) and

National Recreation and Park Association

(<http://heartsparks.org>).

Sample Media Advisory

for Hearts N' Parks Launch at local site



[Note: Advisory Should Never Be More Than One Page]

NEWS ADVISORY

FOR [IMMEDIATE] RELEASE
[DATE]

CONTACT: [NAME OF ORGANIZATION
OR DEPARTMENT]

[PHONE]

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION AND/OR KEY PRESENTER]

To Launch Innovative Heart Disease Prevention Program

WHAT: Special event to launch the [NAME OF ORGANIZATION OR COMMUNITY] Hearts N' Parks Program, an innovative, community-based initiative that teaches people of all ages how to incorporate heart-healthy eating and physical activity into their lives. Activities will include a news conference and heart-healthy activities, including [SUMMARIZE EVENT ACTIVITIES]. A list of activities is attached [OPTIONAL].

WHO: Hearts N' Parks is a national program cosponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the National Institutes of Health, and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The [NAME OF ORGANIZATION OR COMMUNITY] is the first to offer the program in the [CITY/TOWN/REGION] area.

Speakers: [LIST NAMES AND TITLES]

WHEN: [DATE AND TIME]

WHERE: [NAME, ADDRESS, AND PHONE NUMBER FOR EVENT; DIRECTIONS IF SITE IS NOT LIKELY TO BE EASILY RECOGNIZED BY MEDIA]

OTHER: [ADDITIONAL DETAILS, SUCH AS SPECIAL PHOTO OR INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES, REQUEST FOR MEDIA TO REGISTER, ETC]

Sample News Release



FOR [IMMEDIATE] RELEASE
[DATE]

Contact: [ORGANIZATION NAME]
[PHONE NUMBER]

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION/AGENCY] Launches Hearts N' Parks

[COMMUNITY] Becomes First in Area to Participate in Innovative and Nationwide Obesity and Heart Disease Prevention Effort

[CITY, STATE]-The [NAME OF ORGANIZATION OR AGENCY] launched Hearts N' Parks at a special event in [CITY, STATE] on [DATE]. A national, community-based program developed by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health and by the National Recreation and Park Association, Hearts N' Parks is an innovative initiative that aims to reduce the growing trend of obesity and the risk of coronary heart disease in the United States.

The event began with a news conference featuring [NAME AND TITLES OF SPEAKERS, LISTING MOST PRESTIGIOUS FIRST].

[ADD OTHER DETAILS ABOUT THE EVENT, INCLUDING PARTNERING/CO-SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS, OTHER PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS, etc.]

Heart disease is the leading killer among all Americans. Through Hearts N' Parks, science-based information about lifestyle choices that can reduce one's risk of heart disease and skills for incorporating heart-healthy behaviors into one's life—such as engaging in regular physical activity, following a heart-healthy eating plan, and maintaining a healthy weight—are taught as part of regular activities offered by park and recreation departments and other community-based agencies. Maintaining a healthy weight is stressed because overweight and obese individuals are at increased risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, and other serious conditions. Hearts N' Parks provides tools for measuring the impact of these activities, which are intended for people of all ages.

“This is a very important and exciting public health effort and NAME OF PARK/REC CENTER is proud to be a part of it,” said NAME AND TITLE OF CENTER DIRECTOR OR OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY. “Heart disease and obesity are major health problems, and we are pleased to play a role in helping members of our community learn how to prevent and control these and related conditions.”

[IF POSSIBLE, ADD QUOTE OR DATA THAT ADDRESSES THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.]

The [NAME OF ORGANIZATION OR AGENCY] Hearts N' Parks program will include [PROVIDE HIGHLIGHTS OF HEARTS N' PARKS RELATED ACTIVITIES]. "We feel confident that the residents of AREA will learn a lot while having a great time in our facility," added NAME.

Hearts N' Parks was launched nationally in July 2000 at a special event featuring U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D., and hosted by the Arlington County (Virginia) Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Resources.

The initiative was first piloted in 1999 by more than 2,000 participants in 33 North Carolina sites. An evaluation of the North Carolina pilot program showed that participants retained information about heart-healthy behaviors and intended to eat healthier. In addition, children reported learning new physical activities and improving their performance in others; seniors reported feeling healthier and experiencing less pain in their daily lives by the end of the program. To date, nearly 350 recreation and parks agencies in more than 35 States have expressed interest in becoming Hearts N' Parks communities. [UPDATE INFO ACCORDING TO INFORMATION ON THE HEARTS N' PARKS WEBSITE OR FROM NRPA.]

For more information about Hearts N' Parks activities provided by [NAME OF ORGANIZATION OR AGENCY], please contact [PROGRAM INFORMATION STAFF OR REGISTRAR] or visit the [NAME OF ORGANIZATION OR AGENCY] Web site at [URL].

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) has been helping Americans and people worldwide stay healthier since 1948. The Federal institute undertakes a wide range of activities to improve the understanding, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart, lung, and blood disorders.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) supports the delivery of quality park and recreation resources through a nationwide network of recreation and park professionals and citizen advocates. The primary areas for national program focus are on health, youth development, and the environment.

Additional information about Hearts N' Parks is available through NRPA at 1-800-649-3042 or www.heartsnparks.org, or through NHLBI at www.nhlbi.nih.gov.

Additional Notes

[IN RELEASE EMPHASIZING EVENT FOR KIDS, INSERT BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CHILDREN-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES AND FOLLOWING QUOTE: Children as well as adults can develop high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol. Research shows that the buildup of plaque in the arteries (atherosclerosis), which causes coronary heart disease, begins in adolescence. Thus, it is important to start heart-healthy behaviors early in childhood.]

[IN RELEASE EMPHASIZING EVENT FOR SENIORS, INSERT BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EVENT AND FOLLOWING AFTER LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE'S QUOTE: Seniors need to stay physically active not only to help prevent heart disease but also to help slow bone loss and prevent fractures from osteoporosis. Activities that build balance and strength are particularly important for senior citizens.]



Consent and Waiver

I hereby grant permission to [OFFICIAL NAME(S) OF ORGANIZATION(S)] to use, reproduce, publish, distribute, and exhibit my picture, portrait, likeness, or voice, or any or all of them (or those of a child under my guardianship), in or in connection with the production of a photograph, videotape, audiotape, CD-ROM, or in any manner and for any purpose as stated below, and...

I hereby waive all rights of privacy or compensation (or those of a child under my guardianship) which I have in connection with the use of my picture, portrait, likeness or voice, or any or all of them, in or in connection with said photograph, videotape, audiotape, CD-ROM, or Web site, and any use to which the same or any material therein may be put, applied, or adapted by the organizations designated above.

It is understood and agreed that the above waiver is limited to the use by the organizations listed above, or by any of their agencies, departments, or distributors for educational purposes only and not for profit or trade.

It is also understood and agreed that this consent and waiver will not be made the basis of a future claim of any kind against the organizations as noted above or their affiliates.

Participant's Name: _____

Address: _____

*Signature: _____ Date: _____

*If above is signature of parent or guardian (required if individual is a minor), please print name here: _____



Sample Cover Letter to Parents of Children for Consent Form

Dear Parent:

On [DATE AND TIME], the [NAME OF ORGANIZATION] will host an event to launch **Hearts N' Parks**, an innovative program that promotes the adoption of heart-healthy behaviors by people of all ages. Hearts N' Parks was developed and is supported by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the National Institutes of Health and by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

We invite you and your child to join us for this exciting event, which includes a **news conference featuring [LIST PROMINENT SPEAKERS AND TITLES]**.

Heart-healthy activities to be held during the event include [ADD DETAILS].

We will have photographers [ADD "and videographers" IF APPROPRIATE] documenting the event. **We would appreciate your signing the attached consent form to grant permission for your child to participate in this exciting event, including being photographed or videotaped. Please return it to [SPECIFY] by [PROVIDE DEADLINE].**

If you have any questions, please contact [PROVIDE NAME AND PHONE NUMBER].

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

[NAME, TITLE, ETC.]

Additional Resources...to assist programmers in locating resources and information that help plan and implement Hearts N' Parks programs.

Appendix

Additional Resources

for your Hearts N' Parks program

The list below is intended to help you locate resources and information that may assist you with planning and implementing your Hearts N' Parks program. References to any nongovernmental entity, product, service, or source of information that may be contained in this list should not be considered an endorsement, either direct or implied, by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). NHLBI is not responsible for the content of any non-Federal Web pages referenced in this list. Furthermore, contact information listed is subject to change.

General and Heart Health Information	Type of information provided
<p>American Health Foundation 1 Dina Road Valhalla, NY 10595 Telephone: (212) 953-1900 Web: www.ahf.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancer prevention • Healthy eating • High fiber, low-fat diet • Cholesterol lowering
<p>American Heart Association** 7272 Greenville Avenue Dallas, TX 75231-4596 Telephone: (214) 373-6300 1-800-AHA-USA or (800) 242-8721 - locate regional affiliate (800) 553-6321 (Stroke Connection) Fax: (214) 706-2139 E-mail: inquire@amhrt.org Web: www.amhrt.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A-Z Guide for Heart and Stroke Information • Stroke prevention • Nutrition education, recipes, and meal ideas • Exercise (children and older adults) • Fundraising events
<p>American Lung Association** 61 Broadway, 6th Floor New York, NY 10006 Telephone: (212) 315-8700 (800) LUNGUSA or (800) 586-4872 - referral to local chapters Fax: (212) 265-5642 E-mail: info@lungusa.org Web: www.lungusa.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asthma, smoking, occupational health • School-based education program • Referral to local allergists and free patient education • Teen smoking
<p>Association of Worksite Health Promotion 60 Revere Drive Suite 500 Northbrook, IL 60062 Telephone: (847) 480-9574 Fax: (847) 480-9282 E-mail: awhp@awhp.org Web: www.awhp.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best-practices, methods, processes, and technologies • Publications

** Local or State Chapters exist

General and Heart Health Information	Type of information provided
<p>The American Academy of Pediatrics 141 Northwest Point Boulevard Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098 Telephone: (847) 228-5005 Fax: (847) 228-5097 Web: www.aap.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's health • <i>You and Your Family</i> health and nutrition brochures • Guide to organizing a health fair
<p>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1600 Clifton Road Atlanta, GA 30333 Telephone: (800) 311-3435 Web: www.cdc.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health topics A–Z • School-based nutrition and physical activity programs • Health statistics • Health topics in the news
<p>Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Public Health Services 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 14-05 Rockville, MD 20857 (301) 443-3376 Web: www.hrsa.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to healthcare, quality of care, and healthcare policy • Spanish material
<p>Heart Information Service Texas Heart Institute P.O. Box 20345, MCI-194 Houston, TX 77225-0345 Telephone: (713) 794-6630 or (800) 292-2221 Fax: (713) 794-3714 E-mail: his@biostl.thi.tmc.edu Web: www.tmc.edu/thi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 800-number for questions relating to heart disease • Cardiovascular health • Heart-health quiz
<p>National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute P.O. Box 30105 Bethesda, MD 20824 Telephone: (301) 592-8573 Fax: (301) 592-8563 Web: www.nhlbi.nih.gov E-mail requests: NHLBIinfo@rover.nhlbi.nih.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health information from trained information specialists • Asthma, sleep disorders, overweight, obesity, physical activity, cholesterol, heart disease, high blood pressure, and other heart, lung, and blood disorders
<p>National Institutes of Health (NIH) 9000 Rockville Pike Bethesda, Maryland 20892 Web: www.nih.gov/index.html</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A–Z subject guide including all the Institutes at NIH
<p>Wellness Council of America** 7101 Newport Avenue, Suite 311 Omaha, NE 68152 Telephone: (402) 572-3590 Fax: (402) 572-3594 Web: www.welcoa.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace and employee wellness programs • Local chapter in some States

**** Local or State Chapters exist**

Nutrition and Weight Loss	Type of Information Provided
<p>American Dietetic Association** 216 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 800 Chicago, IL 60606-6995 Telephone: (312) 899-0040, (800) 877-1600 Web: www.eatright.org Consumer Nutrition Hotline (800) 366-1655</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition information for various age groups, diseases, and circumstances • Nutrition education • Nutrition hotline for nutrition information and to find a local dietitian
<p>Center for Science in the Public Interest Suite 300 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20009-5728 Telephone: (202) 418-2312 Fax: (202) 208-2321 E-mail: cspi@cspinet.org Web: www.cspinet.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food safety • Nutrition • Kids nutrition Web site • Nutrition quizzes
<p>USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion U.S. Department of Agriculture North Lobby, Suite 200 1120 20th Street, NW Washington, DC 20036 Telephone: (202) 418-2312 Web: www.usda.gov/cnpp</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Nutrition Insights” newsletter on nutrition-related topics • <i>Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i> • Food Guide Pyramid • Information on nutrition policy
<p>Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service** Web: www.reeusda.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and education, including food and nutrition • State partners • Find an expert (such as home economists or food and nutrition specialists)
<p>Overeaters Anonymous** P.O. Box 44020 Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020 Telephone: (505) 891-2664 Web: www.overeatersanonymous.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for compulsive overeaters
<p>TOPS Club, Inc.** Take Off Pounds Sensibly 4577 South 5th Street Milwaukee, WI 53207 Telephone: (414) 482-4620 (800) 932-8677 (chapter location) Web: www.tops.org/html/information.html</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight loss support groups
<p>Weight-control Information Network (WIN) 1 WIN Way Bethesda, MD 20892-3665 Telephone: (800) WIN-8098 Web: www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrit/win.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating disorders • Weight loss programs • Nutrition tips

** Local or State Chapters exist

Nutrition and Weight Loss	Type of Information provided
<p>Tufts University Nutrition Navigator Web: www.navigator.tufts.edu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rating guide to nutrition Web sites • General nutrition, parents, women, kids, special dietary needs, journalists, health professionals, educators

Physical Activity and Sports	Type of Information Provided
<p>Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance 1900 Association Drive Reston, VA 20191 Telephone: (703) 476-3400 or (800) 213-7193 Web: www.aahperd.org/index.html Publications catalog (800) 321-0789</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical fitness programs for youth and adults • <i>Physical Best Activity Guides</i> (elementary and secondary levels) • Public advocacy to expand physical education programs for students
<p>American College of Sports Medicine P.O. Box 1440 Indianapolis, IN 46206-1440 Telephone: (317) 637-9200 or (800) 486-5643 Fax: (317) 634-7817 E-mail: pipascm@acsm.org Web: www.acsm.org/sportsmed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition and sports information (to order, free, not available online)
<p>Cooper Institute of Aerobic Research Web: www.cooperinst.org Health and nutrition tips: Web: www.cooperaerobics.com/index.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness and aerobic health • Physical fitness assessments • Worksite health promotion
<p>National Association for Health and Fitness 201 S. Capitol Ave., Suite 560 Indianapolis, IN 46225 Telephone: (317) 237-5630 Fax: (317) 237-5632 Web: www.physicalfitness.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity planning kits • Resource and product guide • 8-week program for adults to establish a more healthy and active lifestyle • Employee health and fitness
<p>National Association for Sport and Physical Education 1900 Association Drive Reston, VA 20191 Telephone: (703) 476-3410 Fax: (703) 476-8316 Web: www.aapherd.org/naspe/naspe-main.html Online Store: www.aapherd.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport and physical activity programs that promote healthy behaviors and individual well-being • Physical activity guidelines for pre-adolescent children and national standards for physical education curriculum

**** Local or State Chapters exist**

Physical Activity and Sports	Type of Information Provided
<p>National Recreation and Park Association** Belmont Ridge Road Ashburn, VA 20148 Telephone: (703) 858-0784 Fax: (703) 858-0794 E-mail: programs@nrpa.org Web: www.activeparks.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure and lifestyle • Links to programs focused on health, youth, and the environment • Find a park near you • Online events and calendar contact information for State affiliates
<p>President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports 200 Independence Avenue, SW Room 738H Washington, DC 20201 Telephone: (202) 690-9000 Web: www.surgeongeneral.gov/ophs/pcpfs.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of physical activity • Importance of physical activity • Youth fitness campaign

