

## February is American Heart Month

*Better lifestyle habits can greatly reduce your risk of heart disease*



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February is *American Heart Month*, an annual time dedicated to raising awareness about cardiovascular diseases – the nation's No. 1 killer (Source: American Heart Association, [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)). The American Heart Association [AHA] is particularly well-known for their support of this annual event, sponsoring many local events and national campaigns to educate and advocate for heart health. According to the AHA, better lifestyle habits can greatly decrease your risk of heart disease.

- Eat a nutritious diet.** To keep your heart happy and healthy, be sure your eating plan is based on healthy foods from each of *MyPyramid's food groups*.

  - **Grains:** Make at least half your grains whole – brown rice, oatmeal and whole grain pastas and breads are all good examples of whole grains
  - **Fruits and vegetables:** The more the better – and go for a variety of colors! Fruits and vegetables are a great source of vitamins, minerals and fiber – and most are low-calorie/low-fat.
  - **Dairy:** Eat three servings per day of low-fat or fat-free dairy foods.
  - **Meat & beans:** include lean meats, fish and poultry or plant proteins like beans, nuts and seeds.
  - In addition to eating healthy foods from each food group, MyPyramid recommends limiting consumption of bad fats (saturated and trans-fats), sodium and added sugars.
  - For more information, printable fact-sheets, and personalized tools that calculate and analyze your dietary intake, go to [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov).
- Remember – heart disease isn't just a man's disease!** Heart disease is #1 killer of women in America. National movements, such as *Go Red for Women* (founded by the AHA), aspire to raise awareness about heart disease among women. Visit their website ([www.goredforwomen.org](http://www.goredforwomen.org)) to take the 'go red heart check-up', search for healthy recipes, or access a FREE 12-week physical activity program.
- Be physically active.** Aim for at least 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity – 60 is ideal for weight maintenance or loss.
- Don't smoke – and if you do, it's never too late to quit!** Within 20 minutes of quitting, your body begins a series of positive changes that continue for years. Just one year after quitting your added risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker! For more information go to [http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/index.htm).



*Selecting healthy foods from each of the food groups is just one way you can decrease your risk of heart disease.*

### American Heart Month Events (Missoula):

- **February 2, 2008:** *Heart Expo at St. Patrick Hospital Broadway Building* (7am – 1pm). This annual event is free and open to the public – no registration is required. There will be heart demonstrations, free glucose and lipid screening, prostate lab tests for men (\$10), thyroid lab tests (\$10), presentations by cardiovascular physicians and staff, informational tables and refreshments. Call 406-329-5770 with questions.
- **February 29, 2008:** *Annual Go Red for Women Luncheon at the Hilton Garden Inn* (10:30am – 2pm). This third annual luncheon includes a silent auction, keynote speaker, a delicious healthy lunch, interactive exhibits and breakout sessions focused on the latest trends in women's health, fitness and nutrition. To pre-register, or for more information call Angela Renaldo at 406-829-3377. Proceeds of the luncheon and auction benefit the American Heart Association.
- Go to [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org) for events in your area.