Schoharie County Department of Health

Schoharie County Health Matters

Volume 1 Issue 2 February 2009

February.

- Is American Heart Month
- Is Children's Dental Health Month
- 6th is National Wear Red Day
- 14th is Valentine's Day
- 16th is Presidents' Day
- 20th is Woman's Heart Day

Inside this issue:

Nutrition and Your Heart	2
Tips on Food Portion Size	2
Your Heart and Smoking	2
Children's Dental Health	3
Winter Health and Safety	3
What is Salmonella?	3
Childhood Obesity	4

February is Heart Month - NYSDOH PSA

The heart is a wonderful muscle that seemingly never rests while beating more than two billion times during an average lifespan. During Heart Month in February, the Schoharie County Department of Health reminds us how important it is to take care of our hearts.

More New Yorkers die of cardiovascular diseases, including heart disease and stroke, than all other causes of death combined.

Coronary heart disease is a narrowing of the small blood vessels that supply blood and oxygen to the heart. Coronary heart disease is usually caused by a condition called atherosclerosis, which occurs when fatty material and a substance called plaque builds up on the walls of your arteries. This causes them to narrow. As the coronary arteries narrow, blood flow to the heart can slow down or stop, causing chest pain (stable angina), shortness of breath, heart attack and other symptoms.

Heart disease has a close relationship to lifestyle choices. Physical activity and healthy nutrition help assure that your heart will stay strong.

The New York State Department of Health recommends people of all ages engage in at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most or all days of the week.

Be Active Your Way - A Guide for Adults is available via the US Department of Health and Human Services' website.

Working Out on a Budget - American Cancer Society

In these uncertain economic times, many Americans are cutting the bloat out of their budgets. For some, this might mean ending their gym memberships or cutting back on sports that come with fees or pricey equipment. But don't let hard times affect your health. There are many ways to get much needed exercise on the cheap.

Walking: Walking requires no memberships, little equipment, and has incredible benefits. Regular walking can help you shed pound; lower your blood pressure; reduce your risk of heart attack, diabetes, and stroke; improve mood and sleep; alleviate stress; and strengthen muscles and joints.

Community Centers: Many community centers, church recreation groups and local high schools offer low-cost fitness, exercise, and weight-training classes for reduced rates to area residents.

DVDs: Exercise and yoga DVDs have exploded in popularity in recent years. They're an easy, low-cost way to exercise at home. To further cut costs; check out discs from your local library.

Nutrition and Your Heart - NYSDOH & ACS

Heart-Healthy Diet is one rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

Poor nutrition can lead to many health problems including high blood cholesterol levels, obesity and diabetes. Eating foods high in saturated fat (whole milk, full fat dairy products, butter and red meats), trans fats (food with hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils, such as some boxed cookies, crackers, doughnuts and margarine) or sodium (many processed foods) can increase your risk of getting heart disease. Replacing less healthy foods with more vegetables and fruits is an easy and enjoyable way to reduce fat, cholesterol and calories.

A **heart-healthy diet** is one that is:

- nutritious and well-balanced
- low in saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, and salt
- high in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains

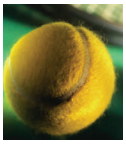
To eat better, follow the American Cancer Society's guidelines and keep track of how well you're doing in a food diary. Get 5 or more servings of a variety of vegetables and fruits every day, choose whole grains over processed grains, limit intake of processed and red meats, and watch portion sizes.

Tips on Food Portion Size

Watch Your Portion Sizes at Meal Times

Super Sizing is Not a Good Thing

Here are some tips to help you with portion sizes.



- A 1/2 cup serving of canned fruit, vegetables, or potatoes looks like half a tennis ball sitting on your plate
- 3 ounces of meat, fish, or chicken is about the size of a deck of playing cards or the palm of your hand

- A 1 ounce serving of cheese is about the size of your thumb
- A 1 cup serving of milk, yogurt, or fresh greens is about the size of your fist
- 1 teaspoon of oil is about the size of your thumb tip

Your Heart and Smoking - NYSDOH

Smoking kills 25,500 people every year in New York State.