** Local or state chapters exist

Gateways/Clearinghouses for Health Information on the Internet	Type of Information Provided
<p>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web: www.cdc.gov/other.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information networks and other information sources • State and local health departments, public health partners
<p>Food and Nutrition Information Center U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Library 10301 Baltimore Boulevard, Room 304 Beltsville, MD 20705-2351 Telephone: (301) 504-5719 Web: www.nal.usda.gov/fnic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allergies, food safety, food and nutrition for all ages, pregnancy and breastfeeding, diabetes, body weight, cardiovascular disease, and nutritional and herbal supplements • Food Guide Pyramid • <i>Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i>
<p>Healthfinder® U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Web: www.healthfinder.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthfinder is a free gateway to reliable consumer health and human services information developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
<p>National Health Information Center Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion U.S. Department of Health and Human Services P.O. Box 1133 Washington, DC 20013 Telephone: (800) 336-4797 Web: nhic-nt.health.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Information Resource Database: 1,100 organizations and government offices that provide health information upon request

Gateways/Clearinghouses for Health Information on the Internet	Type of Information Provided
<p>The National Women's Health Information Center Office on Women's Health Department of Health and Human Services Telephone: (800) 994-WOMAN (9662) Web: www.4woman.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway to health information and referral center for women • Heart health assessment • Media information • Women's health statistics

Local Professionals	Ask for the:
<p>American Diabetes Association Web: www.diabetes.org</p>	Diabetes educator
<p>American Dietetic Association Web: www.eatright.org</p>	Registered dietitian (800) 366-1655 Local chapter (800) 877-1600
<p>Cooperative State Research, Education, Nutrition and Extension Service Web: www.reeusda.gov</p>	Home economist or food and nutrition specialist
<p>American Nurses Association Web: www.nursingworld.org/index.htm Telephone: (800) 274-4ANA (4262)</p>	Registered nurse State nurses association
County Health Department	Health education consultant
Department of Public Health, Health Promotion Division	Public health nutritionist
Office of Health Education	Health educator

Media and Local Associations	Type of Information Provided
<p>The National Association of Counties 440 First Street, NW Suite 800 Washington, DC 20001 Telephone: (202) 393-6226 Fax: (202) 393-2630 Web: www.naco.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact information for State association
<p>National League of Cities 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20004-1763 Telephone: (202) 626-3000 Fax: (202) 626-3043 Web: www.nlc.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacts for State municipal leagues • Links to State, local, and Federal government resources on the World Wide Web

Media and Local Associations	Type of Information Provided
ABC Web: www.abc.go.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact information for local networks
NBC Web: www.nbc.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact information for local networks
CBS Web: www.cbs.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact information for local networks
Fox Network Web: www.foxnetwork.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact information for local networks

Other helpful contacts and ideas

- Local grocery stores or restaurants will often donate heart-healthy food for events.
- Hospitals will sometimes donate staff time and/or supplies for screenings, health fairs, etc. Call your State hospital association or search for it on the Web by searching for “[your State] hospital association”
- Contact local newspapers and local TV stations for coverage of special events.



Health Statistics...to provide programmers with background health information on the burden of heart disease and associated risk factors within the community.

Appendix



Health Statistics

about Cardiovascular Disease



Cardiovascular Disease (CVD)

- Approximately 60.8 million people in the United States had some form of CVD in 1998.
- CVD includes such diseases as high blood pressure (hypertension), coronary heart disease (CHD), stroke, congestive heart failure, and rheumatic heart disease.
- Approximately 50 million people had hypertension and about 12 million people had CHD in 1998.
- CVD is the leading cause of death in the United States, contributing to 949,000 deaths in 1998. The estimated total economic cost of CVD is expected to be \$298 billion in 2001; \$182 billion is expected to be in direct health expenditures.

Source: *NHLBI FY 2000 Fact Book*

Hypertension (High Blood Pressure)

- Approximately 50 million adults in the United States had hypertension in 1997.
- Hypertension is a major risk factor for heart disease.
- High blood pressure is known as the “silent killer” since a large number of people are unaware that they have it and may not have symptoms.



- High blood pressure is more common in older persons, in African Americans, overweight persons, and those with a family history of high blood pressure.
- Lifestyle changes, such as engaging in physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight, limiting alcohol, and following a heart-healthy diet can help prevent or control hypertension.

Source: *Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health*

Cholesterol

- High blood cholesterol is a major risk for CVD.
- More than 90 million adults in the United States have blood cholesterol levels that are higher than desirable.
- More than 50 million adults in the United States have blood cholesterol levels that require medical intervention.
- Lifestyle changes, such as increasing physical activity, reducing excess weight, and following a heart-healthy eating diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol can prevent or lower high blood cholesterol.

Source: *Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health*

Overweight and Obesity

- Approximately 97 million people (55 percent of the American adult population) are overweight or obese.
- One in five children over the age of 6 is considered overweight or obese.
- Overweight and obesity are risk factors for CVD and other diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, osteoarthritis, gall bladder disease, sleep apnea, as well as some types of cancer.
- Obesity acquired during childhood or adolescence may persist into adulthood and increase the risk for CVD and other diseases later in life.
- Lifestyle changes, such as increasing physical activity, behavior modification, and following a heart-healthy eating plan can help with weight loss and maintenance.

Source: *Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health*

Physical Activity

- Physically inactivity increases the risk of heart disease.
- Moderate, regular physical activity for 30 minutes on most days of the week can reduce the risk for many diseases, including heart disease.
- Regular physical activity enhances the quality of life for people of all ages and helps to maintain the functional independence of older adults.
- Currently, 23 percent of adults report regular, vigorous physical activity for 20 minutes or longer 3 or more days per week.
- Approximately 15 percent of adults report moderate physical activity for 5 or more days per week for 30 minutes or longer.
- Approximately 27 percent of adolescents in grades 9 through 12 engage in moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes for 5 or more days.

Source: *Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health*

Smoking

- Cigarette smoking causes heart disease as well as several types of cancer, and chronic lung disease.
- Secondhand smoke exposure causes heart disease in adults.
- Tobacco is responsible for more than 430,000 adult deaths per year in the United States.
- Tobacco use and addiction usually begin in adolescence, and have increased in the 1990s.

Source: *Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health*

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Background Sheets...to provide programmers with reproducible background sheets on what Hearts N' Parks is all about, as well as one on *Eat Right for a Healthy Heart* and one on *Get Moving for a Healthy Heart*.

Appendix



About Hearts N' Parks



Hearts N' Parks is a national, community-based program supported by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) of the National Institutes of Health and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). This innovative program aims to reduce the growing trend of obesity and the risk of coronary heart disease in the United States by encouraging Americans of all ages to aim for a healthy weight, follow a heart-healthy eating plan, and engage in regular physical activity.

Why are these goals important?

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Overweight and obesity increase one's risk of developing heart disease.
- The numbers of overweight children and adolescents, as well as obese adults, in the United States have doubled over the past 2 decades. Approximately 97 million American adults—or 55 percent—are currently overweight or obese. In addition, one in five children over the age of 6 is considered overweight, and overweight and obesity acquired during childhood or adolescence may persist into adulthood and increase the risk for some chronic diseases later in life. In addition to being more likely to develop heart disease and stroke than individuals with healthy weights, overweight and obese individuals are at increased risk for diabetes, cancer, gallbladder disease, sleep apnea and other respiratory problems, osteoarthritis, and other conditions.
- Adopting heart-healthy behaviors, such as following a healthy eating plan and participating in regular physical activity, can help individuals achieve or maintain a healthy weight. Even modest amounts of weight loss of approximately 10 percent of initial body weight can reduce high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol levels, and high blood glucose levels in overweight or obese

individuals with high levels. Reducing these risk factors helps to prevent cardiovascular disease and/or reduce its severity in those with existing disease.

Through Hearts N' Parks, science-based information about lifestyle choices that can reduce an individual's risk of heart disease and skills for incorporating heart healthy behaviors into one's life are taught as part of the regular activities offered by park and recreation departments and other community-based agencies. The program also provides tools for measuring the impact of these activities.

Hearts N' Parks also demonstrates the impact that community park and recreation programs can have on helping people improve and maintain their health. According to NRPA, 75 percent of Americans live within a 2-mile walking distance of a public park. These facilities are widely accessible to individuals from culturally and socioeconomically diverse populations, as well as to individuals with disabilities.

Key elements and benefits of Hearts N' Parks include:

- Hearts N' Parks activities can be incorporated into a variety of programs - nutrition and fitness activities, stress reduction or family life programs, etc. Activities can be adapted for children, youth, adults and seniors.
- Recreation and park departments and other community organizations receive staff training and resources to integrate heart-healthy activities into existing activities or to develop new activities.

Hearts N' Parks is fun and flexible. Each community agency can adapt the program material to its own design, abilities, and needs.



- Consumer-oriented materials are available to communicate heart-healthy messages related to weight management, physical activity, high blood pressure, cholesterol, and heart disease. In addition, materials targeted to specific populations, such as African Americans and Hispanics, are also available.

- Evaluation materials to measure the program's impact are included.
- Hearts N' Parks provides opportunities for community organizations to gain public recognition of their commitment to encouraging healthy behaviors, as well as to develop partnerships to further enrich their activities.

Hearts N' Parks was piloted during the summer of 1999 in 33 sites in 12 North Carolina communities involving more than 2,000 participants. An evaluation showed that participants retained information about heart-healthy behaviors and intended to eat healthier. In addition, children reported learning new physical activities and improving their performance in others; seniors reported feeling healthier and experiencing less pain in their daily lives by the end of the program.

Hearts N' Parks is fun and flexible. Each community agency can adapt the program material to its own design, abilities, and needs. And it's for everybody—participants can be young or old, active or non-active. Community organizations interested in signing up to become a Hearts N' Parks community should contact the National Recreation and Park Association at programs@nrpa.org or 1-800-649-3042.





Eat Right for a Healthy Heart



Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Fortunately, though, there are things you can do to protect yourself and your family against heart disease.

For example, following an eating plan that balances calorie intake with your level of physical activity and is low in saturated and total fat, and cholesterol, and rich in fruits and vegetables, lowfat dairy foods, and whole grains, can help protect you against high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and overweight—factors that, along with physical inactivity and smoking, increase the risk of heart disease.

This eating plan may also help prevent cancer and other health problems.

The earlier you take action, the better. Research shows that heart disease begins early in life and that, once learned, bad habits are hard to break. So you and your family should adopt a heart-healthy eating plan now.

Here's some advice about heart-healthy eating from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA):

- Balancing the calories in the foods you eat with the calories your body uses in physical activity is key to maintaining a healthy body weight, or even to losing weight if you are overweight. Being overweight increases your risk of developing high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabetes, and other serious diseases or conditions.
- The kinds and amounts of foods you eat can affect your ability to maintain weight. High-fat foods contain more calories per serving than other foods and increase the likelihood of weight gain. However, even when people eat less high-fat food, they still can gain weight from eating too much of foods high in starch, sugars, or proteins.
- Healthy people over age 2 should consume less than 10 percent of the day's total calories from saturated fat; no more than 30 percent of total calories from fat; and less than 300 milligrams of dietary cholesterol per day.
- Saturated fat raises cholesterol in the blood more than anything else eaten. Saturated fat is found mainly in animal foods. One way to cut down is to switch to lower-fat foods, including





Special Tips for Kids and Seniors

low-fat or fat-free dairy products and to remove skin from poultry.

- Cholesterol in the diet also can raise blood cholesterol. It is found only in foods from animals. Meat and poultry have similar amounts. Since eggs are especially high in cholesterol, limit intake to four eggs per week.
- Unsaturated fat does not raise blood cholesterol but can add calories. Be careful of extra calories when trying to lose weight.
- Another key to healthy eating is choosing foods lower in salt and sodium, which can affect blood pressure. Have no more than 2,400 mg of sodium a day—equal to about one teaspoon of table salt. This includes salt used in cooking. Instead, season food with herbs and spices. Also, snack on unsalted pretzels, popcorn without salt or butter, and crackers or fruits.
- Having an adequate intake of vitamins and minerals, especially potassium, calcium, and magnesium, also is important for lowering blood pressure.
- Limit alcohol, since it supplies calories but few or no nutrients—for example, no more than two 12-ounce beers in a day for men and one for women.
- To help you follow a heart-healthy eating plan, read food labels to choose foods that are lower in calories, total fat, saturated fat, and sodium.



American children are gaining weight. They are eating too many calories from high-calorie fast- and snack foods and not getting enough physical activity. Try cutting back on high-fat foods for your children by offering more fruits as snacks. Vegetables can be chopped into small

pieces and added to favorite recipes without kids noticing. Combine rice with vegetables. Whole wheat or bran breads add fiber to sandwiches. For desserts, offer fig bars, ginger snaps, graham crackers, or frozen fatfree dairy desserts.

Children often eat many meals away from home, making it harder to maintain good eating habits. To improve fast-food meals, order a small plain hamburger—it has less fat than fried or battered items—and hold the cheese or special sauce. Or, try lean roast beef and grilled or broiled chicken sandwiches or pita pockets with small pieces of meat and vegetables.

Seniors need to be diet-smart too. Maintaining a healthy body weight is important for older people, since we begin to lose weight as we age. Some weight may be lost from muscle, so be sure that your diet is rich in protein and carbohydrates while watching out for too many saturated fats.



Get moving for a healthy heart

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Fortunately, though, you can take steps to reduce your risk of heart disease. For example, getting regular physical activity can help protect you and your family against high blood pressure and overweight and obesity—factors that, along with high blood cholesterol and smoking, increase the risk of heart disease.

Staying active also helps keep off extra pounds, control blood pressure, boost the level of “good” HDL-cholesterol, and prevent diabetes and heart attacks. It also strengthens the lungs, tones the muscles, keeps the joints in good condition, improves balance, helps prevent and treat depression, and helps many people cope better with stress and anxiety.

If you already have heart disease, regular, moderate physical activity lowers your risk of death from heart-related causes. (However, if you have heart disease, check with your doctor first to find out what kinds of activities are best for you.)

The earlier you start, the better. The best time to start learning heart-healthy habits is in childhood, because heart disease risk factors start developing then too. Still, it’s never too late to begin living heart-healthy. This is true even for people in their ‘80s and ‘90s.

Here’s some advice about physical activity from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA):

- To reap benefits from physical activity, you don’t need to train for a marathon. You need

to engage in only about 30 minutes of moderate-level activity on most—and preferably all—days of the week. A moderate-level activity is one that’s about as demanding as brisk walking.

- Other examples of moderate physical activity that can improve heart health are bicycling, conditioning or general calisthenics, racquet sports (such as table tennis), jogging, swimming, dancing, housework, gardening, or lawn mowing.
- You can engage in any of these activities for 30 minutes at one time, or you can do them in shorter periods of at least 10 minutes each, as long as you total approximately 30 minutes each day.
- If you are already engaging in this level of physical activity, you will receive extra health and fitness benefits by doing these activities for a longer period each day or becoming involved in more vigorous activity.

Special Tips for Kids, Adults, and Seniors:

Young people should be physically active—both in and out of school. Instead of television, video games and the computer, kids need to be engaged in “active play,” such as tag, jump rope, hide and seek, or bicycling, or team activities like soccer, basketball, and softball.

Another way to increase children’s activity levels is to get them involved in everyday activities, like household chores, walking the dog, or helping with the groceries.

Take the time to be physically active as a family. This not only provides health benefits for the entire family but can be an important time to get to know each other better. Young kids particularly enjoy being involved in family fun, such as shooting hoops with dad or playing tennis with mom.



