Finding a happy heart lifestyle, reducing saturated fat in your favourite meals and more...
The heart is an amazing organ, in an average lifetime a human heart will faithfully beat around 3 billion times, transporting blood and the oxygen and nutrients it contains to where they’re needed. So this issue of Good Food News we’re focusing on great ways to care for your heart, looking at some emerging research and common questions we get from readers.

Nuts are a great inclusion in a balanced diet, they’re nutrient dense and can add great texture and flavour to both savoury and sweet recipes. New research out of the USA also shows they could be good for your heart – find out more in our story on page 7.

We often get questions here at the Sanitarium Nutrition Service on what can be done to help lower blood cholesterol levels. From a dietary point of view, one of the best ways to help manage cholesterol levels is to minimise the amount of saturated fat in the diet. This issue we’ve got some practical tips on how to do just this on page 10.

We’ve also got information on omega 3 fats and information on an amazingly simple type of physical activity which can lower your risk of cardiovascular disease and as always, some great recipes to try out.

Happy Reading!

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“Our mission is to inspire and resource our community to experience happy, healthy lives.”

Volume 23, Number 2, Winter 2011
One of the most effective ways to look after your health is to follow a lifestyle that keeps your heart healthy. The heart is a wonderful little organ that dutifully keeps on beating day-in and day-out, when we’re sleeping, eating, and working out. It keeps our blood flowing to supply every cell of our body with oxygen and nutrients.

It starts beating in the embryo only a few weeks after conception and in an adult, it beats about 50 - 100 times a minute – that’s 100 thousand times a day or 42 million times a year.

However, most Australians are failing to look after their heart. In fact, the lifestyles of the vast majority of Australians have the potential to place them at a greater risk of Cardiovascular disease (CVD).

CVD includes diseases of the heart, blood vessels and stroke. It is the leading cause of death in Australia, killing one Australian nearly every 10 minutes.

There are many factors that can increase your risk of heart disease. These include your family history and increasing age – two risk factors that cannot be modified. The good news is most other risk factors for CVD are lifestyle related and largely preventable.

Smoking (both active smoking and second hand smoke), physical inactivity, a poor diet, irresponsible alcohol consumption, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, obesity and diabetes are all risk factors for CVD.

Most of us can recognise at least one of these traits or medical conditions. In fact, 92 per cent of Australian adults have at least one of the risk factors for CVD and almost 40 per cent have three or more risk factors.

So what can you do to improve your lifestyle and potentially help to reduce your risk of CVD?

Get active – regular physical activity is good for your heart. The Heart Foundation recommends at least 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, if not all days of the week, for health benefits. This may be a daily brisk walk, or if it is easier, break down the activity into shorter bouts, such as three 10-minute walks a day. It’s also important to break up the time you spend sitting …see page 12.

Eat wholesome foods – It’s never too late to start eating healthy. A balanced diet including a variety of wholesome foods is good for your heart and provides a wide range of health benefits that will boost your energy and overall wellbeing.

A healthy balanced diet should include predominantly plant foods including fruit, vegetables, wholegrains, soy and soy foods, nuts, seeds and legumes. Foods or drinks that are high in fat (particularly saturated fat), salt and sugar should be avoided. It’s also important to take a responsible approach to any alcohol consumption.

For tips on reducing saturated fat intakes see page 10 of Good Food News.

Healthy weight – Maintaining a healthy weight is important for heart health. Getting active and eating wholesome foods will help achieve and maintain a healthy weight. We’re all built differently, so a healthy weight can differ from person to person, have a chat with your doctor about what a healthy weight range is for you.

Smoke free – Quitting smoking is the single most important thing you can do to reduce your risk of heart disease. The benefits are immediate and two years after quitting, your risk of heart attack is around half that of a continuing smoker. It’s also important to avoid second hand smoke. Like any lifestyle change is not easy so seek support call Quitline on 13 7848 for information and advice or talk to your doctor.

See your Doctor – There’s often no symptoms for heart disease, so it’s important to speak to your doctor about your own risks. Your doctor can assess your risk factors and help put steps in place to manage and maintain healthy blood pressure, blood cholesterol, and blood sugar levels.
Lifestyle-related diseases are now the predominant reason patients visit their doctor, and make up 70 per cent of doctor visits. As a result the health profession is continually striving to develop new approaches to aid in the prevention of lifestyle-related chronic disease.

