

Nutrition News - FEBRUARY 2026

Nutrition Tips for American Heart Month

February is American Heart Month; and while heart disease is the nation's leading cause of death, it impacts some communities disproportionately - among them African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American and Pacific Islander.

Heart Disease Is Largely Preventable

And yet, many of us will still develop coronary heart disease, the most common form of the disease. What factors within our control can improve our heart health?

Staying Active

The goal: about 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week. That's two and a half hours. 30 minutes 5 days a week gets it done. So does 10 minutes for three times a day, five days a week. No need to be a "gym rat" about it. A simple walk down the street after a meal can work wonders. Talk to your doctor about what they think could work for your individual case. Then, reach out to OFA to find out about our Senior Exercise options. See dutchessny.gov/seniorexercise for details.

Eat A Heart-Healthy Diet

Fill that plate with veggies, fruits, whole grains, lean protein, and fat-free or low-fat dairy. Take it easy on saturated fats, sugars, salt and sodium. For more information on OFA nutrition counseling, email ofa@dutchessny.gov, call 845-486-2555 or visit dutchessny.gov/ofanutrition...and on the back page of this newsletter, you'll find a tasty and heart-healthy recipe in large print.

Track Your Blood Pressure

High blood pressure is a major heart disease risk factor. Any time you visit a health care provider, get the blood pressure checked, and ask your providers if tracking your blood pressure at home would help.

Stop Smoking

This can be difficult, so here are a few strategies that can help:

- Make a list of reasons to quit
- Pick a date when you'll quit
- Write out a plan for quitting

Your healthcare provider can help.

Control Diabetes and Cholesterol Levels

Talk to your healthcare provider about strategies and possible medications that could help.

Support Each Other

Talk with friends and family about heart health. Learn what the healthy ranges are for blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, and what your numbers are - both currently and over time.

For more information on preventing heart disease, visit hearttruth.gov.

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Recipe: Vietnamese Fresh Spring Rolls (Gỏi Cuốn)

Ingredients:

1 cup carrots, cut into long, thin strips
2 cups bean sprouts
2 cups cucumber, seeds removed and cut into long, thin strips
1 cup minced scallions
½ cup chopped fresh cilantro
¼ cup chopped fresh mint
8 rice paper wrappers

Directions:

1. Toss first six ingredients in a large bowl.
2. Soak one rice paper wrapper in warm water until soft (1 to 2 minutes). Shake off excess water.
3. Place vegetable filling off-center on rice paper, and fold like an egg roll (tuck in the sides to keep the filling inside).
4. Repeat with remaining vegetable filling and rice paper wrappers.
5. Once you have assembled all of the spring rolls, serve immediately.

Source: hearttruth.gov