Help Your Heart

Knowing how to prevent or manage heart disease can help save your life or the life of someone you love. It is always the right time to start taking care of your heart.

Follow these tips to keep your heart healthy:

- Get your cholesterol and blood pressure checked regularly.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Exercise regularly.
- Take your medications as prescribed by your doctor.

Do not stop taking prescribed medications unless directed by your doctor. Work closely with your doctor, and follow his/her plan to live your healthiest life.


Important Information for our Readers

memberNEWS examines issues affecting the majority of our membership. However, it is important to note that there may be occasional differences in health plan designs among the customers we serve. If you have any questions about the information in this issue, please contact Member Services at the number located on the back of your member ID card.
Colorectal Cancer Tests Save Lives

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the second leading cancer killer of men and women in the U.S., following lung cancer. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends three CRC screening tests that are effective at saving lives:

- colonoscopy,
- stool tests (guaiac fecal occult blood test-FOBT or fecal immunochemical test-FIT), and
- sigmoidoscopy (now seldom done).

Screenings can find precancerous polyps—abnormal growths in the colon or rectum—so they can be removed before turning into cancer. Screening also helps find colorectal cancer at an early stage, when treatment often leads to a cure.

If you are age 50 or older, get screened now.

About one-third of adults age 50 or older (about 22 million people)—the age group at greatest risk of developing CRC—have not been screened as recommended. If you think you may be at increased risk for CRC, talk to your doctor about when to begin screening. Ask which test is right for you, and how often to get tested.

Optima Health At-Home FIT Screening Program

Optima Health offers an easy and fast at-home screening program for colon health, at no cost to members—the BioIQ Fecal Immunochemical Testing (FIT) kit. The FIT kit includes detailed instructions and supplies for collecting a stool sample within just a few minutes in the comfort of your own home. A pre-addressed return envelope is also included to send your sample for analysis.

Both you and your primary care provider (PCP) will be notified of the screening results via mail and/or phone. Results will indicate whether you need further testing. One in every ten members who completes a FIT test is positive and needs a follow-up colonoscopy.

By participating in the at-home screening program, members will receive a FIT kit once a year. If you are over age 50 and would like to participate, please visit optimahealth.com/colonhealth to register. You will need to enter your Optima Health member ID number and your PCP’s information.

Member Rights and Responsibilities

The Optima Health Member Bill of Rights and Responsibilities ensures that all members are treated in a manner consistent with the mission, goals, and objectives of Optima Health. It also ensures that members are aware of their obligations and responsibilities upon joining Optima Health, and throughout their membership with the Plan.

New and existing members are notified of their rights and responsibilities in the Benefit Information Guide and member newsletters.

To view this information online:

- visit optimahealth.com/members,
- select Manage My Plan, then
- select Member Rights and Responsibilities.

Coordinating Medical and Mental Health Care

Serious mental health conditions, such as bipolar disorder and schizophrenia, are usually treated with medication.

- It is important for mental health patients to take their medication regularly as directed by their physician.
- People taking these medications should have a blood test at least once a year to check their sugar (glucose) level.
- If the person has diabetes or a heart condition, they should also have their cholesterol level tested.

It is important for both the psychiatrist and the primary care provider to know all of the medicines their patient is taking, and to share information about the results of any blood tests. If you have questions about medications you (or a family member) are taking, and if the medications require you to have a blood test, please ask your doctor for more information.
14 Tips for Healthy Dining

Dine in, dine out, gourmet cuisine, or home cooking—whatever you choose, follow these tips for a safe and heart-healthy meal.

Dining Out

1. **Assess the scene.** Look for certificates that show food-safety practices (e.g., most recent health inspection score, manager’s completion of food-safety training). Note whether the glasses, silverware, napkins, and tablecloths are clean.

2. **Beware of unlikely sources of sodium.** More than 40% of the sodium we eat comes from these common foods: bread and rolls, cold cuts and cured meats, pizza, poultry, soups, sandwiches, cheese, pasta dishes, meat dishes, and snacks.

3. **Know the facts.** Look up nutritional information in advance. Most major restaurant chains have this data online.

4. **Order it cooked thoroughly.** Remember that foods like meat, poultry, and fish need to be cooked to a temperature high enough to kill harmful bacteria that may be present.