Adults who have not been active for a while should start slowly, gradually building up to the recommended 30 minutes per day of moderate-level activity. For example, if you want to begin walking regularly, you might begin with a 10–15-minute walk three times a week. As you become more fit, you can increase the sessions to every day and gradually lengthen each walking session or increase your pace. Some adults should get medical advice before starting a program of physical activity. Consult your doctor first if you:

- Have heart trouble or have had a heart attack;
- Are taking medicine for high blood pressure or a heart condition;

- Are over 50 years old and not used to moderately energetic activity;
- Have someone in your family who developed heart disease at an early age.

Seniors also need regular physical activity. Regular physical activity is good for your heart, mood, muscles, and arteries, and improves your bones

and ability to sleep well. It builds strength, promotes coordination and balance, and helps slow bone loss and prevent fractures from osteoporosis.

Many older people think they are too old or too frail to exercise. Nothing could be further from the truth. Physical activity of any kind—from heavy-duty exercise, such as jogging or bicycling, to easier efforts like walking—is good for you.

Older people who become more active—including those with medical problems—may feel better and have more energy. Being active is also an easy way to share some time with friends or family, as well as to meet new friends.

Keys to Success

- Go slow. If you have not been physically active until now, gradually build up to the recommended 30 minutes per day of moderate-level activity.
- Begin each workout slowly. Allow a 5-minute period of stretching and slow movement to “warm up” and 5 minutes at the end to “cool down” at a slower pace.
- Listen to your body. A certain amount of stiffness is normal at first. But if you hurt a joint or pull a muscle or tendon, stop the activity for several days to avoid more serious injury.
- Pay attention to warning signals. Some types of physical activity may worsen heart problems. Warning signals include sudden dizziness, cold sweat, paleness, fainting, or pain or pressure in your upper body or chest during—or just after—physical activity. If you notice any of these signs, stop and call your doctor immediately.
- Check the weather. Dress appropriately for hot, humid days and for cold days, and drink lots of water before, during, and after activity.
- Keep at it. Unless you have to stop your activity for a health reason, stay with it. Set small, short-term goals for yourself. If you find yourself becoming bored, try doing the activity with a friend or family member. Or switch to another activity.



Reproducibles



	Children	Adolescents	Adults
Healthy Eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat Right for a Healthy Heart • Snacks Like These Are Okay • Find the Foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay Young at Heart Menu • Dining Out—How to Choose • Foods in the Fast Lane • Putting Heart Healthy Eating Habits Into Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart Healthy Eating Plan • Help Your Family to Better Heart Health • Cooking the Heart-Healthy Way • Shop to Your Heart’s Content • Dining Out—How to Choose • Stay Young at Heart Menu
Physical Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get Moving Fast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Activity and Heart Disease IQ • Get Physical • Guide to Physical Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help Your Family to Better Heart Health • Physical Activity and Heart Disease IQ • Guide to Physical Activity
Obesity & Overweight		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Your Weight and Heart Disease IQ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines on Overweight and Obesity • Check Your Weight and Heart Disease IQ • Heart Healthy Eating Plan
High Blood Pressure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Heart IQ • High Blood Pressure Prevention IQ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Heart IQ • High Blood Pressure Prevention IQ
High Blood Cholesterol		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Heart IQ • Cholesterol and Heart Disease IQ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tips to Help Older Americans Control Cholesterol • Healthy Heart IQ • Cholesterol and Heart Disease IQ

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Healthy Eating



Eat Right

for a Healthy Heart

The foods you eat play a big part in keeping your blood cholesterol level low or high. It depends on the choices you make. Foods low in fat and cholesterol are good choices.

A type of fat, called saturated (SACH-uh-rate-id) fat, can really make your blood cholesterol go up. So can the cholesterol you eat. Cholesterol is not the same as saturated fat. A food can be low in cholesterol but high in saturated fat. Choosing foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol is important. This will help you lower your blood cholesterol level. And, this may help prevent heart problems when you get older.

FOODS HIGH IN SATURATED FAT

- ☹ Fatty cuts of beef, pork, and lamb, like hamburger and ribs
- ☹ Butter
- ☹ Whole milk and cream
- ☹ Most cheeses
- ☹ Ice cream
- ☹ Many cakes, cookies, and pies

FOODS HIGH IN CHOLESTEROL

- ☹ Egg yolks
- ☹ Liver

For a Healthy Heart:

- ♥ You can eat right.
- ♥ You can get plenty of exercise.
- ♥ Do not start smoking.

Build a **Balanced Diet**



“Diet” means the foods you eat most often.

A healthful diet is a balanced diet which is low in saturated fat and cholesterol. A balanced diet has the right amount of calories (KAL-uh-reez) and nutrients (NEW-tree-unts) your body needs. Calories provide you with energy to grow and move around. Fat of any kind provides more calories than any other nutrient. So you have to be careful not to eat too much. Other nutrients found in food are protein, carbohydrate (starch and sugars), vitamins, and minerals.



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P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563



Do you know what a balanced diet looks like?

The foods in A, B, and C below are low in saturated fat and cholesterol. Which of these do you think provide all the nutrients you need in one day?

- A.** Toast and fat-free milk
- B.** A baked potato and baked chicken leg
- C.** Lots of spinach
- D.** None of the above

The answer is D. No one food can give you all the nutrients your body needs. Even two foods, like those in A and B, do not give a balance. You need to eat a variety of foods every day.

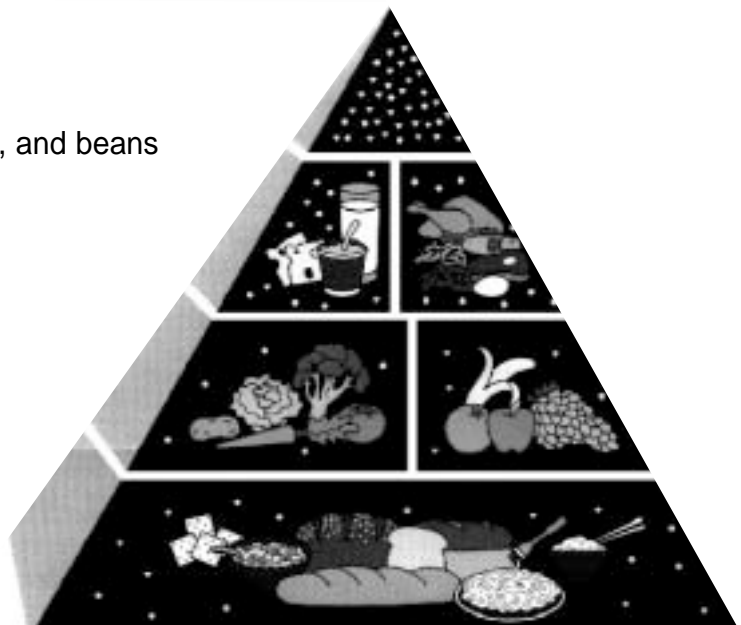
Foods can be put in groups. Each group provides different kinds of nutrients.

- ♥ Meat, poultry, and fish
- ♥ Milk and dairy products
- ♥ Breads, cereals, pasta, rice, dry peas, and beans
- ♥ Vegetables
- ♥ Fruits

To build a balanced diet:

Eat a variety of foods from each food group.

Choose those foods lower in saturated fat and cholesterol.

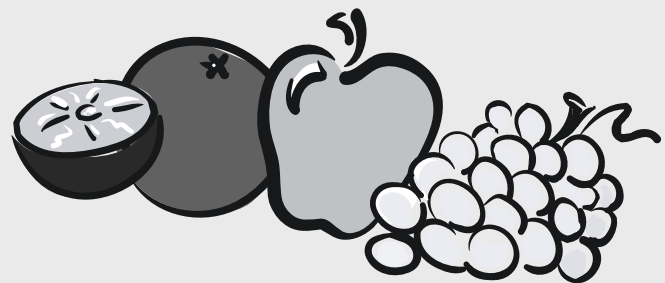


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Snacks Like These Are Okay!

- ☺ Fruit juices, drinks, punches
- ☺ Fat-free or 1% milk
- ☺ Frozen desserts like sherbet, sorbet, fruit ice, popsicles, ice milk, frozen yogurt
- ☺ Flavored low-fat yogurt, plain or with fruit
- ☺ Animal crackers, graham crackers
- ☺ Homemade cookies, cake, muffins, pudding made with less saturated fat and cholesterol
- ☺ Gingersnaps, fig bar cookies
- ☺ Angel food cake
- ☺ Candy like candy corn, gumdrops, hard candy
- ☺ Gelatin
- ☺ Canned, fresh, or dried fruit
- ☺ Vegetable sticks
- ☺ Air-popped popcorn
- ☺ Pretzels
- ☺ Peanut butter in celery sticks



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Find The Foods!

Look at the snacks in the list. Can you find these 11 snack foods in the picture? They are low in saturated fat and cholesterol. Color them after you find them.



- 1 Cold cereal with fat-free milk
- 2 Toast with jam or jelly
- 3 Popcorn
- 4 Popsicles or fruit slush
- 5 A bowl of fresh fruit
- 6 Flavored low-fat yogurt
- 7 Celery stalk filled with peanut butter
- 8 Peanuts in a shell
- 9 Fruit juice
- 10 Homemade muffin
- 11 Peanut butter spread on crackers



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Stay Young at Heart

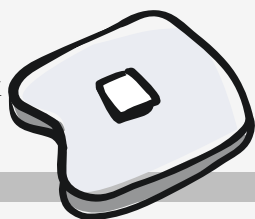
HERE ARE SOME MENU ITEMS TO CHOOSE AND SOME TO DECREASE FOR EACH MEAL.

Menu

BREAKFAST

CHOOSE:

Egg substitute
Hot or cold cereal
Toast with margarine and jam
English muffin or bagel with nonfat cream cheese
Fruit or juice
Fat-free or 1 percent milk
Canadian bacon



DECREASE:

Egg yolks, any style
Fried potatoes
Bacon or sausage
Biscuit, croissant, or sweet roll
Whole milk



LUNCH

CHOOSE:

Salad (with dressing on the side)
Regular-sized hamburger (hold the mayo)
Turkey, chicken, lean ham, or roast beef sandwich (hold the mayo)
Broth-based soups
Low fat or nonfat cottage cheese or yogurt with fresh fruit

DECREASE:

Deluxe sandwiches
Hot dogs or sausage
Breaded and fried chicken or fish
Cream-based soups
French fries, onion rings, or chips

DINNER

CHOOSE:

Pasta with low-fat sauce, such as marinara
Grilled or broiled fish or skinless chicken
Lean steak, trimmed of fat
Vegetarian entree (little or no cheese)
Baked potato with a little margarine or nonfat yogurt
Vegetables, plain
Low-fat desserts like fresh fruit, sorbet, sherbet, ice milk, or nonfat frozen yogurt

DECREASE:

Prime rib or untrimmed steaks or chops
Fried chicken
Cream sauces or gravies
Rich desserts, such as cake, cheesecake, or tortes



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Dining Out—How to Choose



GENERAL TIPS FOR HEALTHY DINING OUT

Whether or not you're trying to lose weight, you can eat healthfully when dining out or bringing in food, if you know how. The following tips will help you move toward healthier eating as you limit your calories, as well as fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium when eating out.

YOU ARE THE CUSTOMER

- Ask for what you want. Most restaurants will honor your requests.
- Ask questions. Don't be intimidated by the menu—your server will be able to tell you how foods are prepared or suggest substitutions on the menu.
- If you wish to reduce portion sizes, try ordering appetizers as your main meal.
- General tips: Limiting your calories and fat can be easy as long as you know what to order. Try asking these questions when you call ahead or before you order. Ask the restaurant, whether they would, on request, do the following:



- Serve nonfat (fat-free) milk rather than whole milk or cream.
- Reveal the type of cooking oil used.
- Trim visible fat off poultry or meat.
- Leave all butter, gravy, or sauces off a side dish or entree.
- Serve salad dressing on the side.
- Accommodate special requests if made in advance by telephone or in person.



Above all, don't get discouraged. There are usually several healthy choices to choose from at most restaurants.

READING THE MENU

- Choose lower calorie, low-fat cooking methods. Look for terms such as, “steamed in

its own juice” (au jus), “garden fresh,” “broiled,” “baked,” “roasted,” “poached,” “tomato juice,” “dry boiled” (in wine or lemon juice), or “lightly sautéed.”

- Be aware of foods high in calories, fat, and saturated fat. Watch out for terms such as “butter sauce,” “fried,” “crispy,” “creamed,” “in cream or cheese sauce,” “au gratin,” “au fromage,” “escaloped,” “parmesan,” “hollandaise,” “bearnaise,” “marinated (in oil),” “stewed,” “basted,” “sautéed,” “stir-fried,” “casserole,” “hash,” “prime,” “pot pie,” and “pastry crust.”

SPECIFIC TIPS FOR HEALTHY CHOICES

BREAKFAST

- Fresh fruit or small glass of citrus juice
- Whole grain bread, bagel, or English muffin with jelly or honey
- Whole grain cereal with low-fat (1%) or nonfat milk
- Oatmeal with nonfat milk topped with fruit
- Omelet made with egg whites or egg substitute
- Multigrain pancakes without butter on top
- Nonfat yogurt (try adding cereal or fresh fruit)



BEVERAGES

- Water with lemon
- Flavored sparkling water (noncaloric)
- Juice spritzer (half fruit juice and half sparkling water)
- Iced tea
- Tomato juice (reduced sodium)



BREAD

Most bread and bread sticks are low in calories and low in fat. The calories add up when you add butter, margarine, or olive oil to the bread.



Also, eating a lot of bread in addition to your meal will fill you up with extra unwanted calories and not leave enough room for fruits and vegetables.

APPETIZERS

- Steamed seafood
- Shrimp* cocktail (limit cocktail sauce—it's high in sodium)
- Melons or fresh fruit
- Bean soups
- Salad with reduced-fat dressing (or add lemon juice or vinegar)



***If you are on a cholesterol-lowering diet, eat shrimp and other shellfish in moderation.**

ENTREE

- Poultry, fish, shellfish, and vegetable dishes are healthy choices.
- Pasta with red sauce or with vegetables (primavera).
- Look for terms such as “baked,” “broiled,” “steamed,” “poached,” “lightly sauteed,” or “stir-fried.”
- Ask for sauces and dressings on the side.
- Limit the amount of butter, margarine, and salt you use at the table.



SALADS/SALAD BARS

- Fresh greens, lettuce, and spinach
- Fresh vegetables—tomato, mushroom, carrots, cucumber, peppers, onion, radishes, and broccoli
- Beans, chickpeas, and kidney beans
- Skip the nonvegetable choices: deli meats, bacon, egg, cheese, and croutons.
- Choose lower calorie, reduced fat or fat free dressing, lemon juice, or vinegar.



SIDE DISH

- Vegetables and starches (rice, potato, noodles) make good additions to meals and can also be combined for a lower calorie alternative to higher calorie entrees.
- Ask for side dishes without butter or margarine.
- Ask for mustard, salsa, or low-fat yogurt instead of sour cream or butter.



DESSERT/COFFEE

- Fresh fruit
- Nonfat frozen yogurt
- Sherbet or fruit sorbet (these are usually fat free, but check the calorie content)
- Try sharing a dessert.
- Ask for lowfat milk for your coffee (instead of cream or half-and-half).



