

Heart Support Group Newsletter



February 2012

Heart Support Group

The Heart Support Group meets on the first Tuesday of each month at Asheville Cardiology Associates from 2:00—4:00pm. This group is designed to help patients learn more about cardiovascular disease and ways to cope with the disease on a daily basis. These monthly meetings give patients the opportunity to meet others living with the same condition.



If you or someone you know has cardiovascular disease and would like more information about the Heart Support Group, contact Leslie Council at (828) 274-6000.

Celebrate Heart Month



Did you know that an estimated 82.6 million Americans have one or more types of cardiovascular disease? **It's true.** About one in three of us has cardiovascular disease and during the month of February, it is our hope to bring attention to American Heart Month. Now is the perfect time to start educating yourself on the risks of high cholesterol, high blood pressure, stroke, and heart disease.

Not sure where to begin? Here are some things that you can start doing today.

Talk to your doctor. When it comes to getting more information about heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol, your healthcare professional will be the best

source. Talk to your doctor about concerns and ask for literature or references to consult to learn more.

Speaking of healthcare professionals, **make February a month to get checked out for heart issues.** Get readings for your blood pressure, triglycerides, weight, cholesterol, and other important metrics for determining heart health. Work with your doctor to come up with a plan to keep your ticker running at its best!

Start eating healthier. If you kicked off 2012 eating right and exercising, February is usually the time when those resolutions get harder to keep. Make it a point to pay attention to your diet. Cut back on fats, salts, and sugars—all of which can impact heart health.

Monitor your blood pressure at home with a blood pressure machine or wrist blood pressure monitor. Blood pressure monitoring is very important and at home monitoring is one of your best lines of defense when it comes to cardiovascular issues.

Get moving. A healthy heart takes exercise, so do yourself a favor and start walking, running, jogging, dancing, riding a bike, swimming, stretching, and playing your way to a healthier cardiovascular system.

www.heartmonitorusa.com

February Speaker—William Hathaway, MD, FACC



Wisconsin in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He completed his Internship and Residency at Duke

University Medical Center. His professional societies include Fellow of the American College of Cardiology and the Western North Carolina Medical Society.

Dr. William Hathaway joined Asheville Cardiology Associates in 1999. He completed his premedical education in Biology from Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont. He obtained a medical degree from the Medical College of

University Medical Center. His professional societies include Fellow of the American College of Cardiology and the Western North Carolina Medical Society.

Dr. Hathaway currently serves as the Medical Director of the Cardiovascular Diagnostics Catheterization Laboratory at Asheville Cardiology, and the Chief of Staff at Mission Hospital.

His topic will be "Happy Heart Month! All You Need to Know About Heart Disease".



Interesting Facts About the Human Heart

- The heart beats about 35 million times a year.
- The heart pumps about 5 quarts of blood each minute—approximately 2,000 gallons of blood each day—throughout the human body.
- When attempting to locate their heart, most people place their hand on their left chest. Actually, your heart is located in the center of your chest between your lungs. The bottom of the heart is tipped to the left, so you feel more of your heart on your left side of your chest.
- An adult woman's heart weighs about 8 ounces, a man's about 10 ounces. A child's heart is about the size of a clenched fist. An adult's heart is about the size of two fists.
- The human heart weighs less than a pound.
- Feel your pulse by placing two fingers at pulse points on your neck and wrists. The pulse you feel is blood stopping and starting as it moves through your arteries.

www.interestingfacts12.blogspot.com

Keep Your Ticker Happy With Chocolate

In a review of several studies, chocolate appeared to significantly lower the risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes. These studies have suggested that chocolate can be considered a heart-healthy food. Chocolate appears to:

- decrease inflammation in the body,
- make the blood less likely to clot,
- lower blood pressure,
- help prevent hardening of the arteries,
- increase HDL cholesterol levels, and
- improve insulin sensitivity.



While regularly eating chocolate could cut the risk of heart disease and stroke by about one-third, before you indulge, a cautionary note: Chocolate bars, cookies, and drinks are high in sugar, fat, and calories, so eating too much can lead to weight gain, and you guessed it, heart disease. Moderation is key.

Be careful about the type of chocolate you choose: chewy caramel-marshmallow-nut-covered dark chocolate is by no means a heart-healthy food option. Watch out for those extra ingredients that can add lots of extra fat and calories.



Enjoy!

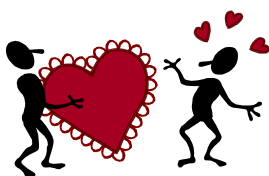
Fun Things to do on Valentine's Day



If you have some free time on your hands on Valentine's Day, there are plenty of things you can do, whether you are single or romantically involved. Valentine's Day activities don't have to be expensive, either. No matter what your budget or walk of life, you are sure to find something to do on this cheerful and fun holiday.

Have a Romantic Valentine's Dinner. If you are looking for cheap fun on Valentine's Day, you can make a homemade romantic dinner for two. Get some candles and a bottle of inexpensive champagne or red wine. Plan your evening meal around Valentine's Day themes. Make sure to prepare plenty of pink and red foods and heart shaped foods, such as strawberries. Making pasta dishes with whole grain pasta such as spaghetti or lasagna with tomato sauce will also incorporate more red into the meal.

Watch a Romantic Movie. If you are spending the evening with your sweetheart, you can make Valentine's evening a date night by combining your romantic dinner with a movie. Even if you will be hanging out with your friends, watching a romantic movie is a relaxing and fun way to spend Valentine's Day evening. There are many movies to chose from. Rent or buy a movie on DVD, or watch your romantic movie online. Curl up on the couch with a blanket, some hot drinks and a bucket of popcorn, and you're all set.



Host a Valentine's Day Gift Wrapping Party.

Throwing a Valentine's Day gift wrapping party is a great way to spend the holiday. Invite your friends over and have them bring their unwrapped gifts. Make sure they bring at least one gift to exchange with other guests at the party. Put together some Valentine's Day food that won't get your hands all greasy or sticky. Pretzels and veggie sticks and dip make a good choice. Put up some simple decorations such as balloons decorated with hearts, roses and cupids. Provide supplies such as the Valentine's gift wrapping paper, scissors and tape.



Make Valentine's Day Crafts and Cards. Making Valentine's crafts and cards is a great activity, especially if you have kids. Get some basic supplies such as construction paper, crayons, colored pencils, markers, scissors and glue. Spread newspaper down on a table and start crafting. Have the kids make crafts and cards as gifts for their friends and family.

Whether you plan to celebrate Valentine's Day on your own or with someone else, remember to take steps to be a healthy valentine. Challenge yourself to be active, healthy, and smoke free. Eat heart-healthy foods that include plenty of fruits and vegetables, and enjoy a favorite healthy alternative to candy with your loved ones.

