

Numbers for a healthy heart

February is heart month! Follow the numbers to keep your heart healthy.

40 inches or less waist circumference for men, **35 inches** or less for women. This is a measure of obesity.

30 minutes or more of physical activity on most days. For weight loss and maintaining weight loss, evidence shows that **60 to 90 minutes** of moderate activity on most days is needed.

25 or lower **Body Mass Index (BMI)**, a measure of overweight and obesity based on height and body weight. Don't know yours? Use the online calculator on the healthy weight page at www.stepaheadprogram.com.

4 to 5 cups a day of fruits and vegetables. High levels of vegetable and fruit consumption can lower risk even for people with a family history of heart disease.

3 to 6 ounces of lean meats, poultry or seafood per day.

3 to 4 servings of whole grains per day, accounting for at least half of your total servings.
2 to 3 cups of fat-free or low-fat dairy products per day.

2 to 3 servings of fats and oils per day. One serving = 1 teaspoon trans fat free margarine or 1 Tablespoon mayonnaise.

0 use of tobacco products and exposure to second-hand smoke.

Work with your health care provider to **keep your other numbers in a healthy range**, including blood pressure, total cholesterol, HDL ("good") and LDL ("bad") cholesterol, triglycerides and fasting glucose.

From www.heart.org/numbersthatcount

For more resources, also see

<http://womenshealth.gov/heart-health-stroke/> ,

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/index.htm>

<http://healthfinder.gov/prevention/category.aspx?catId=5>

http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/what_you_can_do.htm

Recipe of the Week: Raspberry Chocolate Chunk Muffins

makes 12 muffins

adapted from Pure Dessert by Alice Medrich

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1 Tbsp. baking powder
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
2/3 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 cup low-fat milk
5 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted and still warm
pinch of salt
3 ounces dark chocolate, chopped or 2/3 cup chocolate chips
5 ounces frozen raspberries, not thawed, remove from freezer at very last minute. If using fresh raspberries, place them in a single layer on a baking sheet and freeze till frozen.

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Put rack in lower third of oven. Put paper wrappers in muffin tin.
2. In a small bowl combine flours, baking powder, nutmeg and salt.
3. In another bowl whisk eggs. Add sugar and whisk together. Whisk in milk and butter. Mix well.
4. Pour liquid mixture into dry ingredients. Stir just till all ingredients are moist. Do not overbeat.
5. Add chocolate and frozen raspberries, stir very gently just until fairly well distributed in batter.
6. Spoon batter into muffin tins. Bake 15-18 minutes, till a toothpick tests clean. Cool on a rack. Serve warm if possible.

Nutrition information per muffin: Calories: 215 Total Fat: 8g
Saturated Fat: 5g Cholesterol: 45mg Sodium: 144mg
Carbohydrate: 33g Dietary Fiber: 3g Protein: 5g

Tip of the Week:

Red-purple foods are a natural on Valentine's Day, and they are rich in antioxidant polyphenols that are heart-healthy. Try the low-fat high-fiber muffin recipe here (it is special enough for dessert!) Have some red wine with your meal, or try some festive, ruby-red pomegranate juice.

--- adapted from www.newswise.com