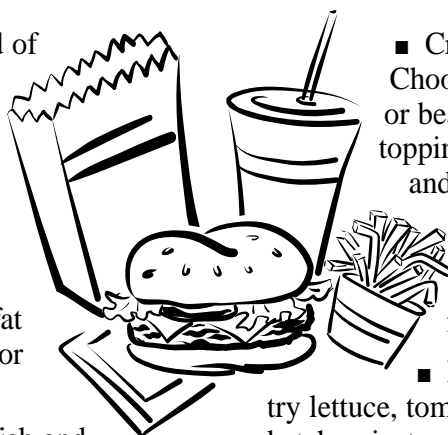
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phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563



Foods --- *In The Fast Lane*

When you eat in a heart-healthy way, you don't have to give up eating fast foods completely. You can eat right and still eat fast foods if you select carefully. Here are some tips on fast foods to choose:

- Order a small hamburger instead of a larger one. Try the lower-fat hamburger. Hold the extra sauce.
- Order roast beef for a leaner choice than most burgers.
- Order a baked potato instead of French fries. Be careful of high-fat toppings like sour cream, butter, or cheese.
- Order grilled, broiled, or baked fish and chicken.
- Order fat-free or 1 percent milk instead of a milkshake. Try the low-fat frozen yogurt or low-fat milkshake.
- Order a salad. Use vinegar and oil or low-calorie dressing more often than creamy salad dressing.



- Create a salad at the salad bar. Choose any raw vegetables, fruits, or beans. Limit high saturated fat toppings of cheese, fried noodles, and bacon bits as well as some salads made with mayonnaise. Also limit salad dressings high in saturated fat and cholesterol.
- For sandwich toppings, try lettuce, tomato, onion, mustard, and ketchup instead of high saturated fat toppings such as cheese, bacon, special sauces, or butter.
- Order pizza with vegetable toppings such as peppers, mushrooms, or onions instead of extra cheese, pepperoni, or sausage.

Let's see how small changes can add up to big changes with the following sample fast-food meals.

	Typical Meal	Lower-Fat Choice
	Cheeseburger	Hamburger
	Large French fries	1/2 small French fries
	12-ounce cola	12-ounce cola
	Vanilla ice milk cone	Low-fat frozen yogurt cone
Saturated Fat(g)	16	6
Dietary Cholesterol(mg)	78	38
Total Fat(g)	40	19
Total Calories	990	649



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phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563



Putting Heart Healthy Eating Habits Into Play-

Foods to **choose** and foods to **lose**

This is a Who's Who of foods. Use it to learn about food groups and their nutrients. It lists foods in **choose** and **decrease** columns. It also gives recommended serving numbers and sizes. Some serving numbers differ for guys and girls. That's because guys often need more calories. The amount of a single serving is given in parentheses beside the food.

Do:

Choose foods from each food group every day.

Select food group items more often from the "**choose**" column than the "**decrease**" column.

MEAT, POULTRY, FISH, & SHELLFISH

Nutrients: Protein, minerals (especially iron), vitamins, saturated fat, and cholesterol.

Servings/day: Up to 6 ounces cooked (3 ounces of cooked meat is about the size of a deck of cards).

CHOOSE

Lean cuts of meat with fat trimmed, like:

Beef—round, sirloin, chuck, loin, extra lean hamburger

Lamb—leg, arm, loin, rib

Pork—tenderloin, leg, shoulder (arm or picnic)

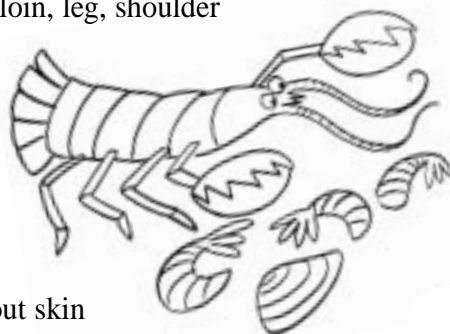
Veal—all trimmed cuts except ground

Poultry without skin

Fish

Shellfish like crabs, clams, and scallops

Lean luncheon meat like turkey ham, turkey, lean ham, or lean roast beef. Chicken hot dogs—these are lower in saturated fat than beef or pork hot dogs. But "lower" doesn't equal "low." So make them a once-in-a-while choice.



DECREASE

Cuts of meat, like:

Beef—regular hamburger, short ribs, corned beef brisket

Pork—spareribs, blade roll

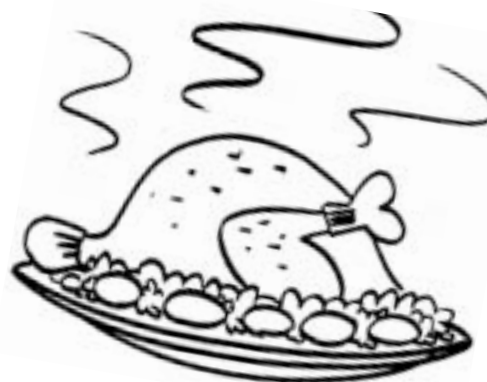
Bacon, sausage

Poultry with skin, fried chicken

Fried fish and fried shellfish

Organ meats like liver, kidney, sweetbread, brain

Regular luncheon meat like bologna, salami, sausage, beef or pork hot dogs





Foods to **choose** and foods to **lose**...

DAIRY PRODUCTS

Nutrients: Protein, vitamins, minerals (especially calcium), saturated fat, and cholesterol.

Servings/day: 4

Note: The numbers in parentheses below are equal to 1 serving.

CHOOSE

Milk (1 cup)—fat-free milk, 1% milk (fluid, powdered, evaporated); buttermilk

Yogurt (1 cup)—nonfat or low-fat yogurt; yogurt beverages

Cottage cheese (1/2 cup)—low-fat or non-fat

Cheese (1 oz.)—low-fat cheeses labeled no more than 3 grams of fat per ounce

Frozen dairy dessert (1/2 cup)—ice milk, low-fat frozen yogurt

Sour cream—low-fat and fat-free

DECREASE

Whole milk (fluid, evaporated, condensed); 2% low-fat milk; imitation milk

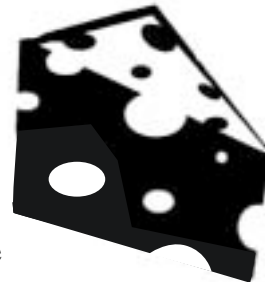
Whole-milk yogurt; custard-style yogurt; whole-milk yogurt beverages

Cottage cheese (4% fat)

High-fat cheese like American, blue, Brie, cheddar, Colby, Edam, Monterey Jack, Parmesan, Swiss; cream cheese

Ice cream

Cream like half and half, whipping cream, sour cream



DON'T HAVE A COW



“One of the easiest things to change is drinking 1% milk instead of whole milk. And now there are lots of substitutes for ice cream.”

Maria, 15

Dairy foods are a great source of calcium and protein. Eating foods high in calcium helps bones grow and stay strong. As a teen, your bones are growing quickly. So now is the best time in your life to eat foods rich in calcium. Girls, especially, need to eat foods high in calcium. A very good choice is low-fat dairy products, which are not only rich in calcium but also low in saturated fat and cholesterol.



Foods to **choose** and foods to **lose**...

BREADS, CEREALS, PASTA, RICE, DRY PEAS, & BEANS

Nutrients: Carbohydrates, protein, vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

Servings/day: 12 for guys and 8 for girls.

Note: The numbers in parentheses below are equal to 1 serving.

CHOOSE

Bread (1 slice)—whole-grain bread; hamburger and hot-dog buns (1/2 a bun); bagels (1/2); tortilla (1)

Cereal (1 cup ready-to-eat, 1/3 cup bran or 1/2 cup cooked)—oat, wheat, corn, multigrain

Pasta (1/2 cup cooked)—plain noodles, spaghetti, macaroni

Rice (1/2 cup cooked)

Low-fat crackers—animal crackers (8); graham (3); saltine-type (6)

Homemade baked goods using unsaturated oil, fat-free or 1% milk, and egg substitutes—quick bread (1 slice); 2" biscuit (1); cornbread muffin (1); bran muffin (1); 4" pancake (1); 9" diameter waffle (1/4)

Dry beans, peas and legumes (1/2 cup cooked)—split peas, black-eyed peas, chick peas, kidney beans, navy beans, lentils, soybeans, soybean curd (tofu)

Soup like chicken or beef noodle, tomato, vegetable

DECREASE

Bread in which eggs are a major ingredient; croissants, butter rolls, cheese bread

Granola-type cereals

Egg noodles and pasta containing egg yolk

Pasta and rice prepared with cream, butter, or cheese sauces

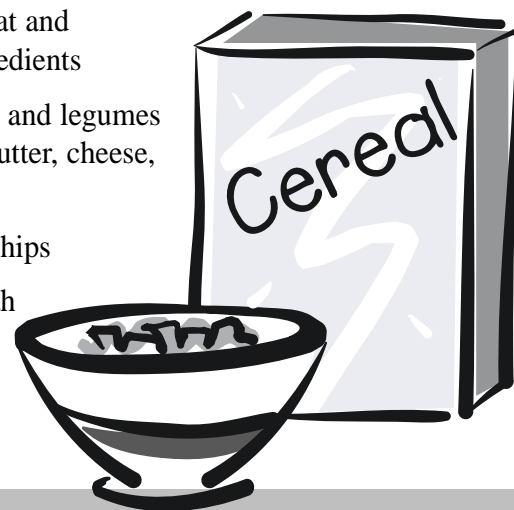
High-fat crackers—cheese crackers, butter crackers, or others made with saturated fats

Commercial baked pastries, muffins, biscuits, doughnuts, sweet rolls, Danish pastry using high saturated fat and cholesterol ingredients

Dry beans, peas and legumes prepared with butter, cheese, or cream sauce

Potato or corn chips

Soups made with cream or whole milk



VEGETABLES

Nutrients: Carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

Servings/day: 4 for guys and 3 for girls.

Note: The numbers in parentheses below are equal to 1 serving.

CHOOSE

Vegetables (1/2 cup)—fresh, frozen, or canned



DECREASE

Vegetables prepared with butter, cheese, or cream sauce

Fried vegetables like French fries



Foods to **choose** and foods to **lose**...

FRUITS

Nutrients: Carbohydrates, fiber, and vitamins.

Servings/day: 5 for guys and 3 for girls.

Note: The numbers in parentheses below are equal to 1 serving.

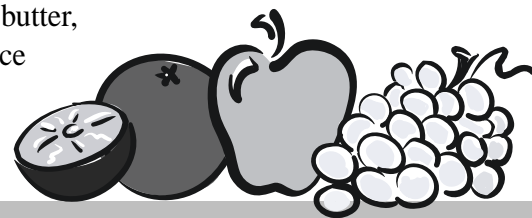
CHOOSE

Fruit (1/2 cup or medium-size piece)—fresh, frozen, canned, or dried

Fruit juice (1/2 cup)—fresh, frozen, or canned

DECREASE

Fried fruit like banana chips or fruit served with butter, cream sauce, or ice cream



FATS & OILS

Nutrients: saturated and unsaturated fats, cholesterol, and very small amounts of vitamins and minerals.

Servings/day: 10 for guys and 5 for girls.

Note: The numbers in parentheses below are equal to 1 serving.

CHOOSE

Unsaturated oils (1 tsp.)—sunflower, safflower, sesame, soybean, corn, olive, canola oil

Margarine or shortening (1 tsp.)—made from unsaturated oils listed above; light or diet margarine (2 tsp.)

Salad dressings (1 tbsp.)—dressings made with unsaturated oils listed above; low-fat or oil-free dressings (serving size depends on amount of oil)

Seeds and nuts (1 tbsp.)—peanut butter, other nut butters*

Cocoa powder (as desired)

Olives (5 small) and avocado (1/8 of whole)*

DECREASE

Saturated oils—coconut oil, palm kernel oil, palm oil

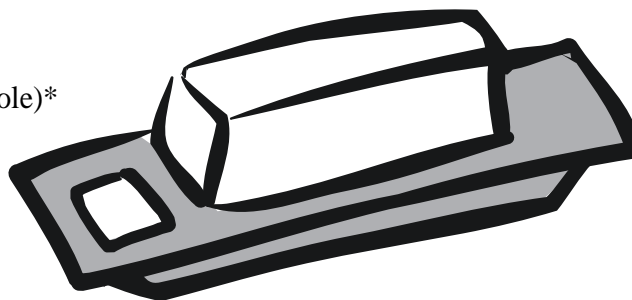
Butter, lard, bacon fat

Shortening

Dressings made with egg yolk, cheese, sour cream, whole milk

Coconut

Chocolate



* These are listed because they are high in unsaturated fat.



Foods to **choose** and foods to **lose**...

SWEETS & SNACKS

Nutrients: Saturated fat, cholesterol, and carbohydrates.

Servings/day: 4 for guys and 3 for girls.

Note: The numbers in parentheses below are equal to 1 serving.

CHOOSE

Beverages (6 fl. oz.)—fruit-flavored drinks; lemonade, fruit punch

Sweets (1-1/2 tbsp.)—sugar, syrup, honey, jam, preserves; candy (3/4 oz.) made primarily with sugar (candy corn, gumdrops, hard candy); fruit-flavored gelatin (1/2 cup)

Low-fat frozen desserts (1/3 cup)—sherbet, sorbet, fruit ice, popsicles, low-fat frozen yogurt

Cookies (2), cake (1 slice), pie (1 slice), pudding (1/2 cup)—all prepared with egg whites, egg substitute, fat-free or 1% milk, and unsaturated oil or margarine; plain popcorn (3 cups); gingersnaps (2); fig bar cookies (1); angel food cake (1 slice)

DECREASE

Candy made with chocolate, butter, cream, coconut oil, palm oil, palm kernel oil

Ice cream and frozen treats made with ice cream or whole milk

Commercial baked high-fat cookies, cakes, cream pies, doughnuts



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P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563





The Heart-Healthy

Eating Plan

The foods you eat play a big part in keeping your heart healthy. But, what exactly is a heart-healthy eating plan?

And is a heart-healthy eating plan important for everyone? All healthy Americans, 2 years of age or older, should eat in a way that is lower in total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, and extra calories.

Heart disease is still the number one killer of both men and women in the United States. High blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, overweight, and physical inactivity increase your risk of getting heart disease. The good news is that you can change these risk factors and reduce your risk of heart disease.

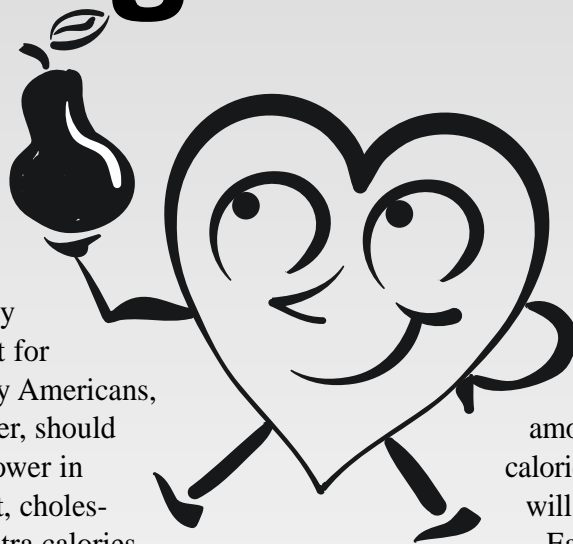
In order to help your family eat in a heart-healthy way, follow these recommendations.

1 Choose foods low in saturated fat.

All foods that contain fat are made up of a mixture of saturated and unsaturated fats. Saturated fat raises your blood cholesterol level more than anything else you eat. The best way to reduce blood cholesterol is to choose foods lower in saturated fat. Less than 10 percent of the calories in your diet should come from saturated fat. One way to help your family do this is by choosing foods such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains—foods naturally low in total fat and high in starch and fiber.

2 Choose foods low in total fat.

Since many foods high in total fat are also high in saturated fat, eating foods low in



total fat will help your family eat less saturated fat. No more than 30 percent of the calories in your diet should come from fat. When you do eat fat, substitute unsaturated fat—either polyunsaturated or monounsaturated—for saturated fat. But, watch the amount. Fat is a rich source of calories, so eating foods low in fat will also help you eat fewer calories.

Eating fewer calories can help you lose weight and, if you are overweight, losing weight is an important part of lowering your blood cholesterol.

