

Healthy Workplace

Your monthly Anthem wellness newsletter



CT Pipe Trades



Preventing Heart Disease at Any Age

No matter your age, everyone can benefit from a healthy diet and adequate physical activity. Preventing heart disease means making smarter choices today to pay off for the rest of your life.



All age groups:

- Choose a healthy eating plan.
- Be physically active.
- Learn the signs of heart disease and stroke. A heart episode or stroke can happen at any time.

In your 20s

- **Find a provider and have regular wellness exams.** Healthy people need doctors, too! Establishing a relationship with your provider allows you to discuss diet, lifestyle, and can start heart-healthy screenings early.
- **Be physically active.** It's a lot easier to be active and stay active if you start at a young age.
- **Don't smoke and avoid second-hand smoke.** Including e-cigarettes! If you picked up smoking as a teen, it's time to quit smoking. Even exposure to second and third hand smoke can pose a serious health hazard.

You'll also want to have your blood sugar checked if you are pregnant, have weight concerns, or diabetes. Knowing where your numbers stand early makes it easier to spot a possible change in the future.

In your 30s

- **Make heart-healthy living a family affair.** Create and sustain heart healthy habits for you and your children/anyone else in your household.
- **Know your family history.** Having relatives with heart disease increases your risk. Be sure to speak with your provider about any heart problems within your family.
- **Tame your stress.** Long-term stress causes an increase in heart rate and blood pressure which may damage the artery walls. Learning stress management techniques will not only benefit your body, it will benefit your quality of life.

In your 40s

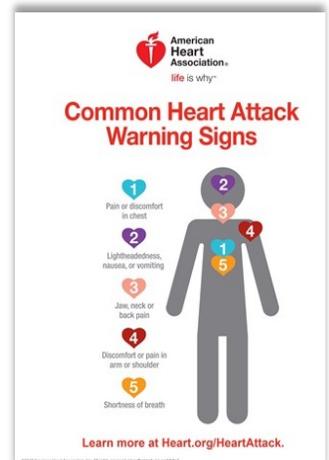
- **Have your blood sugar checked.** In addition to blood pressure checks, you should have a fasting glucose test.
- **Don't brush off snoring.** 1 in 5 adults have at least mild sleep apnea. If not treated properly, sleep apnea can contribute to high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke.

In your 50s

- **Maintain a healthy diet.** Refresh your eating habits by ensuring you get plenty of fruits, vegetables, fiber-rich whole grains, fish, nuts, legumes and seeds.
- **Learn the warning signs of a heart attack and stroke.** Heart attack symptoms can differ between women and men:
 - ◇ **Pain, shortness of breath, fatigue.** No gender differences
 - ◇ **Right-side chest discomfort.** 4.7 times more likely to be reported by men.
 - ◇ **Throat discomfort.** 12 times more likely to be reported by women.
 - ◇ **Discomfort.** 2.7 times more likely to be reported by men.
 - ◇ **Dull ache.** 3.9 times more likely to be reported by men
 - ◇ **Pressing on the chest.** 7.3 times more likely to be reported by women
 - ◇ **Vomiting.** 3.9 times more likely to be reported by women
 - ◇ **Indigestion.** 3.7 times more likely to be reported by men
- **Follow your treatment plan if your provider puts you on one**

In your 60s+

- **Ask your provider about an ankle-brachial test.** This test assesses the pulses in your feet to help diagnose peripheral artery disease, a lesser known cardiovascular disease in which plaque builds in the leg arteries.
- **Learn the warnings signs of heart attack and stroke.**



Black Bean, Sweet Potato, and Kale Tacos!

As we think about heart health, an easy way to add more vegetables into your diet is to include a vegetarian meal every now and then. You don't need to have every Monday be a "meatless" one but recipes sans meat can be easy and quite delicious!

Ingredients

For the Taco Filling:

1 medium sweet potato
1 onion
3 tbs olive oil
1 cup of cooked quinoa
4 large leaves of kale
1 can of black beans
1 teaspoon chili powder
1/4 tsp cumin
Sea salt, to taste

Taco Accompaniments:

6-inch corn or flour tortillas
Sliced fresh avocado
Chopped fresh cilantro
Fresh lime juice
Salsa
Shredded cabbage
Shredded cheddar cheese (or a vegan alternative)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375 ° F. Chop the sweet potato into one-inch cubes. Thinly slice the onion. On a parchment-lined baking dish, combine the sweet potato, onion, olive oil, and a few pinches of salt. Toss to coat and bake for 30 minutes, stirring once to promote even cooking.
2. While the sweet potatoes bake, cook the quinoa if you haven't already done so according to package directions. Thinly chop the kale and add to a large mixing bowl. Drain and rinse the black beans and add to the kale. Add 1 cup of cooked quinoa to the bowl, along with the spices. Toss well.
3. When the sweet potatoes and onions are done, add them right to the bowl with the kale, beans, and quinoa. The heat from the potatoes will slowly wilt the kale. Season with sea salt and more spice, if desired. Toss gently to combine all the filling ingredients.
4. Serve the filling in tortillas with as many accompaniments as you like. The more, the merrier (and tastier!).



Winter Minimalizing

Hello everyone! It's Sarah from Maine here to discuss organizing!

Spring cleaning is a term most people are used to hearing. A time near winter's end where we open the windows, sun shines in, we listen to birds chirping and all seems right with the world as we dust and cough/sneeze our way through cleaning all of our stuff. But what if we didn't have to wait until spring to be sure our space is clean and organized?

