Have you thought about your heart lately?

On average, your heart beats about 100,000 times per day, pumping nutrients and oxygen throughout the body. Taking this hard-working group of muscles for granted can be easy. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States.

Managing risk

When we recognize our risk factors, we can take steps to manage them. Some risk factors, such as age and family history, are not under our control. Other habits, such as smoking, food choices and level of physical activity, can be modified, with some effort. Conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure can be managed through diet, physical activity, medication (as needed) and regular monitoring by a health-care provider.

Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D.
Food and Nutrition Specialist

Do you have risk factors for heart disease?

Answer these questions.

Do you smoke? Yes No
Do you have high cholesterol and/or high LDL cholesterol? Yes No Don't know
Do you have diabetes? Yes No Don't know
Do you have high blood pressure? Yes No Don't know
Are you overweight by 20 or more pounds (according to a health-care provider)? Yes No Don't know
Are you physically inactive? Yes No Don't know
Are you 45 or older? Yes No
Are you postmenopausal? Yes No
Do you have a history or family history of heart disease? (Father or brother stricken before age 55; mother or sister stricken before age 65) Yes No Don't know

Revised February 2016
Tips for trimming fat and saturated fat

You have many ways to cut fat during food preparation and maintain tasty foods. All foods can fit in a healthy diet. If you like high-fat desserts, for example, have a smaller serving or enjoy them less often.

✔ Check the food preparation tips that you have tried or will try in the future:

- Steam, boil, bake or microwave vegetables rather than fry. Or, stir-fry vegetables in a small amount of vegetable oil.
- Season vegetables with herbs and spices instead of fatty sauces, butter or margarine.
- Try flavored vinegars or lemon juice on salads or use smaller servings of oil-based or low-fat salad dressings.
- Use vegetable oil in place of solid shortening, margarine and butter whenever possible. Try using less oil than shortening in baked products.
- Try whole-grain flours to enhance flavors of baked goods made with less fat and cholesterol-containing ingredients.
- Replace whole milk with low-fat or skim milk in puddings, soups and baked products.
- Substitute plain, low-fat yogurt or blender-whipped low-fat cottage cheese for sour cream or mayonnaise.
- Choose lean cuts of meat and trim fat from meat before and/or after cooking. Remove skin from poultry before or after cooking.
- Roast, bake, broil or simmer meat, poultry or fish rather than fry.
- Cook meat or poultry on a rack so the fat will drain. Use a nonstick pan for cooking so adding fat is unnecessary.
- Chill meat or poultry broth until the fat becomes solid. Spoon off the fat before using the broth.
- To lower fat and cholesterol, try substituting egg whites in recipes calling for whole eggs. Use two egg whites in place of each whole egg in muffins, cookies and puddings.

How does diet affect blood cholesterol levels?

Eating a diet high in fat, especially saturated fat and trans fat, tends to raise blood cholesterol levels. Fat adds flavor and satiety value to foods, but many people eat more fat than recommended. Do the foods you eat provide too much fat? Answer the questions below, then see how your diet stacks up.

How often do you eat:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fried, deep-fat fried or breaded foods?</th>
<th>Seldom or never</th>
<th>1-2 times per week</th>
<th>3-5 times per week</th>
<th>Almost daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatty meats such as sausage, luncheon meats or heavily marbled steaks and roasts?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole milk, regular hard cheeses or ice cream?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-fat desserts such as pies, pastries or rich cakes?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breads with lots of fat, such as croissants or rich muffins?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whipped cream, regular sour cream or cream cheese?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter or margarine on vegetables, dinner rolls or toast?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Take a look at your answers. If you have several responses in the last two columns, this indicates that you may have a high fat intake. If so, try to cut back on the amount you eat, as well as the number of times you eat higher-fat foods.

Read nutrition facts labels

Food labels provide lots of information about your food choices. Compare fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, fiber and sodium contents of different foods. If a product package says the product is “heart healthy” or carries a health claim, the food has to meet specific regulations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrition Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serving Size 3 oz (85g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servings Per Container 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount Per Serving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories 180 Calories from Fat 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Daily Value*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat 10g  15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat 4g  20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans Fat 0.5g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol 70mg  23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium 60mg  3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate 0g  0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber 0g  0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars 0g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein 22g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium 2% • Iron 15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your caloric needs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calories: 2,000 2,500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat Less than 65g 80g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat Less than 20g 25g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol Less than 300mg 300mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate 300g 375g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber 25g 30g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calories per gram:

- Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4
Fruits and vegetables and low-fat dairy products

Eating more fruits and vegetables daily is associated with improving health. Nutrition experts now recommend that adults, on average, consume 2½ cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruits daily. See www.choosemyplate.gov for more information.

The DASH diet, which stands for “Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension,” includes at least nine servings of fruits and vegetables, along with low-fat, calcium-rich dairy products. Research has shown that the DASH diet — especially in combination with reduced dietary sodium — can significantly lower blood pressure, one of the risk factors for heart disease.

Eat MORE of certain foods!

Fiber
Fiber, especially soluble fiber found in barley, oatmeal, legumes such as cooked beans and produce such as carrots and apples, may reduce blood cholesterol levels if eaten regularly and in combination with a diet low in saturated fat.

Whole grains
Make at least half your grains whole grains. Aim for at least three of your servings from the grain group to be whole grains. Whole-wheat bread and oatmeal are examples of whole-grain foods.

How do you know a whole grain?
Look for the “whole grain” seal on product packages, look for a health claim, or look at the ingredient label for “whole grain,” “whole wheat” or “whole grain oats” as the first ingredient.

Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids
Substituting polyunsaturated fats (such as sunflower, safflower, corn and soybean oils) or monounsaturated fats (such as olive, canola and peanut oils) for solid fats can help improve your cholesterol profile.

Fish
Fatty fish, such as salmon, tuna, herring, mackerel, bass and halibut, contain omega-3 fatty acids, which are considered more heart healthy. Fish oil dietary supplements don’t appear to have the same effect.

Soy foods
Tofu, soymilk, soy-based burgers and soy nuts are examples. Soy-based foods can carry a health claim linking soy to improved heart health if the foods meet certain criteria. To carry the health claim, the product must contain 6.25 grams of soy protein or more and be low in fat (less than 3 grams per serving), low in saturated fat (less than 1 gram per serving) and low in cholesterol (less than 20 milligrams per serving).

In the DASH diet, what’s a serving of fruits or vegetables?

¾ cup 100% fruit or vegetable juice
1 medium-size piece of fruit
½ cup cooked, canned or raw fruits or vegetables
1 cup salad greens
¼ cup dried fruit

For more information about the DASH diet, visit this website:
Move more!

Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity, such as walking, on five or more days of the week. Three 10-minute segments count. Regular physical activity strengthens the heart, improves oxygen delivery to tissues, may lower blood pressure and may increase HDL cholesterol levels.

To add some activity to your life:

- Park your car in the back of the parking lot instead of near the entrance.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Walk at a mall or gym.
- Go dancing.
- Play with children or grandchildren.

For more information about food and nutrition, contact your local office of the NDSU Extension Service or visit our website: www.ndsu.edu/eatsmart

Web-based Resources with Heart Health Information

- American Heart Association: www.americanheart.org
- National Institutes of Health: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart

In the blanks below, list at least two goals to keep your heart healthier that you will try in the next month.

Today’s Date __________________

Set some goals

Check back in a month to see your progress toward your goals. Then set some new ones!