The latest is the emergence of ‘Lifestyle Medicine’ – “the application of environmental, behavioural, medical, and motivational principles to the management of lifestyle-related health problems in a clinical setting”.

Lifestyle medicine and lifestyle intervention programs are supportive and motivating, and they help participants make positive changes in their lives. They provide practical tips and social support, as well as helpful information about food, cooking, diseases, and much more.

If you need support in making changes to live a healthier lifestyle and look after your heart ask your doctor about lifestyle medicine and programs that could provide you with the support you need.

Other places to seek information and support in making changes to adopt a happy, healthy heart lifestyle are:

**Go 2 and 5** - for tips on adding extra fruit and vegetables to your diet [http://www.gofor2and5.com.au/]

**Swap it Don't Stop it** - for information on simple lifestyle changes that will improve your health [http://swapit.gov.au/]


**Go Red for Women** – increasing awareness about heart disease among women and uniting women in the fight against their number one killer [http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/driving-change/go-red-for-women/Pages/welcome.aspx]

**Heart Foundation** - for information on heart disease and lowering risk factors [http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/Pages/default.aspx]

**Measure Up** – for easy to follow tips and guidelines to help reduce the risk of chronic disease by maintaining a healthy lifestyle [http://www.measureup.gov.au/internet/abhi/publishing.nsf/content/home]

Nuts have traditionally been considered a fatty food – something that you should limit and possibly even avoid if you’re looking to lose weight. The fact is that including nuts in your diet could be good for your heart and may help you maintain a healthy weight.

New research from the USA has found that eating 67 grams of nuts each day (equivalent of two small handfuls) could reduce bad (LDL) cholesterol by seven per cent and triglycerides by 10 per cent. High triglyceride levels may increase the risk of heart disease.

Regularly eating two serves of almonds a day has also been linked to improving insulin control if you are at risk of diabetes (pre-diabetes - the stage before diabetes is actually diagnosed).

Tips for increasing your daily nut consumption:
- Serve nuts as an alternative to pre dinner cheese or dips
- Have a portioned container of nuts at your desk at work
- Sprinkle pine nuts over pasta dishes and include cashews in Asian style dishes
- Toss macadamias into dip recipes to give a creamy texture
- Add chopped roasted hazelnuts and fruit to low-fat ice-cream instead of flavoured topping
- Make your own pesto using pistachios or macadamia nuts, garlic, olive oil and basil

Nuts are a delicious inclusion into your day, they provide a healthy, plant source of protein – each type contributing their own array of vitamins and minerals and regular consumption can help with managing disease.
Stir-fry Greens

Ingredients:
- 200g firm tofu, drained and cut into 1cm cubes
- 100g snow peas, trimmed and finely chopped
- 1 bunch baby bok choy, trimmed, stems chopped
- 1 bunch asparagus, trimmed
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 red onion, cut in thin wedges
- 1/2 x 250g packet fresh lasagne sheets
- 1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)

Methods:
1. Heat oil in a large saucepan. Add tofu and stir-fry until hot. Toss through cashews and serve with steamed brown rice.

Per Serve:
- Calcium 205mg; Iron 6mg; Fibre 4g.
- Sodium 610mg; Potassium 485mg
- Carbohydrate 39g; Total Sugars 11g; Total Fat 10g; Saturated Fat 3g.

Curried Lentil Lasagne

Ingredients:
- 425g can crushed tomatoes
- 425g can brown lentils
- 1 zucchini, grated
- 1 carrot, grated
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 stick celery, diced
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/3 cup raw cashews
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1/4 cup grated low-fat cheese
- 3 cups soy or dairy milk

Methods:
2. Add bok choy leaves, snow peas and sauce mixture. Toss to combine. Cover and cook for 1 minute. Add tofu and stir-fry until hot.
3. Add margarine in a bowl and heat in the microwave for 1 minute or until melted.
4. Add buttermilk to dry ingredients and mix well to combine.

Per Serve:
- Calcium 240mg; Iron 1.8mg; Fibre 5g
- Sodium 250mg; Potassium 650mg
- Carbohydrate 13g; Total Sugars 11g; Total Fat 10g; Saturated Fat 3g.

