



# IN GOOD HEALTH NEWSLETTER...February



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## Volume 2 - Issue 2

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**February:**  
**Risk Factors for Heart Disease**  
**What Everyone Should Know About Heart Attacks**  
**Tips to Lower Risk of Heart Attack or Stroke**  
**Sugar 101**

## Risk Factors for Heart Disease

### Uncontrollable Risk Factors for Heart Disease

There are several risk factors for [heart disease](#); some are controllable, others are not.

Uncontrollable risk factors include:

- Male sex
- Older age
- Post- Menopausal
- Race (African Americans, American Indians, and Mexican Americans are more likely to have heart disease than Caucasians)

### Controllable Risk Factors for Heart Disease

- Uncontrolled hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Physical Inactivity
- Obesity (more than 20% over one's ideal bodyweight)
- Uncontrolled diabetes
- [High C-reactive protein](#)

### Stress

Individual response to stress may be a contributing factor. Some scientists have noted a relationship between [coronary heart disease](#) risk and stress in a person's life, their health behaviors and socioeconomic status. These factors may affect established risk factors. For example, people under stress may overeat, start smoking or smoke more than they otherwise would.

[Get stress management tips and tools](#)

### Alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol can raise blood pressure, increase risk of cardiomyopathy and stroke, cancer and other diseases. It can contribute to high triglycerides, and produce irregular heartbeats. Excessive alcohol consumption contributes to obesity, alcoholism, suicide and accidents. However, there is a cardioprotective effect of moderate alcohol consumption. BDT : Will only cache image widgets as well as query widgets FRAG\_306266 If you drink, limit your alcohol consumption to no more than two drinks per day for men and no more than one drink per day for women. /FRAG The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism defines one drink as 1-1/2 fluid ounces (fl oz) of 80-proof spirits (such as bourbon, Scotch, vodka, gin, etc.), 5 fl oz of wine or 12 fl oz of regular beer. It's not recommended that nondrinkers start using alcohol or that drinkers increase the amount they drink.

### Diet and Nutrition

A healthy diet is one of the best weapons you have to fight cardiovascular disease. The food you eat (and the amount) can affect other controllable risk factors: cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes and overweight. Choose nutrient-rich foods — which have vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients but are lower in calories —over nutrient-poor foods. Choose a diet that emphasizes intake of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains; includes low-fat dairy products, poultry, fish, legumes, nontropical vegetable oils, and nuts; and limits intake of sweets, sugar-sweetened beverages, and red meats. And to maintain a healthy weight, coordinate your diet with your physical activity level so you're using up as many calories as you take in.

[Visit our Nutrition website](#)



## What Everyone Should Know About Heart Attacks

**Did you know?** Typical symptoms of coronary artery disease include pain in the middle of the chest while walking, lifting something heavy or climbing stairs. If it's a warning sign of an impending heart attack, this pain will eventually go away with rest. But if it's a life-threatening heart attack, the chest pain will persist.

**1. Chest pain does not have to be "pain," and it doesn't have to be in the chest.** The pain can feel more like a pressure, tightness or squeezing sensation. This pain, pressure or tightness can also be in the left shoulder, left arm, throat, jaw or back.

**2. You don't have to have chest pain or pressure to be suffering from a heart attack.**

Although pain or pressure in the left-side shoulder, arm or jaw is most common, some people may **experience** nausea, vomiting, weakness, dizziness, hiccups, sweating and/or sudden trouble breathing. Overall, there's a sudden sense of not feeling well, and the time frame is usually anywhere from 15 minutes to several hours. People with diabetes (high blood sugar) and of older age may have milder symptoms.

**3. Heart disease does not discriminate and can strike even in people at low risk.** You don't have to be overweight, sedentary or a smoker to have a heart attack.



### Heart Attack

#### Warning Signs

Chest pain or discomfort

Upper body pain or discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw, stomach

Shortness of breath

Nausea, lightheadedness, weakness, dizziness, hiccups, sweating, cold sweats

LIVESTRONG.COM

**4. Heart disease doesn't just affect men.** Heart disease is also the number one cause of death in **women** across all races. In fact, death from heart disease is more than **10 times more likely** than death from breast cancer. Like men, women may present with vague symptoms like nausea, vomiting, weakness, dizziness, hiccups, sweating and/or sudden trouble breathing. However, more often than not, women present with the classic chest pressure and, unlike men, symptoms are missed simply because of lack of awareness. Heart disease kills more women than men every year, and women are more likely to die within a year of their heart attacks than men. However, compared to men, women have underlying differences in the structure and function of the arteries of their heart and the sequence of events in the body that lead to their heart attacks.

**5. There's an art to exercise.** Anyone over the age of 40 should be cautious when exercising — even relatively healthy people shouldn't suddenly exert themselves more than usual. All exercise should start slowly and gradually increase in pace, duration and resistance. And it's always a good idea to talk to your physician before starting a new exercise regimen.