3 Choose foods high in starch and fiber.

Foods high in starch and fiber are excellent substitutes for foods high in saturated fat. These foods—breads, cereals, pasta, grains, fruits, and vegetables—are low in saturated fat and cholesterol. They are also lower in calories than foods that are high in fat. But limit fatty toppings and spreads like butter and sauces made with cream and whole milk dairy products. Foods high in starch and fiber are also good sources of vitamins and minerals.

When eaten as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, foods with soluble fiber—like oat and barley bran and dry peas and beans—may help to lower blood cholesterol.

4 Choose foods low in cholesterol.

Remember, dietary cholesterol can raise blood cholesterol, although usually not as much as saturated fat. So it's important for your family to choose foods low in dietary





cholesterol. Strive for less than 300 milligrams of cholesterol a day. Dietary cholesterol is found only in foods that come from animals. And even if an animal food is low in saturated fat, it may be high in cholesterol; for instance, organ meats (like liver) and egg yolks are low in saturated fat but high in cholesterol. Egg whites and foods from plant sources do not have cholesterol.

5 Choose foods lower in salt and sodium.

Americans eat more salt (sodium chloride) and other forms of sodium than they need. Often, when people with high blood pressure cut back on salt and sodium, their blood pressure falls. Cutting back on salt and sodium also prevents blood pressure from rising. African Americans, the elderly, and persons with certain illnesses are more affected by sodium than others. Since there's really no practical way to predict exactly who will be affected by sodium, it makes sense to limit intake of salt and sodium to help prevent high blood pressure.

Americans, especially people with high blood pressure, should eat no more than about 6 grams of salt a day, which equals about 2,400 milligrams of sodium (the daily reference value you see on the new food label). That's about 1 teaspoon of table salt. But remember to keep track of ALL salt eaten—including that in processed foods and added during cooking or at the table.

6 Maintain a healthy weight, and lose weight if you are overweight.



People who are overweight tend to have higher blood cholesterol levels. And, as body weight increases, blood pressure increases. Overweight adults with an “apple shape”—bigger (pot) belly—tend to have a higher risk for heart disease than those with a “pear” shape—bigger hips and thighs. Whatever your body shape, when you cut the fat in your diet, you cut down on the richest source of calories. However, even some low-fat foods are high in calories. So it is not only what you eat but how much you eat. An eating pattern of foods high in starch and fiber, instead of fat and calories, in moderation is a good way to help control weight.

7 Be more physically active.

Being physically active helps improve blood cholesterol levels. Being more active also can help you lose weight, lower your blood pressure, improve the fitness of your heart and blood vessels, and reduce stress. And being active together is great for the entire family.



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P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563



Help Your Family To Better Heart Health

It is good to tell children and teenagers to eat right and be physically active; it is even better to show them. Encourage children to eat for the health of their heart, and teach them that what they eat makes a difference in how their body looks, feels, and grows. Here are some tips to help your family develop healthful habits.

KNOW THE GUIDELINES TO HEART-HEALTHY EATING.

Choosing foods lower in saturated fat, total fat, cholesterol, and sodium is important to your success in heart-healthy eating. Here are the basic guidelines:

- Less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat
- An average of no more than 30 percent of calories from fat
- Less than 300 milligrams of dietary cholesterol a day
- Enough calories to support growth and to reach or maintain a healthy weight
- No more than 2,400 milligrams of sodium a day.

BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL.

Set a good example. Adults, particularly parents, are a major influence on children's behavior. Children also are influenced by television, radio, magazines, advertisements, friends, brothers and sisters, and others who may not follow your ways. If you follow a heart-healthy lifestyle, your children will be more likely to do the same. Being physically active with your child also sets a good example.

LEARN TO CHOOSE HEART-HEALTHY FOODS.

Learn to choose foods lower in saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium within each of the different groups. This will help you buy and provide such foods and snacks at home.



Choose heart-healthy foods from:

- Meat, poultry, fish, and shellfish
- Dairy products
- Eggs and egg substitutes
- Fruits and vegetables
- Breads, cereals, pasta, rice, and dry peas and beans
- Sweets and snacks.

STOCK THE KITCHEN.

Stock the kitchen with foods that are lower in saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium from each of the food groups. Prepare these foods in large quantities to be frozen for quick use later. Foods such as casseroles, soups, and breads can be frozen in individual servings for a quick meal. The whole family will then have heart-healthy meals on hand. Have healthy snacks such as fruit, English muffin mini-pizzas, cereal mixes, lower fat microwave popcorn, or frozen fruit bars easily available.

TEACH BASIC FOOD PREPARATION SKILLS.

Teach children how to clean vegetables, make salads, and use the stove, oven, microwave, and toaster safely. Children who have basic cooking skills appreciate food more and are more inclined to try new foods. Teach your children to read the food labels.



PLAN FAMILY MEALS.

Eating meals as a family can encourage heart-healthy eating habits in children. The more you create a family setting where everyone shares the same nutritious meals, the more likely children will accept healthful eating as a way of life. Try to maintain regular family meals as often as you can. This way, the whole family can learn about healthful eating and build good eating habits.

ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

Make time for physical activity. Encourage children to get some exercise throughout the day and especially on weekends. Take trips that involve activities like hiking, swimming,

and skiing. Join in the fun. Ride bikes, run, skate, or walk to places close by. Give your child a splash or dance party. Use your backyard or local park for basketball, baseball, football, badminton, or volleyball.

To be really heart-healthy, physical activity for children needs to raise their heart and breathing rates, last 15 to 30 minutes without stopping, and be repeated at least three times a week.

Children can participate in these activities on their own to help keep their hearts strong.

Bicycling
Dancing
Jumping rope
Running
Brisk walking
Jogging
Roller blading
Skating



Here are some heart-healthy group activities.

Baseball and softball
Basketball
Cross-country skiing
Football
Frisbee
Gymnastics
Hiking and backpacking
Ice and field hockey
Racquetball
Rowing
Soccer
Swimming
Tennis



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P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563

Cooking The Heart-Healthy Way



Now it's time to learn about some easy cooking tips to cut down on calories, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium.

MEAT, POULTRY, AND FISH

Before cooking meat, poultry, or fish:

- Trim fat from meat; remove the skin and fat from poultry.
- If you buy tuna or other canned fish packed in oil, rinse it in a strainer before cooking. Better yet, buy canned fish packed in water. If you are watching your sodium to help lower blood pressure, be sure to rinse the fish whether it is packed in oil or water.

Changes in your cooking style also can help to lower fat.

- Bake, broil, microwave, poach, or roast instead of frying.
- When you do fry, use a nonstick pan and a nonstick cooking spray or a very small amount of oil or margarine.
- When you roast meat or make meatloaf, place the meat on a rack so the fat can drip away.
- When a recipe calls for ground meat, brown the meat and drain well before adding to other ingredients.
- If you baste meats and poultry, use fat-free ingredients like wine, tomato juice, lemon juice, or defatted beef or chicken broth instead of the fatty drippings.

SAUCES, SOUPS, AND CASSEROLES

- After making sauces or soups, cool them in the refrigerator and skim the fat from the top. Treat canned broth-style soups the same way. Try low-sodium or reduced-sodium soups.
- When making casseroles with cheese, try lower-fat cheese. Or use less regular cheese than what the recipe calls for. If you use a sharp-flavored cheese, you won't taste the difference.
- When you make creamed soup or white sauces, use fat-free, 1 percent, or evaporated

fat-free milk instead of 2 percent milk, whole milk, or cream.

- To make a low-fat sauce, thicken it with cornstarch or flour.
- Make main dishes with pasta, rice, or dry peas and beans. If you add meat, use small pieces just for flavoring instead of the main ingredient.

SEASONING AND CONDIMENTS

- Use small amounts of lean meats instead of salt pork or fat back to flavor vegetables while cooking.
- Flavor cooked vegetables with herbs or butter-flavored seasoning instead of butter or margarine.
- Use herbs, spices, and no salt seasoning blends to bring out the flavor of foods. Try using garlic, garlic powder, onion, or onion powder instead of garlic salt and onion salt.
- Use salt sparingly in cooking, and use less salt at the table. Reduce the amount a little each day until no salt is used.
- Limit salty condiments like olives and pickles.

CONVENIENCE FOODS

And for those times when you don't feel like cooking:

- Use your own convenience foods—low-fat casseroles and soups that you have cooked ahead and then frozen in small batches.
- Check the nutrition labels to choose frozen dinners and pizzas that are lower in saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium. Make sure the dinners have vegetables, fruits, and grains—or add them on the side.
- Use fewer sauces, mixes, and “instant” products, including flavored rices, pastas, and cereal, which usually have added salt.
- Use vegetables that are fresh, frozen without sauce, or canned with no salt added.



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Shop

To Your Heart's Content

Use this handy guide to shop for a variety of heart-healthy foods. By eating a variety of foods each day, you will get the nutrients you need. Remember to use the food labels. Look for the words low-fat, lean, and light. The Federal Government has defined these words to help consumers find heart-healthy foods that contain less saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium.



MEAT, POULTRY, FISH, AND SHELLFISH

CHOOSE MORE OFTEN

Lean cuts of meat with fat trimmed before cooking:

Beef—round, top loin, sirloin, chuck arm pot roast, lean ground beef (< 7% fat)

Lamb—leg shank, fore shank, whole leg, loin, sirloin

Pork—tenderloin, sirloin, top loin

Veal—cutlets, ground, shoulder, sirloin, rib roast

Turkey and chicken, skinless

Most seafood~

Low-fat lunchmeat and hotdogs*

CHOOSE LESS OFTEN

Fatty cuts of meat:

Beef—ribs, brisket, chuck blade roast, ground (regular)

Lamb—chops and rib

Pork—spareribs, blade, centerloin

Goose, duck

Liver, kidney

Sausage, bacon

Turkey and chicken, with skin

Eel, pompano, and mackerel

Regular lunchmeat and hotdogs



DAIRY PRODUCTS

CHOOSE MORE OFTEN

Fat-free or 1 percent milk

Nonfat or low-fat yogurt

Cheese with 3 grams of fat or less per ounce*

Low-fat or nonfat sour cream

CHOOSE LESS OFTEN

Whole or 2 percent milk

Cream, most nondairy creamers

Whipped cream or nondairy topping

Whole milk yogurt

Cheese with more than 3 grams of fat per ounce

Sour cream

~ Shrimp, abalone, and squid are low in fat but high in sodium.

* Choices may be higher in sodium.





EGGS

CHOOSE MORE OFTEN

Egg whites
Cholesterol-free or cholesterol-reduced egg substitutes*

CHOOSE LESS OFTEN

Egg yolks



FATS AND OILS

CHOOSE MORE OFTEN

Unsaturated vegetable oils: corn, olive, canola, sesame, soybean, sunflower, safflower
Soft margarine made with unsaturated fats listed above as first ingredient
Low-fat or nonfat salad dressings
Reduced or nonfat mayonnaise

CHOOSE LESS OFTEN

Lard, butter, palm kernel oil, palm oil, beef tallow, cocoa butter, coconut oil
Hydrogenated fats and oils
Margarine or shortening made with fats listed above
Dressing made with egg yolk
Fried foods

FRUITS

CHOOSE MORE OFTEN

Fresh, frozen, canned, dried fruit, and fruit in its own juice

CHOOSE LESS OFTEN

Fried fruit such as fried apples



VEGETABLES

CHOOSE MORE OFTEN

Fresh, frozen, or canned* vegetables

CHOOSE LESS OFTEN

Vegetables prepared in butter, cream, sauce, or fried

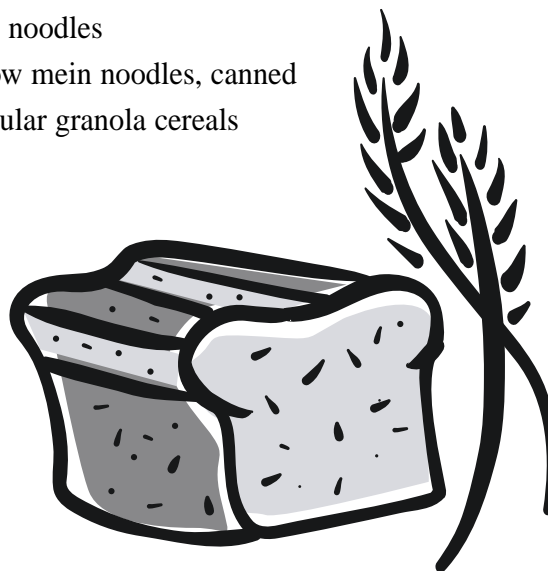
BREADS, CEREALS, PASTA, RICE AND GRAINS, DRY PEAS AND BEANS

CHOOSE MORE OFTEN

Breads, white or whole grain, such as pita, bagel, English muffin, sandwich buns, dinner rolls
Rice cake
Corn tortilla
Low-fat crackers like matzo, bread sticks, rye crackers, saltines*
Pancakes, waffles
Lower-fat biscuits, muffins, hot cereals, most cold cereals*
Rice, barley, bulgur
Dry peas and beans
Pasta

CHOOSE LESS OFTEN

Croissants, pastry, doughnuts, coffee cake, butter rolls
Snack crackers like cheese and butter crackers
Pasta, grain, and potato dishes made with cream, butter, or cheese
Egg noodles
Chow mein noodles, canned
Regular granola cereals



* Choices may be higher in sodium.



SWEETS AND SNACKS

CHOOSE MORE OFTEN

Nonfat and low-fat frozen desserts like sherbet, sorbet, Italian ice, frozen yogurt, frozen fruit juice bars

Low-fat or nonfat baked goods like brownies, cakes, cupcakes, pastries, fig and other fruit bars, vanilla or lemon wafers, graham crackers, gingersnaps

Jelly beans, hard candy, fruit leather

Plain popcorn, pretzels, no-oil baked chips*

(Remember that baked goods and frozen desserts are high in sugar and may be high in calories.)

*Choices may be higher in sodium.

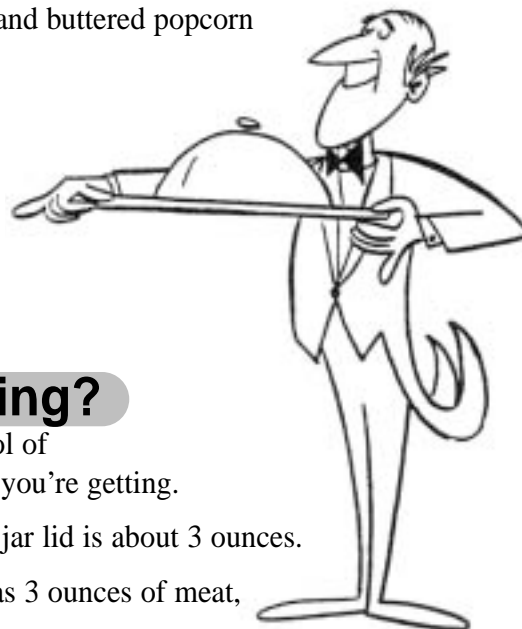
CHOOSE LESS OFTEN

High-fat frozen desserts, like ice cream, frozen tofu, whole-milk frozen yogurt

High-fat baked goods, like most store-bought pound and frosted cakes, pies, cookies

Milk chocolate

Fried chips and buttered popcorn



Do You Know How Much You Are Serving?

Learning about portion sizes is an important part of being in control of what you eat. Here are some tips to help you know just how much you're getting.

- **Jar Lid:** A piece of meat the size of a pint or quart mayonnaise jar lid is about 3 ounces.
- **Deck of cards:** A standard deck of cards is about the same size as 3 ounces of meat, poultry, or fish.
- **Measuring cups:** To find out how much you're serving your family at meals, try dishing it up with measuring cups. After a few tries, it should be easy to judge how big the portions are.

How Much Sodium Is in Your Food?

