

PRESSURE POINTS

July 2011

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE NEWS YOU CAN USE



Answers to Your Questions about High Blood Pressure



What causes high blood pressure?

High blood pressure, or hypertension, can be caused by narrowing of the arteries, a greater than normal volume of blood, or the heart beating faster or more forcefully than it should. Most of the time, the cause of these issues isn't known. Some risk factors for high blood pressure include sedentary lifestyle, obesity, smoking, stress and increased age.

Why is knowing if you have high blood pressure important?

When your blood pressure is too high, it means that the heart has to work very hard to pump blood. This can increase the risk for heart disease and stroke, as well as cause heart failure, kidney disease and blindness. Even if you don't see or feel symptoms of high blood pressure, it could still be causing problems in your body, so it's very important to work with your doctor to come up with a plan to control it. Your plan will include making healthy lifestyle choices such as diet and exercise, and possibly medications.

When should I call the doctor about my high blood pressure?

If you've been diagnosed with high blood pressure, it's very important to regularly check in with your doctor and have your blood pressure measured. High blood pressure isn't a problem that can be treated and then forgotten. It needs to be monitored regularly. You should call the doctor if you have certain symptoms including fatigue, nausea, shortness of breath, lightheadedness, headache, excessive sweating, problems with your vision or confusion. These could be due to high blood pressure or side effects of your blood pressure medication.

Some useful links:

www.umassmemorial.org/heart

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/index.html

www.mayoclinic.com/health/high-blood-pressure/DS00100

www.webmd.com/hypertension-high-blood-pressure/default.htm

Questions for Your Health Care Team

- How often should I have my high blood pressure checked?
- Are there any high blood pressure warning signs I should look for?

Healthy Summertime Eating Made Easy

Visiting a farmer's market is one of the easiest ways to incorporate heart healthy foods into your diet. You'll find a diversity of foods fresh from the fields and meet the people who grow your meal. Farmer's markets offer a wide selection of fruits and vegetables grown here in Worcester County.

Find a farmer's market near you today.

Visit www.farmfresh.org/food/farmersmarkets.php?zip=01608.





Splash into Fitness!

Have you tried any of these exercises: walking, jumping jacks, dancing and badminton?

Now try them in the water. It may sound easy but water provides a great resistance making these exercises fun and challenging.

The benefits of water aerobics:

- Better flexibility and balance
- Pain relief, including relief for arthritic pain
- Stress reduction
- Control of blood pressure and type 2 diabetes
- Strengthened cardiovascular system
- Better oxygen distribution
- Weight loss and/or weight control
- Increased energy levels

For information on swimming and water aerobics, visit these websites:

www.ywcacentralmass.org/wp-content/uploads/Summer-Session4.pdf

www.ymcaofcm.org/download/16_central_summer2011_v2.pdf

www.ymcaofcm.org/download/45_summer16.pdf



Recipes for Heart Health: *Strawberry Cream Tart*

Courtesy of EatBetterAmerica (www.EatBetterAmerica.com)

This recipe starts with a breakfast cereal crust and blends healthy ingredients into a creamy, dreamy strawberry tart.

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| 3 cups Honey Nut Cheerios cereal | 1/3 cup Cascadian Farm organic strawberry fruit spread |
| 1 tablespoon sugar | 1 teaspoon vanilla |
| 2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil | 1 lb fresh strawberries, sliced |
| 4 teaspoons water | 1 tablespoon Cascadian Farm organic strawberry fruit spread |
| 6 ounces fat-free cream cheese
(from 8 ounce package), softened | 1 tablespoon honey |

Serves 12.

Heat oven to 350°. Lightly spray 9-inch tart pan with removable bottom with cooking spray.

Place cereal in food processor; process until crumbly. Add sugar, oil and water; pulse just until moist. Press mixture in bottom and up side of pan. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until light brown. Cool on cooling rack 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, in small bowl, beat cream cheese, 1/3 cup fruit spread and the vanilla with electric mixer on high speed about 1 minute or until completely blended and smooth. Spread over crust. Arrange strawberry slices in circular pattern over cream cheese mixture.

In small microwavable bowl, mix 1 tablespoon fruit spread and the honey. Microwave uncovered on high 15 seconds; stir until blended and smooth. Spoon over strawberries. Cover; refrigerate at least 2 hours.

Nutritional information per serving: Calories: 160; Total Fat: 4.5g; Saturated Fat: 0g; Trans Fat: 0g; Protein: 4g; Carbohydrates: 25g; Fiber: 2g; Sugars: 19g. Exchanges: Starch: 1; Fats: 1; Carbohydrate Choices: 1.5; Other Carbohydrates: .5

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