

Heart Health

SAFETY SHARE COURTESY OF: Lauren Selvik, TXAPA Administrator



Valentine's Day is just around the corner, but you should be thinking about more than candy hearts this month. February is American Heart Month. According to the American Heart Association, one in four deaths in America is the result of heart disease — the leading cause of death among both men and women. Show your heart some love by following these tips:

Maintain a Healthy Diet. Avoid foods with high amounts of sugar, salt, and saturated fats. Heart healthy foods include:

- Nuts such as almonds, walnuts, and pecans
- Dark chocolate
- Omega-3 fatty acid foods such as salmon, tuna, eggs, and milk
- Dark, leafy vegetables such as spinach and kale

Exercise. The American Heart Association recommends 2.5 hours of exercise every week for a healthy heart.

Get Plenty of Rest. Sleep is essential to allow your body to recover from each day. Getting at least seven hours of sleep per night slows the heart rate, lowers blood pressure, and stabilizes breathing — all of which reduce stress on your heart.

Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle. Risk factors for heart disease include:

- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Excessive alcohol use
- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol