



CLICK on this symbol throughout this e-newsletter for links to interactive simple solutions.

In This Issue: • Healthy vs. Unhealthy Fats • Belly Dance Your Way to a Better Body • How to Combat the Winter Blues



HealthyLiving

Have a Heart-healthy Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day traditions – boxes of chocolate and lavish dinners – aren't exactly good for your heart, or your waistline. This February 14th, show that special someone you love him or her in a way that's a little healthier. Here are some suggestions.

If you're giving chocolate, go with dark chocolate. No doubt about it, chocolate is the Valentine's Day gift of choice – and if you go with the dark variety, it can also be a healthy treat. Dark chocolate contains flavonoids, which have been shown to be good for the heart. Look for dark chocolate treats that contain at least 60 percent cocoa to get the most health benefits. Don't go overboard, though – dark chocolate packs just as much fat and calories as the milky kind.

If you're drinking alcohol, pick red wine. Red wine contains antioxidants called polyphenols and a compound called resveratrol that protects the heart and may have other health benefits as well. However, alcohol use is also linked to an increased risk of cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends you limit yourself to no more than 1 drink per day for women and 2 drinks per day for men, if you drink at all.

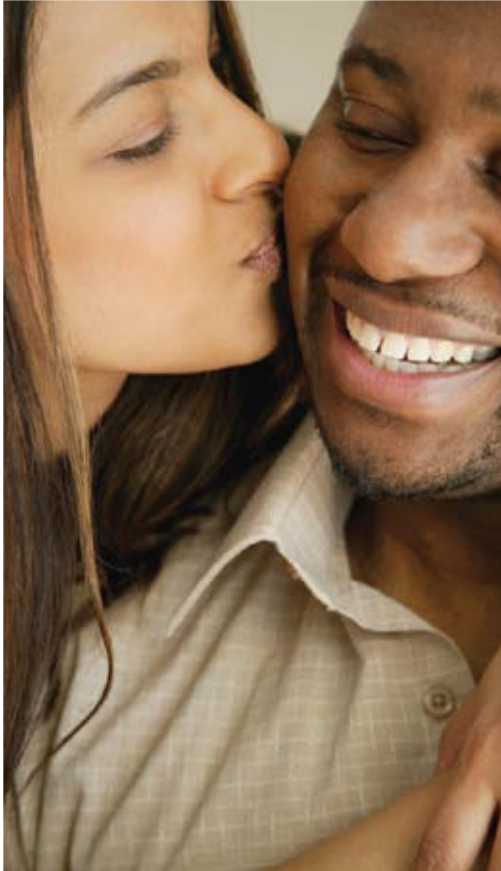
Make a romantic meal at home. If you eat in, you'll have more control over calories, fat, and portion size. For dessert, serve fruit such as strawberries dipped in dark chocolate (see recipe in this issue) or poached pears drizzled with chocolate.

If you do go out, keep these tips in mind. Save on fat and calories by ordering an appetizer, splitting an entrée, or sharing a meal with your sweetie. Ask waiters if the cooks can use lighter preparations: grill the chicken, steam the vegetables, or bring sauces and salad dressings on the side.

Rethink date night. Instead of dinner and a movie, consider a date that involves being active or exercising together. Enjoy romantic vistas on a hike, or pair up on the ice skating rink.

The American Cancer Society can help you learn more ways to stay well and reduce your risk for cancer – visit cancer.org/GreatAmericans or call 1-800-227-2345 for more information.

How do I love thee? This year, show your love in a way that's heart-healthy. These tips can help.



Belly Dance Your Way to a Better Body

In recent years, singers like Britney Spears and Shakira have blended belly dancing moves into their performances. Yet you don't have to move like a pop star to have fun and reap the benefits of this low- to no-impact workout – it's easy on the joints and suits all ages and fitness levels.

Contrary to its Western name, belly dancing is not all about the belly. This ancient Middle

Eastern dance can actually be an effective form of exercise for toning the entire body. Many moves require dancers to raise their arms for extended periods of time, building upper-body, arm, and shoulder strength. By continuously swaying the hips, dancers also build strong leg and back muscles.

And, of course, the many stomach moves help improve torso strength.

As with any other form of exercise, belly dancing's effectiveness depends on the technique, duration, and frequency of your sessions. Look for classes at a reputable gym or studio, and add belly dancing to your fitness routine of at least 30 minutes of activity at least 5 days a week.

Not All Fats Are Created Equal

It used to be that if you were trying to watch your weight, you avoided fats as much as possible. While it's still smart to keep an eye on the amount of fat you're consuming, some fats are better for you than others.

Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are known as "healthy fats" because they can help lower cholesterol, especially "bad" low-density lipoprotein (LDL) known to contribute to heart disease. To get more of these fats in your diet, cook with oils such as canola, olive, safflower, sunflower, corn, flaxseed, and peanut.

Studies suggest one type of polyunsaturated fat, omega-3 fatty acids, can keep your heart healthy. Good sources of omega-3s include walnuts and fatty fish like salmon.

Avoid saturated fat and trans fatty acids, "bad fats" that raise your LDL cholesterol. Saturated fat comes mainly from animal sources such as meat, whole milk, and butter. Trans fatty acids are formed when vegetable oils are processed into margarine or shortening. They're typically found in commercial baked goods and fried foods (such as French fries).

How to Combat the Winter Blues

The days are dark and cold, and it's harder to get outside. The combined effect can put you in a real funk. These tips can help.

Exercise. A brisk walk can do wonders for your mood. If it's too cold outside, try some indoor exercise (see article in this issue). The American Cancer Society recommends adults engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity – above your usual day-to-day activities – on 5 or more days a week. Forty-five minutes to an hour is even better.

Eat a balanced diet. Eating a balanced diet is important for your overall health. Try to avoid excessive caffeine and sugar – they can make you feel anxious and irritable.



Get a good night's rest. Aim for 8 hours every night. If you're not sleeping well, try going to bed at the same time every night and waking up at the same time every morning. A routine can help you sleep more regularly.

Stay connected. During the winter months, people tend to stay inside, which can make you feel isolated. Reach out to friends and family – send an email or pick up the phone.

If these tips don't help, talk to a mental health professional. You may be suffering from seasonal affective disorder (SAD), which can be treated with light therapy and other interventions.



[CLICK HERE](#) for more healthy eating tips.

Green Tea: Miracle Drink?

It's hard to stroll along the tea aisle at your local grocery store without noticing the proliferation of green tea. There's green tea with lemon, mint and green tea blends, decaffeinated green tea, green tea with fruit flavorings. What's the deal with this ubiquitous leaf?

Green tea is made from the steamed and dried leaves of the *Camellia sinensis* plant, a shrub native to Asia. It's widely consumed in Japan, China, and other Asian nations, and it's increasingly popular in the West. Green tea contains chemicals known as polyphenols, which may have health benefits, though researchers are still studying their effects.

Some research has suggested that green tea drinkers have a lower risk of certain types of cancer, though that research isn't conclusive. In short? We don't know yet if green tea has any benefits. If you drink green tea, do so in moderation (it from a reputable source (some green teas contain other ingredients).



[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about green tea.

Winter Weather Workouts You Can Do at Home



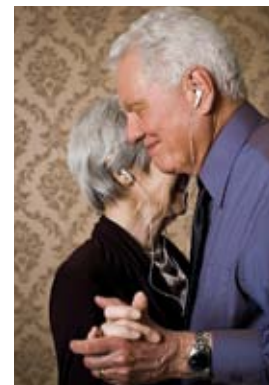
When the weather outside is frightful, it can be hard to motivate yourself to lace up your sneakers and go for a run or get to the gym. Fortunately, there's a lot you can do to stay fit without leaving the confines of your comfy, cozy home.

Working out regularly will not only help you control your weight, you'll also reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. And it's a great way to ward off the wintertime blues. Here are some of our favorite ways to burn calories and fat from your home-sweet-home:

- Pop in a DVD and hop on the treadmill. Or, if you don't have a treadmill, do jumping jacks, run in place, or do push-ups in front of the TV set.

- Put on your favorite music and dance.
- Consider buying a fitness DVD – there's a lot of variety out there, from yoga to aerobics.
- Clean your house. Scrubbing, mopping, and vacuuming all burn calories.

The American Cancer Society recommends adults engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity – above your usual day-to-day activities – on 5 or more days a week. Forty-five minutes to an hour is even better.



[CLICK HERE](#) for more fitness tips.



Chocolate: Being Healthy Never Tasted So Sweet

Good news for chocolate lovers (and who isn't?): This tasty favorite might just be good for you.

Studies in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and other publications have found that moderate amounts of dark chocolate – not milk or white chocolate – may be beneficial to your health. Eating small amounts of dark chocolate per day can lower blood pressure for people with moderately high blood pressure.

What's the magic ingredient in dark chocolate? The treat is rich in antioxidants, and it may lower the amount of "bad" cholesterol in the body.

These studies don't offer a license to eat unlimited amounts of dark chocolate, however. The key is moderation. Chocolate still has plenty of calories, so it's important to balance how much you eat with an overall healthy diet and regular exercise.

Chocolate-covered Strawberries

There's nothing like fruit dipped in chocolate to satisfy a sweet tooth. The sweetness of the berries is the perfect complement to the richness of the chocolate. It's the goods without the guilt.

This dessert is equally tasty with dried apricots or other dried fruits when strawberries are out of season.

4 squares German chocolate
or 2 tablespoons semisweet
chocolate chips

8 large strawberries

Place chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl and microwave on HIGH for 1 minute. Stir to combine. If necessary, heat for another 15 seconds.

Dip strawberries midway into melted chocolate and lay on wax paper to dry. Refrigerate for 10 to 20 minutes or until firm.

Serves 4.

*Approximate per serving: 40 calories;
2.0 grams of fat.*



[CLICK HERE](#) to order *The American Cancer Society's Great American Eat-Right Cookbook*.

From *The Great American Eat-Right Cookbook*,
© 2007 by American Cancer Society. Reprinted
by permission.



In the Next Issue: • When Should You Be Tested for Colon Cancer? • Pack a Healthy Lunch • Penn State Coach Leads Fight Against Cancer

Articles contributed by:
Lisa Harris and Rebecca
V. Snowden.

To sign up for this e-newsletter, please [CLICK HERE](#). To learn more about American Cancer Society programs, services, and upcoming events, please call 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.



[CLICK HERE](#) to donate to the American Cancer Society.

All content for *HealthyLiving* is provided by the American Cancer Society.