



live well, work well

Pompton Lakes Public Schools

Employee Health Benefits Bulletin

February 2016

Winter is here to stay for a few more months, so make the most of all it offers. February is American Heart Month... learn how to take care of your heart and try a heart-healthy chocolate recipe!

Your 2016 Benefits

Your Heart Health Since February is [American Heart Month](#), take time to find out how AmeriHealth can help with your [heart health](#).

Learn your [risk](#) for high blood pressure and how to prevent the disease. Your AmeriHealth plan covers regular blood pressure, cholesterol, and BMI checks. Plus, AmeriHealth provides support and education to members with chronic conditions like high blood pressure and heart failure.

Get on track for better heart health in 2016! Talk with your doctor about next steps and register/log-in at [amerihealthexpress.com](#) to learn how AmeriHealth can help.

Annual Benefits Reminder Your AmeriHealth plan provides annual benefits for certain preventive services such as routine physicals, lab work, and screenings. Now that 2016 is here, you can access these



annual services in-network at no charge. Plus, remember that any deductibles applying to your plan renewed on January 1, 2016. See your plan overviews for details about your plan provisions.

1095 Tax Forms The Affordable Care Act requires that you are provided with IRS Form 1095 to

report if you had qualifying health coverage (i.e., minimum essential coverage) throughout 2015; those who did not may need to pay a tax penalty to the IRS.

Review the 1095 forms that you receive for accuracy. *Note: do not need to include the forms when filing your taxes; keep the forms with your tax copies as proof of coverage.*

National Health Observances

February

American Heart Month

American Heart Association

www.heart.org

Children's Dental Health Month

American Dental Association

www.ada.org

March

Colon Cancer Awareness Month

American Cancer Society

www.cancer.org

National Kidney Month

National Kidney Foundation

www.kidney.org



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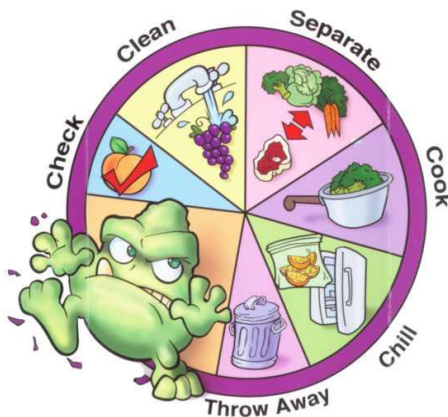
Your Heart Health

No other disease is as detrimental to American health and welfare as cardiovascular disease. At any given time, an estimated 83.6 million American adults are affected by some form of cardiovascular disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that heart disease is our leading cause of death, causing one in three deaths (over 800,000) annually.

Heart disease is caused by atherosclerosis, a buildup of plaque in the inner walls of the arteries, which narrows, slows, or blocks the flow of blood to the heart. The controllable risk factors for developing heart disease include:

- High blood pressure
- High LDL cholesterol
- Type 2 diabetes
- Smoking
- Being overweight or obese
- Lack of physical activity
- Using illegal drugs, such as cocaine

Warning signs depend on the type and severity of your heart condition, but you should know the common symptoms of heart disease, such as shortness of breath, dizziness, chest pain or discomfort, weakness, fatigue, or heart palpitations. See your doctor if you exhibit any of these symptoms. Visit www.cdc.gov for more info.



Preventing Food Illnesses

Each year, approximately 1 in 6 Americans get sick from food poisoning. It's not uncommon to hear about food being recalled or a new foodborne illness outbreak. Most people recover without any long-lasting effects; however, those who are pregnant, the elderly, or those with chronic conditions are more at risk for developing complications.

Prevent foodborne illness at your home by being conscious of food safety guidelines. For instance, avoid

Eating raw or spoiled meats and eggs by checking expiration dates before purchasing and preparing food. Wash hands, cutting boards, and knives with antibacterial soap and hot water after handling raw meat, seafood, or eggs. Never serve meat on the same plate used when it was raw. Check meat is fully cooked with a food thermometer.

In addition, avoid thawing food at room temperature; instead, defrost foods in the refrigerator and do not

refreeze food once it's been fully thawed. Remember to refrigerate foods quickly because cold temperatures slow the growth of harmful bacteria. And wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly before eating, especially those that will not be cooked (like fresh apples or pears) in order to prevent foodborne illness.

Healthy Recipe *Fudgy Fruit* The perfect homemade chocolate treat!

Ingredients

- 6 Tbsp. semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 2 large bananas, peeled and quartered
- 8 large strawberries
- ¼ cup unsalted peanuts, chopped

Directions

- Place chocolate chips in small microwave safe bowl; heat on high for 10 seconds.

- Repeat until chocolate is melted, about 30 seconds.
- Place fruit on a small tray covered with a piece of waxed paper.
- Use a spoon to drizzle the melted chocolate on top of the fruit.
- Sprinkle the fruit with chopped nuts.
- Cover the fruit and place in the refrigerator for 10 minutes or until the chocolate hardens.
- Serve chilled. Makes: 4 servings