Lately I've been feeling bogged down by my stuff. While I don't have January resolutions per say, part of my overall goal this year is to take small action steps towards overall well-being.

"Overall well-being" will look different to everyone, but to me, my current priority is reducing the amount of stuff I have in my apartment.

I find winter to be the best time to really sort through items. Now, knowing my personality, following Marie Kondo's method combined with achieving the ultra modern Scandinavian clean lines we see in magazines won't work. I'm not really a "ruthless" cleaner where I can dedicate hours at a time cleaning and getting rid of belongings in one go.

For overall decluttering and organizing, I have found the "Four Boxes" method works best for me.

Step 1. Pick a space and bring in four boxes—*Put away, Give away, Throw away, and Undecided*.

Step 2. Sort through the space and be really mindful of your "undecided" box.

Step 3. Once you are happy with the space, handle the boxes.

I have been trying to incorporate Marie's method by not only asking myself "does this item make me happy?" but also "will I/ have I used it?"

A great example is cutting back on the beauty products I own that pile up over the years. Recently, I came across some cuticle cream.

Is it a nice product? Sure!
Have I used in the two years since it was gifted to me? No.
Will I use it? No.

For day-to-day cleaning and decluttering, I ask myself "will it take me less than a minute to clean/put away?". I'm guilty of letting clothes piles on the chair and "hair stuff" float on my vanity. Keeping "one minute" in mind has helped me stay on track to put things away and keep my space tidier.



Limiting Screen Time

Screen time rules—not just for kids anymore!

Technology (for the most part) has been a wonderful addition to our day-to-day lives. It makes remote work possible, keeps you in touch with friends and family you might otherwise not see, it even allows you to read this article! But what happens when we become too dependent on technology?

In a world where we are constantly tweeting, texting, Googling and checking e-mail, technology addiction is a real concern for today's kids. Yet parents are often unable to unplug from their own digital devices, research suggests. A recent national survey conducted by Common Sense Media, which included nearly 1,800 parents of children aged 8 to 18, found that parents spend an average of 9 hours and 22 minutes a day in front of various screens—including smartphones, tablets, computers and televisions. Of those, nearly 8 hours are for personal use, not work. (The survey included people from a wide range of socioeconomic classes and fields, who may or may not use computers at their job all day).

Perhaps even more surprising is that 78 percent of parents surveyed believe they are good role models for how to use digital technology. Multimedia are designed to be engaging and habit-forming, so we do not even realize how much time we spend when we heed the siren call of our devices, says Catherine Steiner-Adair, a clinical psychologist and author of *The Big Disconnect* (HarperCollins, 2013). This can be a double whammy for children, who not only feel that their parents are ignoring them or do not find them as engaging as the screen but who also learn to mimic their parents' behavior, Steiner-Adair notes. Studies show that greater use of technology among tweens and teens correlates with shorter attention spans, a preference for digital time over physical activity and worse performance in school.

Toddlers and infants also have a harder time learning emotional and nonverbal cues because their parents constantly have what psychologists call “still face phenomenon” from concentrating on mobile devices. The good news, however, is that if parents use screen time for shared activities with a child—watching a movie or playing an educational game together, for example—it can enhance the child's learning. According to the survey, 94 percent of parents recognize that technology can be used to support their children's education. The key is to limit and track kids' time with technology and set rules for themselves, too. Modeling healthy media habits can start with something as simple as making the family dinner table a device-free zone.

Don't have children or want to benefit from limiting screen time as well? Excessive screen time has been known to add eye and neck strain on our bodies but it can also have damaging mental health effects. Technology can create a sense of addiction—needing to constantly check your phone, feeling “phantom” vibrates, responding immediately to text messages, and feeling isolated and detached can all have a negative effect on our mental well-being.

Below are some tips for helping yourself set limits with recreational technology.

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- **Eat your meals without a screen**
By keeping your meal times screen free, you'll not only give your eyes a rest, you will likely enjoy your food more, too!
- **Limit your non-work screen time**
Do your best to leave work at work. While it can be tempting, off-work time is meant for relaxation and stress relief so you can do you best and be present at work.
- **Don't watch movies or TV in bed**
Watching TV while on the couch is better choice and can be easier to get up and move around rather than just playing the next episode.
- **Cut down on computer socializing**
I love that the internet allows me to connect with my friends all over the world but try to limit computer socializing and opt for face to face with nearby friends.
- **Set a timer**
Try to set a timer for how long you'll use your phone/computer for mindless scrolling on Facebook, Instagram, dating apps, etc.
- **Ban phone charging/use from the bedroom**
Keeping your phone in your bedroom will tempt you to check for messages during the night. Limiting screen time before bed can also better your sleep.
- **Take up another hobby for boredom**
Aimless scrolling can be a tactic for us when we're “bored”. Try a new hobby or even go for a walk when you're feeling the need to mindlessly scroll.
- **Schedule a face-to-face or phone meeting instead of using chat features at work**
Many issues at work can be resolved by either connecting face-to-face or scheduling a quick call v. relaying on email or chats.

My own personal tips:

- Flip your phone over or leave it out of sight when socializing with friends—if I know I'm going to be with a friend that is a constant phone checker, I'll flip my phone over on a table/bar, etc. to signal “I'm here to be present with you”
- “Do not disturb mode” - it's great, especially at night when I am winding down and don't want to be looking at my phone
- Turn off all screen and banner alerts—the only alerts I allow to show on my home screen are missed phone calls. Everything else can wait.