The single largest contributor to the risk of having a heart attack is smoking. Smokers are twice as likely to have a heart attack as non smokers, and they are between two and four times more likely to die suddenly from heart disease. Exposure to smoke in the home and at the workplace has also been shown to increase the risk of heart attack.

The New York State Smokers' Quitsite can help when you are ready to quit or call 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487)

They provide:

- FREE starter kit of Nicotine Patches, Gum or Lozenges for eligible NYS smokers
- Trained Quitline Specialists offering help with quit plans
- Information about local stop smoking programs
- Informational taped messages

National Children's Dental Health Month – ADA

Each February, since 1949, the American Dental Association (ADA) has sponsored National Children's Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health.

Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

- Start with a small size brush.
- Use only a PEA size amount of children's toothpaste with fluoride. Brush 3 times a day (or at least twice).
- Brushing should last 2 to 3 minutes each time they brush.
- Rinse the brush after use and store where bristles can air-dry without being crushed.
- Replace your toothbrush when it becomes worn, or "splayed".

The American Dental Association recommends replacing your toothbrush every 3 to 4 months (or more often), and after infectious diseases. *FLOSS* once a day to remove plaque between the teeth that brushing cannot reach.

Winter Health and Safety

Preparation is the KEY to staying healthy and safe in the winter months.

Winter in the north may be beautiful but it can also be hazardous to your health and safety.

Some winter health and safety issues can include heart problems, influenza, hypothermia, carbon monoxide poisoning, frostbite, and snow shoveling-related maladies.

The Centers for Disease Control website offers information and tips on help to survive these winter woes in their publication Extreme Cold-A Prevention Guide to Promote Your Personal Health & Safety

The University of Wisconsin-Extension • Cooperative Extension addresses winter preparedness and prevention. Topics include winter travel, power outages, ice dam prevention, protecting plumbing, winter safety for animals and livestock, and more.

What is Salmonella? - US Dept. of Food and Drug Administration

Most persons infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12 to 72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most persons recover without treatment. However, in some persons, the diarrhea may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized. In these patients, the *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the blood stream, and then to other body sites and can cause death unless the person is treated promptly with antibiotics. The elderly, infants, and those with impaired immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.

See the following sites for more information from the US Department of Food and Drug Administration:
Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about the Recent Salmonella Outbreak

Salmonella Typhimurium Outbreak

Did you know lizards and turtles can carry a harmful germ called Salmonella? If there are infants or small children in your home, reptiles might not be safe pets for your family.

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Today's Health Tomorrow's Future

High blood pressure, also called hypertension is a serious illness that affects nearly 65 million adults in the US. High blood pressure is often called a "silent killer" because many people have it but don't know it. Have your blood pressure checked.

Schoharie County Department of Health Blood Pressure Clinics are held 11:00 AM until 12:00 PM
at the Office of the Aging meal sites:

Sharon Springs the 2nd Wednesday of the month
Fire House
Beachwood Road

Cobleskill the 3rd Wednesday of the month
103 High Street

Jefferson the 4th Wednesday of the month
Community Center
Route 10

Please remember, this newsletter provides general information only. Our readers should make an appointment with their primary health care providers for all health issues and concerns.

SCDOH

Childhood Obesity — Centers for Disease Control

Why is childhood obesity considered a health problem?
Doctors and scientists are concerned about the rise of obesity in children and youth because obesity may lead to the following health problems:

- **Heart disease**, caused by: high cholesterol and/or high blood pressure
- **Type 2 diabetes**
- **Asthma**
- **Sleep apnea**
- **Social discrimination**

Childhood obesity is associated with various health-related consequences. Obese children and adolescents may experience immediate health consequences and may be at risk for weight-related health problems in adulthood.

Encourage healthy eating habits.
There's no great secret to healthy eating. To help your children and family develop healthy eating habits:

Help Kids Develop Healthy Eating Habits.

- Provide plenty of vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain products.
- Include low-fat or non-fat milk or dairy products.
- Choose lean meats, poultry, fish, lentils, and beans for protein.
- Serve reasonably-sized portions.
- Encourage your family to drink lots of water.
- Limit sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Limit consumption of sugar and saturated fat.

Want to learn more, visit the CDC website.