5. **Ask before ordering.** Raw or undercooked eggs can be a hidden hazard in foods like Caesar salad, custards, and some sauces, unless they are commercially pasteurized. Also, most restaurants offer lower sodium options for entrées and dressings, so check the menu or ask the staff for suggestions.

6. **Sharing is caring.** Consider ordering one entrée to share. Many restaurant servings are enough for two.

7. **Get that doggie bag in the fridge—fast.** If you are not going straight home (within two hours of being served, or one hour if temperatures are above 90°F), leave the leftovers at the restaurant.

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**Quiet Night In**

8. **Choose low-sodium options.** Spice up your meal with herbs and other seasonings, and avoid prepackaged mixes that may contain a lot of salt (or look for low-sodium or salt-free versions).

9. **Make recipes healthier.** Look for [healthy substitutions](https://recipes.heart.org/) for saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol in your favorite baked goodies.

10. **Steer clear of frying.** Opt for [cooking methods](https://recipes.heart.org/) that add little or no fat, like roasting, grilling, or steaming.

11. **Keep HOT Food HOT!** Once food is cooked, it should be held at an internal temperature of 140°F or above. Just keeping food warm (between 40°F and 140°F) encourages fast growth of germs that cause foodborne illness, also known as food poisoning. Use a food thermometer to make sure your meal stays out of the danger zone.

12. **Keep COLD Food COLD!** Cold foods should be kept at 40°F or below.

13. **Follow the two-hour rule.** Throw away all perishable foods such as meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products that have been left at room temperature longer than two hours (one hour in temperatures above 90°F).

14. **Safely manage leftovers.** If the meal is just too big to finish, go ahead and put it in the fridge or freezer—but eat it within three to four days.

**Sources:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017.
“Healthy For Good RECIPES,” American Heart Association, [https://recipes.heart.org/](https://recipes.heart.org/).
Sentara Healthcare Achieves Health Champion Designation by American Diabetes Association

Sentara Healthcare, the parent company of Optima Health, was named a “Health Champion” by the American Diabetes Association (ADA)\(^1\), as part of their Wellness Lives Here initiative.

The Health Champion Designation recognizes companies that make health and wellness a priority for their employees. Sentara Healthcare met ADA designations in healthy living criteria for Nutrition and Weight Management, Physical Activity, and Organizational Well-Being, including promoting healthy food choices, facilitating physical activity, and implementing a system-wide tobacco-free policy.

\(^1\) American Diabetes Association Award Letter, October 2017.
Tips for Your Taste Buds: Cinnamon Vanilla Toasted Oats

Add these toasted oats to yogurt, cottage cheese, hot or cold cereals, frozen yogurt, or fresh fruit. Toasted oats can take the place of nuts or chocolate chips in some recipes.

Ingredients

- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon water
- 1/2 cup rolled or old-fashioned oats
- Canola cooking spray

Directions

1. Add cinnamon to a very small cup. Stir in vanilla extract and water, then set aside.

2. Add 1/2 cup rolled or old-fashioned oats to a nonstick frying pan (over medium-high heat) that has been coated lightly with canola cooking spray. If desired, spray the top of the oats lightly with canola cooking spray. Let the oats toast for about one minute.

3. Drizzle the vanilla mixture over the top and stir. Keep stirring the oats gently as they lightly brown, about two minutes more.

4. Keep toasted oats in a covered container or sealable plastic bag until ready to use.

Nutritional Information

Recipe makes 2 servings

Amount per serving:

77 calories, 3 g protein, 13 g carbohydrate, 1.3 g fat, 0.2 g saturated fat, 0.4 g monounsaturated fat, 0.5 g polyunsaturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 2.1 g fiber, 1 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 15%.

Source: WebMD Health Services.
Pharmacy Changes Effective April 1, 2018

For members with pharmacy benefits administered by Optima Health, the pharmacy changes effective April 1, 2018 are now available at optimahealth.com/members:

- select Manage My Plan,
- select Forms and Drug Lists,
- scroll down to find the Quarterly Pharmacy Changes list.


With the MyOptima mobile app, access your member ID card, benefits and claims information, and more—anywhere, anytime, anyplace—on your smartphone or tablet.