Read more: <http://www.livestrong.com/blog/everyone-know-heart-attacks/#ixzz3yx06Z6dq>

**Did you know?** In the United States, 1 in 4 women dies from heart disease. In fact, [coronary heart disease](#) (CHD)—the most common type of heart disease—is the #1 killer of both men and women in the United States. The good news is that you can control many CHD risk factors.

Please view this video: “Just a little Heart Attack”:

<https://youtu.be/t7wmPWTnDbE>

“A little film about a mom who takes care of everyone but herself”

Elizabeth Banks

## Tips to Lower Risk of Heart Attack or Stroke

### 1. Exercise a Little Each Day

Moderate physical activity lowers your chances of getting a heart attack by 30% to 50%. Aim for 30 minutes of exercise that gets your heart pumping at least 5 days a week. Brisk walking or swimming are some good choices. On the other 2 days, do strength training, like lifting



### 2. Set a Reasonable Goal for Weight Loss

If you're overweight or obese, you don't have to get thin to reduce your risk for a heart attack or stroke. If you lose 5% to 10% of your weight, you'll improve your cholesterol numbers and lower your blood pressure and blood sugar levels.

### 4. Eat Well

If you stick to a healthy diet you could lower your odds of getting heart disease by 25%. Fill your plate with different kinds of fruits, veggies, whole grains, fish, and lean meats. Stay away from processed or prepared foods that often are high in salt and filled with preservatives.

### 5. Drink Some Alcohol, but Not Too Much

If you drink, any type of alcohol helps your heart, but use caution. Too much raises your risk of high blood pressure, heart attack, and stroke. To get the benefit without the risk, limit yourself to one drink a day if you're a woman and two if you're a man.

### 6. Eat a Little Chocolate

Several studies show that people who eat it more than once a week lower their risk of heart disease by almost 40% and stroke by about 30%. Go for dark chocolate, and make sure the ingredients are at least 70% cacao. It's filled with nutrients that help protect your ticker. Keep your portions small so you don't gain weight and work your



### 7. Don't Smoke

Smoking dramatically raises your risk of heart attacks and strokes, so talk to your doctor about how to quit. You'll also be doing your friends and family a favor, since secondhand smoke can also lead to heart disease.

### 8. Pay Attention to Your Symptoms

Don't just hope they'll go away. See your doctor if you feel anything unusual, like shortness of breath, changes in your heart rhythm, or extreme tiredness. Also watch for pain in your jaw or back, nausea or vomiting, sweating, or flu-like symptoms.

WebMD

# Sugar 101



## How much added sugar per day?

According to the American Heart Association (AHA), the maximum amount of added sugars you should eat in a **day** are: Men: 150 calories **per day** (37.5 grams or 9 teaspoons). Women: 100 calories **per day** (25 grams or 6 teaspoons).

## 3 Ways to find added sugar

- 1. The sugar bowl.** Believe it or not, you might be the most common source of added sugar in your food. The first step to finding and eliminating extra sugar in your diet is to become aware of the spoonfuls we add at home. To do this, make the bowl harder to reach. It will give you a moment to think twice about your choice to add sweetener to your food. The **calories in sugar** can add up in a hurry so you should be thoughtful if you are going to use it.
- 2. Find added sugar on the nutrition label.** The next place to find sugar is in the processed foods you eat. Many processed products, even those that you'd never suspect, contain sugar. For example, many savory **foods like ketchup contain sugar** and even some commercially produced salsas contain the sweetener as well.
- 3. Find added sugar in the ingredients list.** Finding hidden sugars in the ingredients list takes keen detective skills. Unfortunately very few food manufacturers call sugar by that name on the label. They often use other terms that are harder to decode. One rule of thumb is to look for any word ending in "ose." These are most likely sugars. In addition, these are some other terms that manufacturers might use to describe the sugar that they've added to a product.

## Added Sugars

- Agave nectar
- Brown sugar
- Cane crystals
- Cane sugar
- Corn sweetener
- Corn syrup
- Crystalline fructose
- Dextrose
- Evaporated cane juice
- Fructose
- Fruit juice concentrates
- Glucose
- High-fructose corn syrup
- Honey
- Invert sugar
- Lactose
- Maltose
- Malt syrup
- Molasses
- Raw sugar
- Sucrose
- Sugar
- Syrup

## 4. Candy

This one is no surprise... According to recent estimates, candy consumption accounts for 6.7% of overall added sugar intake.

## 5. Dairy Desserts

This is the category that includes ice cream and frozen yogurts, and accounts for 5.6% of overall added sugar consumption. Beware of low-fat versions of dairy desserts; to compensate for the loss of fat, many manufacturers add more sugar to these than would be found in the higher or full fat versions.