Lentil Sausage Rollettes

Ingredients:
- 1 slice bread grain (soy and linseed)
- 400g can lentils, rinsed and drained
- 1 carrot, coarsely grated
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons barbecue sauce
- 5 sheets filo pastry

Methods:
1. Preheat oven to 200°C and line a baking tray with baking paper.
2. Process bread in a blender to make breadcrumbs. Place breadcrumbs in a large bowl with the lentils, carrot, egg, walnuts, chives, sauces and mix well to combine.
3. Remove 1 sheet filo pastry and cover the remaining sheets with a damp tea towel. Brush or spray with olive oil. Cut sheet in half lengthwise and then turn so that both short ends of the two strips face you.
4. Place 2 tablespoons of mixture on each edge closest to you, about 5cm from the edge and 1/2 cm from the sides. Even it out so that the filling is about 3cm wide. Fold pastry over filling and then roll up. Do this for both strips of pastry. Place on prepared tray and brush with oil. Repeat with remaining filling and pastry.
5. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and bake for 25 minutes until pastry is lightly brown. Makes 10.

Per Serve:
- Calcium 55mg; Iron 0.6mg; Fibre 2g.
- Sodium 190mg; Potassium 140mg
- Carbohydrate 26g; Total Sugars 11g; Total Fat 10g; Saturated Fat 3g.

Blueberry Shortcake

Ingredients:
- 1/2 cup plain flour
- 1/4 cup wholesome flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 125g blueberries
- 2 teaspoons raw sugar
- Greek yoghurt, to serve

Methods:
1. Grease and line the base of a 20cm cake pan with non-stick baking paper, allowing 1cm paper to come up the sides of the pan.
2. Place flours, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, salt and sugar into a food processor. Process until combined. Add margarine and process until mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Transfer to a large bowl.
3. Add buttermilk to dry ingredients and gently stir to form a batter. Spoon into prepared pan. Arrange blueberries on top. Sprinkle with raw sugar. Bake at 180°C for 30-35 minutes or until base is golden.
4. Cool in pan for 10 minutes and turn onto a rack to cool. Slice and serve with Greek yoghurt.

Per Serve:
- Calories 805 kJ (192 Cal); Protein 4g; Total Fat 7g; Saturated Fat 1g; Carbohydrate 25g; Total Sugars 11g; Sodium 19mg; Potassium 140mg; Calcium 55mg; Iron 0.6mg; Fibre 2g.

Serving suggestions and garnishes are not included in recipe analysis. Energy values rounded to the nearest 10 Kilojoules and to the nearest 5 Calories. Note: Not all Sanitarium products are available in all regions. Please ring us if you would like suggestions on alternative ingredients.
Reducing Saturated Fat in Your favourite meals

We all know that too much fat, especially saturated fat, can be bad for our health. There is a body of scientific research showing saturated fat has the potential to increase the level of ‘total’ and ‘bad’ (LDL) cholesterol in the blood, a key risk factor for heart disease.

To help maintain heart health and general well being, it is best to limit the amount of saturated fat in your diet. Saturated fats are found mainly in full-cream dairy products, fatty meats, pastries, palm and coconut oils and many commercial biscuits, snacks and takeaway foods. While these foods can be avoided, how do you ensure the meals you cook at home, or eaten at restaurants, are also low in saturated fat?

In many cases your favourite recipes can be modified to offer a healthier alternative. Here are some suggestions to help reduce saturated fat intake.

Tips for Cooking
- Use low fat dairy products or calcium fortified soy milk in place of full cream dairy.
- Substitute the meat in casseroles for kidney beans or brown lentils.
- If using meat, choose skinless chicken breast, fish and meat cuts with the least amount of visible fat.
- Use low fat yoghurt or reduced fat evaporated milk as an alternative to cream.
- Slice pita breads into 8-10 wedges, brush with olive oil, add some herbs and dry in the oven to make ‘pita crisps’ to use in place of chips.
- Use coconut flavoured evaporated milk in cooking as an alternative to regular coconut milk, as it has much less fat.

