



Work Hard, Play Harder

Did You Know?

Everyone knows that fruits and vegetables are key to a healthy diet and lifestyle. But there are several other things you might not know about healthy eating....

Choose good fats like monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats; Grab a handful of nuts, which are rich in good fats, fiber, folic acid and more; Drink more water; Eat a variety of foods high in protein, which helps maintain muscle mass and promotes muscle growth; Limit sodium to less than 2,300 mg per day; and watch out for added sugars and aim for less than 10% of your daily calories to come from sugars.

February is National Heart Health Month

Know Your Numbers: Cholesterol

Your body makes two types of cholesterol – HDL, or “good cholesterol” and LDL, or “bad cholesterol”. HDLs protect against artery blockages that can lead to heart disease. LDLs are more likely to clog arteries and cause heart disease.

A total cholesterol number of less than 200 mg/dl is preferred. If your number is higher, talk with your doctor about ways to lower it. Your doctor will look at your levels and risk factors and decide how to best manage your cholesterol. This may include lifestyle changes, or in some cases, cholesterol-lowering statin drugs.

Here are some ways to reduce your risk and manage your cholesterol:

- Limit saturated fats in your diet.
- Avoid trans fat, as no amount is healthy.
- Eat a heart-healthy diet that is rich in fruits, veggies, whole grains, fish, and low-fat dairy foods.
- Enjoy foods that are high in soluble fiber.
- Limit foods and drinks with lots of added sugar.
- Use healthier oils in cooking and dressings.
- Keep a healthy body weight.
- Get active.
- If you smoke, quit!

February is National Heart Health Month, and Friday, February 4, 2022, is National Wear Red Day. This is a day to come together in support of women’s health by wearing red to raise awareness about cardiovascular disease, which is the leading cause of death in women.

The risk of heart disease increases with age; however, there are things you can do to lower or reverse your risk. As part of treatment for heart disease, you may need to make changes to your lifestyle and dietary habits.

Lifestyle changes you can make include: not smoking, being physically active, maintaining a healthy weight, getting regular checkups, reducing alcohol intake, and minimizing stress.

A heart-healthy diet includes:

- Eating more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and other high-fiber foods
- Foods that are low in saturated and trans fats
- Limiting sodium intake

- Eating at least two servings of fish each week (oily fish, which contain omega-3 fatty acids, are best!)
- Limiting sugary drinks and foods
- Drinking water to reduce stress on the heart, kidneys, and other organs

There are so many good reasons to follow a healthy eating plan. In addition to lowering your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and cancer, healthy eating just makes you feel better overall.

Your primary care provider may talk with you about your risk for heart disease and conduct tests to check your heart and blood flow. Things they will look at during these tests include blood pressure, diabetes, age, gender, and family history.

Work with your primary care provider to keep health problems under control. It’s never too late to start living a healthy lifestyle and getting your heart disease risks in check.

Source: www.mycigna.com



Questions?

Visit Cigna’s website at www.mycigna.com for more personalized information. For other questions, contact a Cigna representative at

1-800-244-6224.

Nutrition Awareness Challenge

The Nutrition Awareness Challenge concludes on February 4, 2022. During the month-long challenge, participants tracked their intake of vegetables, fruits, proteins, and water, and scored points for each serving of vegetables, fruits, and proteins, and for each cup of water they drank. All active participants will receive a gift for their efforts, so stay tuned!

Wellness BINGO Challenge Starts February 28th!

The Wellness BINGO Challenge begins February 28, 2022, and will run until April 1, 2022. During this challenge, participants will focus on healthy lifestyle changes. BINGO can be earned by completing trackers (provided in the challenge) horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. [Registration](#) opens for this challenge on February 21st. Good luck, and have fun tracking your progress for completing goals focused around your personal well-being!

UPMC Virtual Workshops

UPMC Western Maryland will offer a free 6-week workshop entitled The Chronic Pain Self-Management Program. The next session begins on February 17, 2022, from 1-3:30 p.m. and continues each Wednesday through March 24th. UPMC will also offer a 7-week interactive workshop entitled Building Better Caregivers. This also begins on February 17th from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and continues each Thursday for seven weeks. For more information, or to register for either workshop, call 240-964-8424.

Cigna EAP Webcast Seminars

Cigna's Employee Assistance Program will host two one-hour webcast seminars in February. Each will begin at 2 p.m. EST. Visit www.cigna.com/EAPwebcasts to register.

- February 9th – Stress Less: Mind and Body Strategies
- February 23rd – Pay it Forward: A Guide to Giving Back

Sweet Potato Nachos

This easy weeknight appetizer serves 6 and only takes 30 minutes to prepare and plate. It's also budget-friendly at only about \$1.56 per serving!

Source: www.heart.org

**Ingredients:**

- Cooking spray
- 3 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced into ¼ -inch thick rounds
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 ½ tsps. Paprika
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/3 cup no-salt added black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1/3 cup low-fat shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/3 cup chopped tomato or 1/3 cup canned diced tomatoes, drained
- 1/3 cup chopped avocado

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Line two medium baking pans with aluminum foil. Lightly spray the foil with cooking spray.
3. In a large bowl, toss together the sweet potatoes, oil, paprika, chili powder, and garlic powder. Spread the sweet potato mixture in a single layer on the baking pans.
4. Bake for 10 minutes. Using a spatula, turn over the sweet potatoes. Bake for 5-10 minutes more, or until crisp.
5. Remove the pans from the oven. Sprinkle the beans and cheddar over the sweet potatoes. Bake for 2 minutes, or until the cheese melts.
6. Sprinkle with the tomato and avocado.

Nutritional Information:

- Calories, 209
- Total Fat, 5.5 g
- Cholesterol, 5 mg
- Sodium, 194 mg
- Carbohydrates, 34 g
- Protein, 6 g