If you see one of these names listed, then the product contains added sugar. If the sugar is listed as one of the first ingredients, then it is a primary ingredient.

## Top 5 Sources of Added Sugar

### 1. Soda and Energy/Sports Drinks.

Soda plus energy and sports drinks account for the largest food-group source (34.4%) of added sugars in the U.S. diet. Sugar-sweetened beverages were confirmed as the top source for added sugars among children and adolescents by other researchers as well when examining data from [the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey \(NHANES\)](#).

### 2. Grain Desserts

These are the pies, cookies, and cakes that so many love to eat for dessert. Basically, anything that is made with any kind of flour counts as a grain dessert. And, according to the latest findings, we as a nation are eating far too many of them.

### 3. Fruit Drinks

Fruit drinks are seldom 100% fruit juice, but rather are more likely to be a **combination of added sugars** and syrups with some blend of fruit juices thrown in. These added sugars include ingredients like sucrose (table sugar), cane sugar, evaporated cane juice, fructose, high-fructose corn syrup, juice concentrate, and other additives that are essentially sugar as far as the human digestive system is concerned.





## Sugar 101

### Dump 3 Foods to Reduce Sugar Intake

**1. Sodas, sweetened drinks and designer coffees.** Much of the sugar we consume each day comes not from the foods we eat but from the drinks we consume. In fact, many healthy-sounding beverages are often the [drinks that will ruin your diet](#). Even diet sodas can cause trouble. DeFigio recommends that we "stay away from sodas of all types, both sugared and sugar free." He recommends [healthy, flavored water](#) instead.



**2. Fruit juice and "juice" drinks.** While real fruit juice has lots of vitamins and antioxidants, it's also a concentrated source of fructose.

"Fructose overload", is a direct path to body fat. Juice cocktails and children's juice boxes are generally only 10% real juice or less and the remaining product is high-fructose corn syrup or other manufactured sweetener.

**3. Candy, pastries, frozen desserts, and "junk food" sources of sugar.** If you're not sure how much sugar your processed food contains, check the Nutrition Facts Label. In his book, DeFigio recommends avoiding any food that has more than 10 grams of sugar per serving. But the key is [understanding serving size](#). If you eat more than the amount listed on the label, you are getting more sugar than is indicated on the Nutrition Facts Label.

### Curb Sugar Cravings



**In order to manage the cravings that will probably hit when you change your diet, follow these 3 essential tips.**

**1. Eat often enough throughout the day.** When you go long periods without food, your body goes into starvation mode, holding on to fat stores and turning on the craving center.

**2. Drink enough water.** Your hypothalamus controls both your appetite and your thirst sensation. It's easy to confuse being thirsty with wanting something to eat.

**3. Plan ahead!** Know [what you're going to eat throughout the day](#), so you don't find yourself at the mercy of whatever is lying around in the break room at work, or whatever's quick and easy at a drive-thru.

[abouthealth.com](http://abouthealth.com)



## Southwestern Layered Bean Dip



This **healthy superbowl appetizer** has plenty of blackbeans, salsa, and chopped fresh vegetables which equals a healthy amount of dietary fiber. Reduced fat sour cream along with full fat (and full flavored) cheese to make the dip lighter without compromising great taste.



**Makes:** 12 servings, about 1/2 cup each

**Active Time:** 20 minutes

**Total Time:** 20 minutes

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 16-ounce can nonfat refried beans, preferably “spicy”
- 1 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed
- 4 scallions, sliced
- 1/2 cup prepared salsa
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/4 cup pickled jalapeño slices, chopped
- 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack, or Cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1 1/2 cups chopped romaine lettuce
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 1 medium avocado, chopped
- 1/4 cup canned sliced black olives, (optional)

### PREPARATION

- 1 Combine refried beans, black beans, scallions, salsa, cumin, chili powder and jalapeños in a medium bowl. Transfer to a shallow 2-quart microwave-safe dish; sprinkle with cheese.
- 2 Microwave on High until the cheese is melted and the beans are hot, 3 to 5 minutes.
- 3 Spread sour cream evenly over the hot bean mixture, then scatter with lettuce, tomato, avocado and olives (if using).

### NUTRITION

**Per serving:** 146 calories; 7 g fat (3 g sat, 3 g mono); 12 mg cholesterol; 15 g carbohydrates; 7 g protein; 5 g fiber; 288 mg sodium; 164 mg potassium.

**Nutrition Bonus:** Fiber (20% daily value), Vitamin A & Vitamin C (15% dv).

**Carbohydrate Servings:** 1/2

**Exchanges:** 1 starch, 1 very lean meat, 1 fat

### TIPS & NOTES

**Make Ahead Tip:** Prepare through Step 1, cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day. To serve, continue with Steps 2 & 3.