Tips for Eating Out
- Look for dishes that are steamed, grilled or stir-fried.
- Order boiled or steamed rice instead of fried rice with Chinese take-away.
- Choose a side of salad or steamed vegetables instead of fries.
- Share a dessert with a friend at the table.
- Some foods may be difficult to modify. Plan to choose smaller serving sizes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meal</th>
<th>Swap This</th>
<th>FOR</th>
<th>Swap This</th>
<th>Saturated Fat per Serve</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Bacon &amp; eggs on white toast</td>
<td>Baked beans &amp; tomatoes on wholegrain toast</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Large take-away sausage roll</td>
<td>Large lentil sausage roll</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hamburger</td>
<td>Salad roll with avocado</td>
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<td>1.0g</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td>Spaghetti bolognaise</td>
<td>Spaghetti bolognaise with kidney beans instead of meat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thai green chicken</td>
<td>Stir-fry greens with tofu**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beef lasagne</td>
<td>Curried lentil or vegetable lasagne</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.0g</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snack &amp; sweets*</td>
<td>Lamington (70g)</td>
<td>Blueberry shortcake</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ice-cream (2 scoops)</td>
<td>Sorbet (non milk)*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Garlic bread (4 slices)</td>
<td>Bread with garlic or herbs infused oil</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whipped cream (2 tablespoons)</td>
<td>Low fat yoghurt (2 tablespoons)</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;1.0g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* May be high in sugar  ** Add coconut flavoured evaporated milk and green curry paste for a delicious Thai Green Curry flavour.
Stand up for yourself

It’s time to get up and get moving, according to a new study on heart health.

Research has shown that adults who spend less time sitting throughout the day have a lower risk of early death from cardiovascular disease.

Current government recommendations for physical activity are to include 30 minutes or more moderate intensity activity on most or all days of the week. This activity can be in one long block or broken up into multiple shorter amounts, such as 3 x 10 minute bursts of activity.

However, even for people who are physically active and exercise regularly, a large part of the day can still be spent seated, such as when travelling, watching TV or and working at a desk.

The research suggests that no matter how much time is spent seated, regular breaks from sitting, even simple things like just regularly standing up, may help with reducing risk factors for heart disease. So look for ways to break up the time you spend seated during the day, such as standing up during ad breaks while watching TV, getting up to talk to a work colleague rather than sending an email or standing up for all or part of your train journey – your heart will thank you for it.

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Omega-3 fats

Omegas-3 is a polyunsaturated fat that has been associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease. It may help lower blood pressure and reduce triglyceride levels – key risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Omega-3 is also essential for the development of a healthy brain and eyes in infants and children. Ongoing research suggests there are many other health benefits associated with omega-3.

There are different types of omega-3 fats:

- ALA (alpha-linolenic acid) is an essential fatty acid, which you can get from your diet by eating plant foods such as canola and linseed oils.
- DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) and EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) are found in marine foods, particularly in oily fish such as salmon. DHA and EPA can also be made in your body in small amounts from the conversion of ALA.
- A vegan source of DHA made from microalgae is recommended for those that do not eat oily fish. These are available as algae DHA supplements and can be purchased online in New Zealand and Australia.
- Use less omega 6 oils/margarines (such as sunflower, safflower, corn oil) and replace with olive or canola oils/margarines so the body can use ALA more efficiently.

Tips for adding omega 3 to your diet:

- Regularly include good sources of ALA, flaxseed/linseed oil, canola oil, chia seeds, legumes, walnuts and foods that are fortified with omega -3, such as bread and eggs.
- Add ground linseeds or LSA (a blend of linseed, almonds and sunflowers seeds) to your breakfast cereal or sprinkle on top of yoghurt. Remember, it’s important to grind linseeds before using.
- If you do include fish in your diet choose oily fish like salmon, tuna and sardines. These contain the highest concentration of EPA and DHA. Aim for two servings per week.
- A vegan source of DHA made from microalgae is recommended for those that do not eat oily fish. These are available as algae DHA supplements and can be purchased online in New Zealand and Australia.
- Use less omega 6 oils/margarines (such as sunflower, safflower, corn oil) and replace with olive or canola oils/margarines so the body can use ALA more efficiently.
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- health coaching
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Go to www.sanctuary.sanitarium.com.au for more information.
The Sanitarium Nutrition Service is a free community initiative that has been offered by the Sanitarium Health Food Company for the past 21 years. We are a team of qualified nutritionists and dietitians who work together to help people enjoy the benefits of healthy food and a healthy lifestyle. We would like to help answer any questions you may have on health and nutrition. Whether it's nutrition advice for you or your family or for delicious healthy recipes, just give us a call or contact us via our website:

www.sanitarium.com.au
freecall 1800 673 392.

We look forward to hearing from you.

If you would like a copy of any of the references for the articles featured in this newsletter, please feel free to contact the Sanitarium Nutrition Service.

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The information contained in this leaflet is correct at the time of publication with every effort made to ensure that it follows the latest nutrition guidelines. It should not be taken in substitution for medical advice or professional diagnosis. Please consult your dietitian or doctor for advice on your personal dietary requirements or in relation to any individual health circumstances.