- Most canned vegetables, vegetable juices, and frozen vegetables with sauce are higher in sodium than fresh or frozen ones cooked without added salt.
- Sodium content of milk products varies. Lowest are milk and yogurt. Natural cheese contains a bit more, followed by cottage cheese, then processed cheeses, cheese foods, and cheese spreads.
- Most fresh meats, poultry, and fish are low in sodium. Most cured and processed meats such as hotdogs, sausage, and lunchmeats are higher in sodium because sodium is used as a preservative.
- "Convenience" foods such as frozen dinners and combination dishes, canned soups, and dehydrated mixes for soups, sauces, and salad dressings often contain a lot of sodium.



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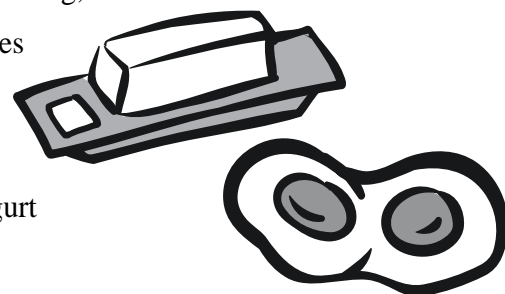


New Ways To Use Favorite Recipes

Lots of special cookbooks and recipe booklets can help you lower the fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium when you cook. But you don't have to throw out your favorite cookbook or recipes that you've been using for years. Just cut down on the high-fat, high-sodium ingredients, and substitute ingredients that are lower in saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium as much as possible. Some recipes may change in texture and consistency when you use these substitutions.

Recipe Substitutions

Instead of	Use
Whole milk	Fat-free or 1 percent milk
Evaporated milk	Evaporated fat-free milk
Light cream	Equal amounts of 1 percent milk and evaporated fat-free milk
Heavy cream	Evaporated fat-free milk
1 cup butter	1 cup soft margarine or 2/3 cup vegetable oil*
Shortening or lard	Soft margarine*
Mayonnaise or salad dressing	Nonfat or light mayonnaise or salad dressing; Mustard in sandwiches
1 whole egg	1/4 cup egg substitute or 2 egg whites
Cheese	Lower fat cheese ⁺
Cream cheese	Nonfat or light cream cheese
Sour cream	Nonfat or low-fat sour cream or yogurt
Fat for greasing pan	Nonstick cooking spray
1 ounce baking chocolate	3 tablespoons cocoa powder plus 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
Regular bouillon or broth	Low sodium bouillon and broth
Fatback, neck bone, or ham hocks	Skinless chicken thighs
Pork bacon	Turkey bacon, lean ham, or Canadian bacon (omit if on low sodium diet)
Pork sausage	Ground skinless turkey breast
Ground beef and pork	Ground skinless turkey breast



* The texture of baked goods may be different when you use these substitutions.
 "Light" margarine is not recommended for baking. Experiment to find out what works best for you.
⁺ Some salad dressings, processed cheeses, and cottage cheese are very high in sodium.
 Omit if on a low-sodium diet or substitute a product that is low in sodium and fat.



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Physical Activity



Get Moving *Fast*

Can you run for a bus without huffing and puffing?

Physical activity is good for you and your heart. Your heart, like every other muscle, gets stronger with exercise. The right kind of exercise will help you and your heart become more fit. The more fit your heart is, the better it works. The more fit you are, the longer you can exercise without getting tired. You will be able to run for the bus without huffing and puffing.

Physical activity is fun for everyone. There are all kinds of activities you can do. You can enjoy exercise by yourself, with a friend, or your family. Find what is right for you.

Exercise is good for you and your heart.

These Activities Are Good for Your Heart

Fast walking

Soccer

Swimming

Dancing

Skating

Frisbee®

Hockey

Hiking

Tennis

Running

Basketball

Jumping rope

Skipping

Kickball

Skiing

Rowing

Bicycling

Handball

The good things physical activity does for YOU

- Your heart gets strong because it gets a good workout.
- Your muscles look and feel firm and work better.
- You can breathe easier.
- You burn off calories which will help keep you from getting fat.
- You have more energy.

The letters in some of the activities listed above are now all mixed up. Can you write the word the way it should be?

mniwgims _____

creocs _____

gpsnpkii _____

cdainng _____

sfta likngaw _____

pmjungl proe _____

kistnga _____

nugnri _____

ksabtelbal _____



NHLBI Health Information Center
P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563



Check Your Physical Activity and Heart Disease

Test how much you know about how physical activity affects your heart. Mark each question true or false. See how you did by checking the answers on the back of this sheet.



- 1** Regular physical activity can reduce your chances of getting heart disease.
 T F
- 2** Most people get enough physical activity from their normal daily routine.
 T F
- 3** You don't have to train like a marathon runner to become more physically fit.
 T F
- 4** Exercise programs do not require a lot of time to be very effective.
 T F
- 5** People who need to lose some weight are the only ones who will benefit from regular physical activity.
 T F
- 6** All exercises give you the same benefits.
 T F
- 7** The older you are, the less active you need to be.
 T F
- 8** It doesn't take a lot of money or expensive equipment to become physically fit.
 T F
- 9** There are many risks and injuries that can occur with exercise.
 T F
- 10** You should always consult a doctor before starting a physical activity program.
 T F
- 11** People who have had a heart attack should not start any physical activity program.
 T F
- 12** To help stay physically active, include a variety of activities.
 T F





Answers

To the Check Your Physical Activity and Heart Disease I.Q. Quiz

- 1 True.** Heart disease is almost twice as likely to develop in inactive people. Being physically inactive is a risk factor for heart disease along with cigarette smoking, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and being overweight. The more risk factors you have, the greater your chance for heart disease. Regular physical activity (even mild to moderate exercise) can reduce this risk.
- 2 False.** Most Americans are very busy but not very active. Every American adult should make a habit of getting 30 minutes of low-to-moderate levels of physical activity daily. This includes walking, gardening, and walking up stairs. If you are inactive now, begin by doing a few minutes of activity each day. If you only do some activity every once in a while, try to work something into your routine every day.
- 3 True.** Low- to moderate-intensity activities, such as pleasure walking, stair climbing, yard work, moderate-to-heavy housework, dancing, and home exercises can have both short- and long-term benefits. If you are inactive, the key is to get started. One great way is to take a walk for 10 to 15 minutes during your lunch break, or take your dog for a walk every day. At least 30 minutes of physical activity every day can help improve your heart health and lower your risk of heart disease.
- 4 True.** It takes only a few minutes a day to become more physically active. If you don't have 30 minutes in your schedule for an exercise break, try to find two 15-minute periods or even three 10-minute periods. Once you discover how much you enjoy these exercise breaks, they'll become a habit you can't live without.
- 5 False.** People who engage in regular physical activity experience many positive benefits. Regular physical activity gives you more energy, reduces stress, helps you relax, and helps you sleep better. It helps lower high blood pressure and improves blood cholesterol levels. Physical activity helps tone your muscles, burns off calories to help you lose extra pounds or stay at your desirable weight, and helps control your appetite. It can also increase muscle strength, help your heart and lungs work more efficiently, and let you enjoy your life more fully.
- 6 False.** Low-intensity activities—if performed daily—can have some long-term health benefits and can lower your risk of heart disease. Regular, brisk, and sustained exercise for at least 30 minutes—three to four times a week—such as brisk walking, jogging, or swimming—is necessary to improve the efficiency of your heart and





lungs and burn off extra calories. These kinds of activities are called aerobic—meaning the body uses oxygen to produce the energy needed for the activity. Other activities may give you benefits such as increased flexibility or muscle strength, depending on the type of activity.

7 False. Although we tend to become less active with age, physical activity is still important. In fact, regular physical activity in older persons increases their capacity to do everyday activities. In general, middle-aged and older people benefit from regular physical activity just as young people do. What is important, NO matter what your age is tailoring the activity program to your own fitness level.

8 True. Many activities require little or no equipment. For example, brisk walking only requires a comfortable pair of walking shoes. Also, many communities offer free or inexpensive recreation facilities and physical activity classes. Shopping malls, make ideal walking environments as many of them are open early and late for people who do not wish to walk alone, in the dark, or in bad weather.

9 False. The most common exercise risk is injury to the muscles and joints. Such injuries are usually caused by exercising too hard for too long, particularly if a person has been inactive for some time. To avoid injuries, try to build up your level of activity gradually; listen to your body for early warning pains; be aware of possible signs of heart problems (such as pain or pressure in the left or mid-chest area, left neck, shoulder, or arm during or just after exercising, or sudden light-headedness, cold sweat, pallor, or fainting); and be prepared for special weather

conditions.

10 True. You should ask your doctor before you start (or greatly increase) your physical activity if you have a medical condition such as high blood pressure, have pains or pressure in the chest and shoulder area, tend to feel dizzy or faint, get very breathless after mild exertion, are middle-aged or older and have not been physically active, or plan a fairly vigorous activity program. If none of these apply, start slow and get moving.

11 False. Regular, physical activity can help reduce your risk of having another heart attack. People who include regular physical activity in their lives after a heart attack improve their chances of survival and can improve how they feel and look. If you have had a heart attack, **consult your doctor** to be sure you are following a safe and effective exercise program that will help prevent heart pain and further damage from overexertion.

12 True. Pick several different activities that you like doing, because you will be more likely to stay with a regular regimen. Plan short-term as well as long-term goals. Keep a record of your progress, and check it regularly to see the progress you have made. Get your family and friends to join in. They can help keep you going.



NHLBI Health Information Center
P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563



Get Physical!

Want more energy? Want less stress? Want to fall asleep easily? Firmer muscles sound good? One—count it, one—there’s one way to do it all. What’s the secret? Getting physical, of course.

Turn off your TV and turn on to physical activity! You don’t have to groan for hours every day. A few minutes of some type of activity, even walking, every day will help improve your health—and more vigorous activity such as swimming, running or jumping rope will help condition your heart and lungs if you do them for at least 30 minutes, three to four times a week.

These kinds of activities are often called “aerobic”—which means the body uses oxygen to produce the energy needed for the activity. These exercises are brisk enough to raise your heart and breathing rates. They expand your lung capacity and help to strengthen your heart muscle, warding off heart disease.

Physical activity also can help lower high blood cholesterol and control weight. First, it can decrease “bad” LDL-cholesterol, while increasing “good” HDL-cholesterol.

Second, combined with a low-calorie diet, it helps you shed extra weight. You’ll find it decreases your hunger and fine-tunes the metabolism. See the activities on page 51 to see how many calories can be burned up doing different activities.

Sold?

Good, because being physically active is no fad. It’s a lifelong good habit. Try out various activities. Find ones that you enjoy. And don’t hesitate to mix them up—don’t get into a rut. The activities on page 51 give you some ideas. Try one or all!



Get *Physical!*



“
Working out makes you feel and look better. It's also a good way to meet new people.
”
Suzanne, 18

Key To Health

You hold the key to health and fitness — regular physical activity. Starting can be tough, though. So here are some how-to's to rev your motor:

1

Start your exercise session by preparing. Stretch and warm your muscles.

2

Don't do too much too soon. Begin slowly and intensify carefully.

3

Try an outdoor and an indoor activity. Switch back and forth to prevent boredom. You won't have to reschedule because of bad weather, either.

4

Ask someone to join you.

5

Make regular physical activity part of your life. Make time for your workout, whether before, during, or after school. It doesn't matter when you do it—but set a schedule and stick to it.

6

If you're not sure about an activity, ask your gym teacher or coach for advice.



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P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563

Get Physical!



Here are a few activities that just may get you hooked on being physically active.

Listed next to each one is the number of calories a 150-pound person would burn up doing these activities for an hour. Remember: Any activity that gets you moving around is better than nothing at all. To help condition your heart and lungs, move it at least three times a week, for about 30 minutes each time. Do it on your own or with friends.



And don't forget to have fun!



ACTIVITY	CALORIES BURNED UP PER HOUR
----------	-----------------------------

Running	650-1280
Jogging	740-920
Jumping rope	750
Racquetball	750
Cross-country skiing	700
Basketball	564
Ice and field hockey	546
Football	540
Soccer	540
Swimming	275-500
Brisk walking	440
Dancing	420
Bicycling	240-410
Hiking and backpacking	408
Tennis	400
Skating	300
Baseball and softball	282
Gymnastics	270



Note: These numbers are for someone who weighs 150 pounds. The amount of calories you burn up depends on how much you weigh. The more you weigh, the more calories you burn.



Get Physical!

So Figure It Out For Yourself

To find the number of calories you would burn up in any of the activities noted on the previous chart:

Write down your weight. Since the numbers on the chart are for someone 150 pounds, divide your weight by 150.

Multiply this number by the number of calories burned in an hour of an activity you like to do that is listed on the chart.

This will give you the number of calories YOU burn doing this activity for an hour.

Note: In this example, a 125-pound person burns only 0.83 times the calories of a 150-pound person, and when playing basketball, only 468 calories are burned compared to 564 calories.



<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> </div> <p>(Your weight)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">÷</p> <p style="text-align: center;">150</p> <p style="text-align: center;">=</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> </div> <p>(# of calories)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">=</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> </div>	<p>Example:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">125 lbs.</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">÷</p> <p style="text-align: center;">150</p> <p style="text-align: center;">=</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">.83</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">564 calories (basketball)</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">=</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">468 calories</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> </div>
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P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563

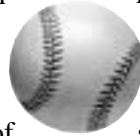


Guide To Physical Activity



Both healthy eating and physical activity are important in weight control. Most successful weight loss is a combination of eating fewer calories and using more energy through activity. Staying physically active is most helpful in keeping weight off for life. Plus, physical activity has the benefit of lowering the risk of certain diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes.

If you have not been physically active in the past, the key to success is to start slowly. Trying too hard at first can lead to injury. Also, taking the time to find out what you enjoy doing will help to make physical activity a regular part of your lifestyle.

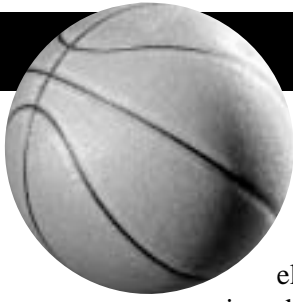


To improve your health, set a goal of at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity most days of the week. You can do this all at one time or at several times during the day. Initial activities may be to start out walking or swimming at a slow pace. For example, you can start out walking slowly for a total of 30 minutes 3 days a week and gradually build to 45 minutes or more of faster-paced walking. By doing this, you can use 100 to 200 more calories per day.

This plan can be used with other types of physical activity, but walking is popular because it is safe and convenient.

Examples of Moderate Amounts of Physical Activity

Common Chores	Sporting Activities	
Washing and waxing a car for 45 to 60 minutes	Playing volleyball for 45 to 60 minutes	<p style="text-align: center;">Less Vigorous, More Time</p> <p style="text-align: center;">More Vigorous, Less Time</p>
Washing windows or floors for 45 to 60 minutes	Playing touch football for 45 minutes	
Gardening for 30 to 45 minutes	Walking 1 ³ / ₄ miles in 35 minutes (20 minutes/mile)	
Wheeling self in wheelchair 30 to 40 minutes	Basketball (shooting baskets) 30 minutes	
Pushing a stroller 1 ¹ / ₂ miles in 30 minutes	Bicycling 5 miles in 30 minutes	
Raking leaves for 30 minutes	Dancing fast (social) for 30 minutes	
Walking 2 miles in 30 minutes (15 minutes/mile)	Water aerobics for 30 minutes	
Shoveling snow for 15 minutes	Swimming laps for 20 minutes	
Stair-walking for 15 minutes	Basketball (playing game) for 15 to 20 minutes	
	Bicycling 4 miles in 15 minutes	
	Jumping rope for 15 minutes	
	Running 1 ¹ / ₂ miles in 15 minutes (10 minutes/mile)	



Another way to be more active is to do more “everyday” activities, such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Also, try spending more time doing lighter activities such as gardening, household chores, and walking to visit neighbors, rather than sedentary activities such as watching television and working on the computer.

Becoming Physically Active

For the beginner, choose very light activities such as an increase in standing activities, special chores like room painting, pushing a stroller or wheelchair, yard work, ironing or cooking, and playing a musical instrument.

The next level would be light activities, such as slow walking, garage work, carpentry, house cleaning, child care, golf, sailing, and recreational table tennis.

Once comfortable with this level, try adding more moderate activities such as faster walking, weeding and hoeing a garden, carrying a load, cycling, skiing, tennis, and dancing.

High intensity activities include very fast walking or walking with a load uphill, tree felling, heavy manual digging, basketball, climbing, or soccer/kickball.

You may also want to try:

- Flexibility exercise to improve joints and muscles
- Strength-building or resistance exercises
- Aerobic conditioning

If structured group activities are what you need to help you stay physically active, try joining community recreation programs, the YMCA, or a health club. You can find a variety of activities for all fitness levels and budgets.



How You Can Fit Activity Into Your Schedule

Many people are completely inactive, and they all have reasons.

I don't have the time to exercise.

While physical activity does take time, only about 1 hour per week of vigorous activity gives benefits to your heart, lungs, muscles, and weight.

Consider the amount of time you spend watching TV. Many forms of physical activity can be done while watching TV, such as riding an exercise bike or using hand weights.

I don't like to exercise.

You have bad memories of doing situps or running in high school, sweating, puffing, and panting. Nowadays we know that you can get plenty of gain without pain. Activities you already do such as gardening and walking can improve your health, so just do more of the activities you like.

I don't have the energy to be more active.

Once you become a little more active, you should have more energy. As you progress, daily tasks will seem easier.

Benefits Of Regular Activity

- Your weight is much easier to control when you are active.
- Physical activity can be lots of fun.
- You can be with other people when you are active.
- You'll feel and look better when you're physically active.
- Physical activity is good for your heart.
- Physical activity is a great way to reduce anxiety and stress, and helps you beat the blues.
- You'll feel more confident when you are active.
- You'll have more energy.
- You may sleep better.



NHLBI Health Information Center
P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563



Obesity & Overweight



Check Your Weight and Heart Disease

The following statements are either true or false. The statements test your knowledge of overweight and heart disease. The correct answers can be found on the following page.



- 1** Being overweight puts you at risk for heart disease.
 T F
- 2** If you are overweight, losing weight helps lower your blood cholesterol and high blood pressure.
 T F
- 3** Quitting smoking is healthy, but it commonly leads to excessive weight gain which increases your risk for heart disease.
 T F
- 4** An overweight person with high blood pressure should pay more attention to a low-sodium diet than to weight reduction.
 T F
- 5** A reduced intake of sodium or salt does not always lower high blood pressure to normal.
 T F
- 6** The best way to lose weight is to eat fewer calories and exercise.
 T F
- 7** Skipping meals is a good way to cut down on calories.
 T F
- 8** Foods high in complex carbohydrates (starch and fiber) are good choices when you are trying to lose weight.
 T F
- 9** The single most important change most people can make to lose weight is to avoid sugar.
 T F
- 10** Polyunsaturated fat has the same number of calories as saturated fat.
 T F
- 11** Overweight children are very likely to become overweight adults.
 T F

YOUR SCORE: How many correct answers did you make?

10–11 correct—Congratulations! You know a lot about weight and heart disease. Share this information with your family and friends.

8–9 correct—Very good.

Fewer than 8—Go over the answers and try to learn more about weight and heart disease.





Answers

To Your Weight and Heart Disease I.Q. Test

- 1 True.** Being overweight increases your risk for high blood cholesterol and high blood pressure, two of the major risk factors for coronary heart disease. Even if you do not have high blood cholesterol or high blood pressure, being overweight may increase your risk for heart disease. Where you carry your extra weight may affect your risk too. Weight carried at your waist or above seems to be associated with an increased risk for heart disease in many people. In addition, being overweight increases your risk for diabetes, gallbladder disease, and some types of cancer.
- 2 True.** If you are overweight, even moderate reductions in weight, such as 5 to 10 percent, can produce substantial reductions in blood pressure. You may also be able to reduce your LDL-cholesterol (“bad” cholesterol) and triglycerides and increase your HDL-cholesterol (“good” cholesterol).
- 3 False.** The average weight gain after quitting smoking is 5 pounds. The proportion of ex-smokers who gain large amounts of weight (greater than 20 pounds) is relatively small. Even if you gain weight when you stop smoking, change your eating and exercise habits to lose weight rather than starting to smoke again. Smokers who quit smoking decrease their risk for heart disease by about 50 percent compared to those people who do not quit.
- 4 False.** Weight loss, if you are overweight, may reduce your blood pressure even if you don’t reduce the amount of sodium you eat. Weight loss is recommended for all overweight people who have high blood pressure. Even if weight loss does not reduce your blood pressure to normal, it may help you cut back on your blood pressure medications. Also, losing weight if you are overweight may help you reduce your risk for, or control, other health problems.
- 5 True.** Even though a high sodium or salt intake plays a key role in maintaining high blood pressure in some people, there is no easy way to determine who will benefit from eating less sodium and salt. Also, a high intake may limit how well certain high blood pressure medications work. Eating a diet with less sodium may help some people reduce their risk of developing high blood pressure. Most Americans eat more salt and other sources of sodium than they need. Therefore, it is prudent for most people to reduce their sodium intake.
- 6 True.** Eating fewer calories and exercising more is the best way to lose weight and keep it off. Weight control is a question of balance. You get calories from the food you eat. You burn off calories by exercising. Cutting down on calories, especially calories from fat, is key to losing weight. Combining this with a regular physical activity program, like walking, bicycling, jogging, or swimming, can not only help in losing weight but also in maintaining



the weight loss. A steady weight loss of 1 to 2 pounds a week is safe for most adults, and the weight is more likely to stay off over the long run. Losing weight, if you are overweight, may also help reduce your blood pressure and raise your HDL-cholesterol, the “good” cholesterol.

7 False. To cut calories, some people regularly skip meals and have no snacks or caloric drinks in between. If you do this, your body thinks that it is starving even if your intake of calories is not reduced to a very low amount. Your body will try to save energy by slowing its metabolism—that is, decreasing the rate at which it burns the calories. This makes losing weight even harder and may even add body fat. Try to avoid long periods without eating. Five or six small meals are often preferred to the usual three meals a day for some individuals trying to lose weight.

8 True. Contrary to popular belief, foods high in complex carbohydrates (like pasta, rice, potatoes, breads, cereals, grains, dried beans and peas) are lower in calories than foods high in fat. In addition, they are good sources of vitamins, minerals, and fiber. What adds calories to these foods is the addition of butter, rich sauces, whole milk, cheese, or cream, which are high in fat.

9 False. Sugar has not been found to cause obesity; however, many foods high in sugar are also high in fat. Fat has more than twice the calories as the same amount of protein or carbohydrates (sugar and starch). Thus, foods that are high in fat are high in calories. High-sugar foods, like cakes, cookies, candies, and ice cream, are high in fat and calories and low in vitamins, minerals, and protein.

10 True. All fats—polyunsaturated, monounsaturated, and saturated—have the same number of calories. All calories count, whether they come from saturated or unsaturated fats. Because fats are the richest sources of calories, eating less total fat will help reduce the number of calories you eat every day. It will also help reduce your intake of saturated fat. Particular attention to reducing saturated fat is important in lowering your blood cholesterol level.

11 False. Obesity in childhood does increase the likelihood of adult obesity, but most overweight children will not become obese. Several factors influence whether or not an overweight child becomes an overweight adult: (1) the age the child becomes overweight; (2) how overweight the child is; (3) the family history of overweight; and (4) dietary and activity habits. Getting to the right weight is desirable, but children’s needs for calories and other nutrients are different from the needs of adults. Dietary plans for weight control must allow for this. Eating habits, like so many other habits, are often formed during childhood, so it is important to develop good ones.

Hearts N' Parks



NHLBI Health Information Center
P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563



GUIDELINES ON Overweight and Obesity

With the release of the *Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults: Evidence Report*, which is intended for health professionals, many patients have expressed interest in information on how to lose weight and improve their health.

Overweight and Obesity— What Are The Risks?

Over one-half of all American adults (about 97 million) are overweight or obese. If you are overweight or obese, carrying this extra weight puts you at risk for developing many diseases, especially heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer.

1

Box 1—Consider the Risks

If you are overweight or obese, you are at risk for developing the following diseases:

- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Type 2 diabetes
- Coronary heart disease
- Stroke
- Gallbladder disease
- Arthritis
- Sleep apnea and breathing problems
- Some cancers
 - Endometrial
 - Breast
 - Prostate
 - Colon

2

Box 2—Calculation Directions and Sample

Here is a shortcut method for calculating BMI

(Example: for a person who is 5 feet 5 inches tall weighing 180 lbs.)

1. Multiply weight
(in pounds) by 703 180 x 703 = 126,540
 2. Divide the answer
in step 1 by height
(in inches) 126,540/65 = 1,946
 3. Divide the answer
in step 2 by height
(in inches) to get your BMI 1,946/65 = 29.9
- BMI = 29.9**

What Is Your Risk?

First, let's gather some information—

1. *Check Your Body Mass Index*
Your body mass index (BMI) is a good indicator of your risk for a variety of diseases since it gives an accurate estimate of your total body fat. There are two ways to check your BMI. One way is to use the chart on the next page to find your weight and height and then go above that column to find your BMI. The other way to check your BMI is to calculate it; one method is shown in Box 2. Another way to do this: Divide your weight in pounds by your height in inches squared and then multiply the total by 703. Once you know your BMI, check Box 3, which shows the BMI ranges for underweight, normal weight, overweight, and obesity.



3

2. Waist Circumference Measurement

Your waist circumference measurement is also important in determining your overall risk. If most of your fat is around your waist, you are at greater chance for developing risk factors for heart disease and diabetes. This risk increases with a waist measurement of greater than 35 inches for women or greater than 40 inches for men.

Are You At Risk?

Talk to your doctor to see if you are at an increased risk and if you should lose weight. Your doctor will evaluate your BMI, waist measurement, and other risk factors for heart disease. These risk factors are shown in Box 4.

If you are overweight, do not have a high waist measurement, and have less than 2 risk factors, it's important that you not gain any more weight. If you are overweight (BMI 25 to 29.9) and have two or more risk factors, or if you are obese (BMI 30), it is important for you to lose weight. Even a small weight loss (just 10 percent of your current weight) will help lower your risk of developing the diseases listed in Box 1.

And remember, if you do need to lose weight there are no quick fixes. Losing as little as 10 percent of your current body weight at a rate of 1 to 2 pounds per week may take as long as six months, but will make it easier to keep off. And it will give you the time to make new healthy lifestyle changes.

Box 3—Classification of Overweight and Obesity by BMI

	BMI
Underweight	<18.5
Normal	18.5–24.9
Overweight	25.0–29.9
Obesity	>30.0

4

Box 4—Risk Factors

Besides being overweight or obese, other risk factors to consider are:

- Cigarette smoking
- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- High LDL-cholesterol (“bad” cholesterol)
- Low HDL-cholesterol (“good” cholesterol)
- High triglycerides
- High blood glucose (sugar)
- Family history of premature heart disease
- Physical inactivity

Additional Resources

For additional information on the Clinical Guidelines on Overweight and Obesity, contact the NHLBI Obesity Education Initiative:

NHLBI Health Information Center
P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD
20824-0105
301-592-8573, 301-592-8563 (fax);
or visit the NHLBI Web site at
www.nhlbi.nih.gov



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High Blood Pressure



Check Your Healthy Heart

Answer “true” or “false” to the following questions to test your knowledge of heart disease and its risk factors. Be sure to check the answers and explanations on the back of this sheet to see how well you do.

- 1** The risk factors for heart disease that you can do something about are: high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity.
 T F
- 2** A stroke is often the first symptom of high blood pressure, and a heart attack is often the first symptom of high blood cholesterol.
 T F
- 3** A blood pressure greater than or equal to 140/90 mm Hg is generally considered to be high.
 T F
- 4** High blood pressure affects the same number of blacks as it does whites.
 T F
- 5** The best ways to treat and control high blood pressure are to control your weight, exercise, eat less salt (sodium), restrict your intake of alcohol, and take your high blood pressure medicine if prescribed by your doctor.
 T F
- 6** A blood cholesterol of 240 mg/dL is desirable for adults.
 T F
- 7** The most effective dietary way to lower the level of your blood cholesterol is to eat foods low in cholesterol.
 T F
- 8** Lowering blood cholesterol levels can help people who have already had a heart attack.
 T F
- 9** Only children from families at high risk for heart disease need to have their blood cholesterol levels checked.
 T F
- 10** Smoking is a major risk factor for four of the five leading causes of death, including heart attack, stroke, cancer, and lung diseases such as emphysema and bronchitis.
 T F
- 11** If you have had a heart attack, quitting smoking can help reduce your chances of having a second attack.
 T F
- 12** Someone who has smoked for 30 to 40 years probably will not be able to quit smoking.
 T F
- 13** The best way to lose weight is to increase physical activity and eat fewer calories.
 T F
- 14** Heart disease is the leading killer of men and women in the United States.
 T F



Answers

To The Healthy Heart I.Q. Quiz

- 1 True.** High blood pressure, smoking, and high blood cholesterol are the three most important risk factors for heart disease. On the average, each one doubles your chance of developing heart disease. So, a person who has all three of the risk factors is eight times more likely to develop heart disease than someone who has none. Obesity increases the likelihood of developing high blood cholesterol and high blood pressure, which increase your risk of heart disease. Physical inactivity increases your risk of heart attack. Regular exercise and good nutrition are essential to reducing high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and overweight. People who exercise are also more likely to cut down or stop smoking.
- 2 True.** A person with high blood pressure or high blood cholesterol may feel fine and look great; there are often no signs that anything is wrong until a stroke or heart attack occurs. To find out if you have high blood pressure or high blood cholesterol, you should be tested by a doctor, nurse, or other health professional.
- 3 True.** A blood pressure of 140/90 mm Hg or greater is generally classified as high blood pressure. However, blood pressures that fall below 140/90 mm Hg can sometimes be a problem. If the diastolic pressure, the second or lower number, is between 85-89, a person is at an increased risk for heart disease or stroke and should have his/her blood pressure checked at least once a year by a health professional. The higher your blood pressure, the greater your risk for developing heart disease or stroke. Controlling high blood pressure reduces your risk.
- 4 False.** High blood pressure is more common in blacks than whites. It affects 29 out of every 100 black adults compared to 26 out of every 100 white adults. Also, with aging, high blood pressure is generally more severe among blacks than among whites, and therefore causes more strokes, heart disease, and kidney failure.
- 5 True.** Recent studies show that lifestyle changes can help keep blood pressure levels normal even into advanced age, and are important in treating and preventing high blood pressure. Limit high-salt foods, which include many snack items such as potato chips, salted pretzels, and salted crackers; processed foods such as canned soups; and condiments such as ketchup and soy sauce. Also, it is extremely important to take blood pressure medication if prescribed by your doctor, to make sure your blood pressure stays under control.
- 6 False.** A total blood cholesterol of under 200 mg/dL is desirable and usually puts you at a lower risk for heart disease. A blood cholesterol level of 240 mg/dL or above is high and increases your risk of heart disease. If your cholesterol level is high, your doctor will want to check your levels of LDL-cholesterol (“bad” cholesterol) and HDL-cholesterol (“good” cholesterol). A HIGH level of LDL-cholesterol increases your risk for heart disease, as does a LOW level of HDL-cholesterol. A cholesterol level of 200-230 mg/dL is considered borderline-high and usually increases your risk for heart disease. If your cholesterol is borderline-high, you should speak to your doctor to see if additional cholesterol tests are needed. All adults 20 years of age or older should have their blood cholesterol level checked at least once every 5 years.
- 7 False.** Reducing the amount of cholesterol in your diet is important; however, eating



foods low in saturated fat is the most effective dietary way to lower blood cholesterol levels, along with eating less total fat and cholesterol. Choose low-saturated fat foods such as grains, fruits, and vegetables; low-fat or skim milk and milk products; and lean cuts of meat, fish, and chicken. Trim fat from meat before cooking; bake or broil meat rather than fry; use less fat and oil; and take the skin off chicken and turkey. Reducing overweight will also help lower your level of LDL-cholesterol as well as increase your level of HDL-cholesterol.

8 True. People who have had one heart attack are at much higher risk for a second attack. Reducing blood cholesterol levels can greatly slow down (and, in some people, even reverse) the buildup of cholesterol and fat in the walls of the arteries, and significantly reduce the chances of a second heart attack.

9 True. Children from “high risk” families, in which a parent has high blood cholesterol (240 mg/dL or above), or in which a parent or grandparent has had heart disease at an early age (at 55 years or younger), should have their cholesterol levels tested. If a child from such a family has a cholesterol level that is high, it should be lowered under medical supervision, primarily with diet, to reduce the risk of developing heart disease as an adult. For most children, who are not from high-risk families, the best way to reduce the risk of adult heart disease is to follow a low-saturated fat, low cholesterol eating pattern. All children over the age of 2 years and all adults should adopt a heart-healthy eating pattern as a principal way of reducing coronary heart disease.

10 True. Heavy smokers are two to four times more likely to have a heart attack than nonsmokers, and the heart attack death rate among all smokers is 70 percent greater than that of nonsmokers. Older male smokers are also nearly twice as likely to die from stroke than older men who do not smoke, and these odds are nearly as high for older female smokers. Further, the risk of dying from

lung cancer is 22 times higher for male smokers than male nonsmokers and 12 times higher for female smokers than female nonsmokers. Finally, 80 percent of all deaths from emphysema and bronchitis are directly due to smoking.

11 True. One year after quitting, ex-smokers cut their extra risk for heart attack by about half or more, and eventually the risk will return to normal in healthy ex-smokers. Even if you have already had a heart attack, you can reduce your chances of a second attack if you quit smoking. Ex-smokers can also reduce their risk of stroke and cancer, improve blood flow and lung function, and help prevent diseases like emphysema and bronchitis from getting worse.

12 False. Older smokers are more likely to succeed at quitting smoking than younger smokers. Quitting helps relieve smoking-related symptoms like shortness of breath, coughing, and chest pain. Many quit to avoid further health problems and take control of their lives.

13 True. Weight control is a question of balance. You get calories from the foods you eat. You burn off calories by exercising. Cutting down on calories, especially calories from fat, is key to losing weight. Combining this with a regular physical activity, like walking, cycling, jogging, or swimming, can not only help in losing weight but also in maintaining weight loss. A steady weight loss of 1/2 to 1 pound a week is safe for most adults, and the weight is more likely to stay off over the long run. Losing weight, if you are overweight, may also reduce your blood pressure, lower your LDL-cholesterol, and raise your HDL-cholesterol. Being physically active and eating fewer calories will also help you control your weight if you quit smoking.

14 True. Coronary heart disease is the number 1 killer in the United States. Approximately 489,000 Americans died of coronary heart disease in 1990, and approximately half of these deaths were women.





Check Your High Blood Pressure Prevention

Test your knowledge of high blood pressure with the following questions. Circle each true or false. The answers are given on the back of this sheet.



1 There is nothing you can do to prevent high blood pressure.

T F

2 If your mother or father has high blood pressure, you'll get it.

T F

3 Young adults don't get high blood pressure.

T F

4 High blood pressure has no symptoms.

T F

5 Stress causes high blood pressure.

T F

6 High blood pressure is not life-threatening.

T F

7 Blood pressure is high when it's at or over 140/90 mm Hg.

T F

8 If you're overweight, you are two to six times more likely to develop high blood pressure.

T F

9 You have to exercise vigorously every day to improve your blood pressure and heart health.

T F

10 Americans eat two to three times more salt and sodium than they need.

T F

11 Drinking alcohol lowers blood pressure.

T F

12 High blood pressure has no cure.

T F



How well did you do?



Answers

To The High Blood Pressure Prevention I.Q. Quiz

- 1 False.** High blood pressure can be prevented with four steps: 1) keep a healthy weight; 2) become physically active; 3) limit your salt and sodium use; and, 4) if you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.
- 2 False.** You are more likely to get high blood pressure if it runs in your family, but that doesn't mean you must get it. Your chance of getting high blood pressure is also greater if you're older or an African American. But high blood pressure is NOT an inevitable part of aging, and everyone can take steps to prevent the disease—the steps are given in answer 1.
- 3 False.** About 15 percent of those ages 18-39 are among the 50 million Americans with high blood pressure. Once you have high blood pressure, you have it for the rest of your life. So start now to prevent it.
- 4 True.** High blood pressure, or “hypertension,” usually has no symptoms. In fact, it is often called the “silent killer.” You can have high blood pressure and feel fine. That's why it's important to have your blood pressure checked—it's a simple test.
- 5 False.** Stress does make blood pressure go up, but only temporarily. Ups and downs in blood pressure are normal. Run for a bus and your pressure rises; sleep and it drops. Blood pressure is the force of blood against the walls of arteries. Blood pressure becomes dangerous when it's always high. That harms your heart and blood vessels. So what does cause high blood pressure? In the vast majority of cases, a single cause is never found.
- 6 False.** High blood pressure is the main cause of stroke and a factor in the development of heart disease and kidney failure.
- 7 True.** But even blood pressure slightly under 140/90 mm Hg can increase your risk of heart disease or stroke.
- 8 True.** As weight increases, so does blood pressure. It's important to stay at a healthy weight. If you need to reduce, try to lose 1/2 to 1 pound a week. Choose foods low in fat (especially saturated fat), since fat is high in calories. Even if you're at a good weight, the healthiest way to eat is low fat, low cholesterol.
- 9 False.** Studies show that even a little physical activity helps prevent high blood pressure and strengthens your heart. Even among the overweight, those who are active have lower blood pressures than those who aren't. It's best to do some activity for 30 minutes, most days. Walk, garden, or bowl. If you don't have a 30-minute period, do something for 15 minutes, twice a day. Every bit helps—so make activity part of your daily routine.



10 True. Americans eat way too much salt and sodium. And some people, such as many African Americans, are especially sensitive to salt. Salt is made of sodium and chloride, and it's mostly the sodium that affects blood pressure. Salt is only one form of sodium—there are others. So you need to watch your use of both salt and sodium. That includes what's added to foods at the table and in cooking, and what's already in processed foods and snacks. Americans, especially people with high blood pressure, should eat no more than about 6 grams of salt a day, which equals about 2,400 milligrams of sodium.

11 False. Drinking too much alcohol can raise blood pressure. The “Dietary Guidelines” recommend that for overall health, women should limit their alcohol to no more than one drink a day and men should have no more than two drinks a day. A drink would be 1.5 ounces of 80 proof whiskey, or 5 ounces of wine, or 12 ounces of beer.

12 True. But high blood pressure can be treated and controlled. Treatment usually includes lifestyle changes—losing weight, if overweight; becoming physically active; limiting salt and sodium; and avoiding drinking excess alcohol—and, if needed, medication. But the best way to avoid the dangers of high blood pressure is to prevent the condition.

For more information on high blood pressure



NHLBI Health Information Center
P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563



High Blood Cholesterol



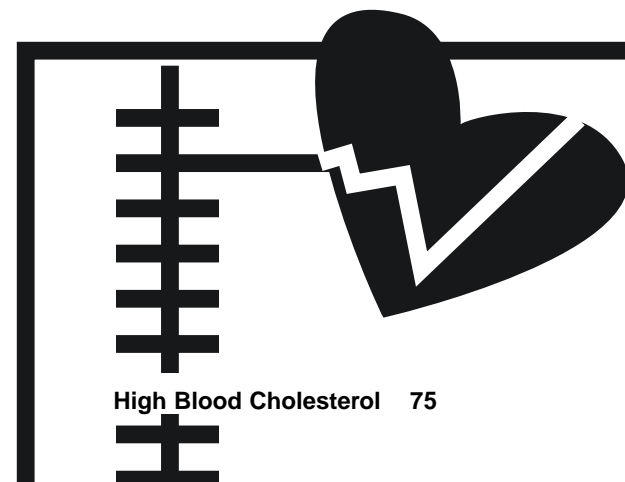
Check Your Cholesterol and Heart Disease

Are you cholesterol smart? Test your knowledge about high blood cholesterol with the following questions. Circle each true or false. The answers are given on the back of this sheet.

- 1 High blood cholesterol is one of the risk factors for heart disease that you can do something about.
 T F
- 2 To lower your blood cholesterol level, you must stop eating meat altogether.
 T F
- 3 Any blood cholesterol level below 240 mg/dL is desirable for adults.
 T F
- 4 Fish oil supplements are recommended to lower blood cholesterol.
 T F
- 5 To lower your blood cholesterol level, you should eat less saturated fat, total fat, and cholesterol; and lose weight if you are overweight.
 T F
- 6 Saturated fats raise your blood cholesterol level more than anything else in your diet.
 T F



- 7 All vegetable oils help lower blood cholesterol levels.
 T F
- 8 Lowering blood cholesterol levels can help people who have already had a heart attack.
 T F
- 9 All children need to have their blood cholesterol levels checked.
 T F
- 10 Women don't need to worry about high blood cholesterol and heart disease.
 T F
- 11 Reading food labels can help you eat the heart-healthy way.
 T F





Answers

To The Cholesterol and Heart Disease I.Q. Quiz

- 1 True.** High blood cholesterol is one of the risk factors for heart disease that a person can do something about. High blood pressure, cigarette smoking, diabetes, overweight, and physical inactivity are the others.
- 2 False.** Although some red meat is high in saturated fat and cholesterol, which can raise your blood cholesterol, you do not need to stop eating it or any other single food. Red meat is an important source of protein, iron, and other vitamins and minerals. You should, however, cut back on the amount of saturated fat and cholesterol that you eat. One way to do this is by choosing lean cuts of meat with the fat trimmed. Another way is to watch your portion sizes and eat no more than 6 ounces of meat a day. Six ounces is about the size of two decks of playing cards.
- 3 False.** A total blood cholesterol level of under 200 mg/dL is desirable and usually puts you at a lower risk for heart disease. A blood cholesterol level of 240 mg/dL is high and increases your risk of heart disease. If your cholesterol level is high, your doctor will want to check your level of LDL-cholesterol (“bad” cholesterol). A HIGH level of LDL-cholesterol increases your risk of heart disease, as does a LOW level of HDL-cholesterol (“good” cholesterol). An HDL-cholesterol level below 35 mg/dL is considered a risk factor for heart disease. A total cholesterol level of 200–239 mg/dL is considered borderline-high and usually increases your risk for heart disease. All adults 20 years of age or older should have their blood cholesterol level checked at least once every 5 years.
- 4 False.** Fish oils are a source of omega-3 fatty acids, which are a type of polyunsaturated fat. Fish oil supplements generally do not reduce blood cholesterol levels. Also, the effect of the long-term use of fish oil supplements is not known. However, fish is a good food choice because it is low in saturated fat.
- 5 True.** Eating less fat, especially saturated fat, and cholesterol can lower your blood cholesterol level. Generally, your blood cholesterol level should begin to drop a few weeks after you start on a cholesterol-lowering diet. How much your level drops depends on the amounts of saturated fat and cholesterol you used to eat, how high your blood cholesterol is, how much weight you lose if you are overweight, and how your body responds to the changes you make. Over time, you may reduce your blood cholesterol level by 10–50 mg/dL or even more.
- 6 True.** Saturated fats raise your blood cholesterol level more than anything else. So, the best way to reduce your cholesterol level is to cut back on the amount of saturated fats that you eat. These fats are found in largest amounts in animal products such as butter, cheese, whole milk, ice cream, cream, and fatty meats. They are also found in some vegetable oils—coconut, palm, and palm kernel oils.



7 False. Most vegetable oils—canola, corn, olive, safflower, soybean, and sunflower oils—contain mostly monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, which help lower blood cholesterol when used in place of saturated fats. However, a few vegetable oils—coconut, palm and palm kernel oils—contain more saturated fat than unsaturated fat. A special kind of fat, called trans fat, is formed when vegetable oil is hardened to become margarine or shortening, through a process called “hydrogenation.” The harder the margarine or shortening, the more likely it is to contain more trans fat. Choose margarine containing liquid vegetable oil as the first ingredient. Just be sure to limit the total amount of any fats or oils, since even those that are unsaturated are rich sources of calories.

8 True. People who have had one heart attack are at much higher risk for a second attack. Reducing blood cholesterol levels can greatly slow down (and, in some people, even reverse) the buildup of cholesterol and fat in the wall of the coronary arteries and significantly reduce the chances of a second heart attack. If you have had a heart attack or have coronary disease, your LDL level should be around 100 mg/dL, which is even lower than the recommended level of less than 130 mg/dL for the general population.

9 False. Children from “high risk” families, in which a parent has high blood cholesterol (240 mg/dL or above) or in which a parent or grandparent has had heart disease at an early age (at 55 years or younger), should have their cholesterol levels tested. If a child from such a family has a high cholesterol level, it should be lowered under medical supervision, primarily with diet, to reduce the risk of developing heart

disease as an adult. For most children, who are not from high-risk families, the best way to reduce the risk of adult heart disease is to follow a low saturated fat, low cholesterol eating pattern. All children over the age of 2 years and all adults should adopt a heart-healthy eating pattern as a principal way of reducing coronary heart disease.

10 False. Blood cholesterol levels in both men and women begin to go up around age 20. Women before menopause have levels that are lower than men of the same age. After menopause, a women’s LDL-cholesterol level goes up—and her risk for heart disease increases. For both men and women, heart disease is the number one cause of death.

11 True. Food labels have been changed. Claims like “low-fat” or “light” on certain foods are government-regulated. Look on the nutrition label for the amount of saturated fat, total fat, cholesterol, and total calories in a serving of the product. Use this information to compare similar products and find the ones with the smallest amounts. If there is not a nutrition label, look for the list of ingredients. Here, the ingredient in the greatest amount is shown first and the ingredient in the least amount is shown last. So, to choose foods low in saturated fat or total fat, go easy on products that list fats or oil first, or that list many fat and oil ingredients.



NHLBI Health Information Center
P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563



To Help Older Americans Control Cholesterol

Just because you're over 65 doesn't mean you can ignore your cholesterol level. Lowering your cholesterol can help you stay healthy by reducing your risk for heart disease. If you have heart disease, lowering cholesterol can help you live longer and reduce your risk of having a heart attack.

So make these cholesterol-lowering habits a part of your life:

Eat foods low in saturated fat, total fat and cholesterol. Good choices include fruits and vegetables, low fat and fat-free dairy products, and whole grains. Choose lean cuts of meat, skinless poultry, and fish.

Maintain a healthy weight.

Being overweight raises your cholesterol and increases your risk of getting heart disease.

Be physically active. With your doctor's okay, try 30 minutes of moderate activity a day. Walking and dancing promote coordination, and light weight-lifting strengthens bones. Pressed for time? Divide those 30 minutes into three 10-minute sessions.

Take your medicine if prescribed.

If your doctor has prescribed cholesterol-lowering medication for you, it is important that you take it every day in addition to following heart-healthy habits.



NHLBI Health Information Center
P.O. Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
phone: (301) 592-8573 fax: (301) 592-8563

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
National Institutes of Health
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

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Hearts N' Parks
COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION GUIDE

*A project of the
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
National Recreation and Park Association*

