



Wellness-Fitness Program Newsletter

February 2008



National Organ Donor Day

On February 14th, we recognize the gift of life in all its forms. This includes the donation of organs, tissues, marrow, platelets, and blood.

The generosity of donors nationwide has allowed millions of Americans to enjoy improved health and quality of life. Unfortunately, many people still die who can be saved through donation.

One of the main challenges associated with organ and tissue donation, is that more than half of the families of potential donors DO NOT consent to donation. The decision whether to donate on behalf of a loved one must be made quickly, but families facing this decision often do so in a time of crisis. By registering as a donor, you can both save a life and spare your family an emotional choice by making your wishes known in advance.

Organ and tissue donation is a charitable act of love and giving. Donations can be used to help people who have critical injuries, severe burns, organ failure, and those who are blind.

There are many ways to be a donor. Part of the purpose of National Donor Day is to increase awareness about the multitude of ways you can give the gift of life, and to allay any fears, concerns, or misconceptions about donation of any kind.

If you're not sure about becoming a donor, here are some important facts:

- Being a donor will not affect your treatment in an emergency room.
- There are no age limits for donors; you can register at any age.
- Most religions support organ and tissue donations*
- If you wish, you can specify exactly which organs and tissues you prefer to donate.

You can also make *living donations* that can help save lives. For example, you can donate blood and tissue, or bone marrow while living. You can even donate a kidney or part of the liver.

Organ	People Waiting
Kidney	74,195
Pancreas	1,621
Kidney/Pancreas	2,267
Liver	16,540
Intestine	220
Heart	2,653
Lung	2,218
Heart/Lung	103
Total:	97,935

Source:
United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS)
national patient waiting list.

On National Donor Day:

- Talk with others about donation and learn as much as you can.
- Register with your State Donor Registry and make sure your family knows you want to be a donor.
- Join the National Registry of potential volunteer marrow and blood stem cell donors.
- Learn how you can donate your baby's umbilical cord blood stem cells at birth.
- Donate blood.

To learn more, visit organdonor.gov and see how you can change lives by giving the gift of life.

* National Donor Sabbath: organdonor.gov/get_involved/donorsabbath.htm

Walking for the Health of it

Walking is a moderate-intensity activity that provides high intensity health benefits.

Because regular walking improves blood pressure, regulates blood glucose (sugar) levels, and improves the blood lipid profile (cholesterol), it also reduces the risks associated with heart disease. A walking program can also help you to achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

Additionally, regular walking can help you meet the health goals suggested by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the American Heart Association (AHA). The ACSM/AHA recommends that average healthy adults supplement their regular daily activities with a combination of strength training and aerobic exercise (see box for recommendations).

Finally, walking is also a great way to gradually and safely begin a program of physical activity. Here are some ways to get and stay motivated to walk.*

- Take it a step at a time – Get a pedometer and use it to help you start small and make increases of 10% each week toward 10,000 daily steps.
- Partner up – Walk with a friend, join a walking group, and/or participate in workplace walking challenges.
- Mix it up – walk the mall, in the neighborhood, vary walking partners, and vary the days and times you walk,
- Make it interesting – If you use a treadmill, listen to music, a book on CD, or watch a TV show.

The Weight-control Information Network (WIN) can help you learn how to get the most from a walking program. WIN is a service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) of the National Institutes of Health.

The NIDDK's program, *Walking: A step in the right direction*, is available at <http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/walking.htm>.

Remember, your FOH Wellness/Fitness Center is an excellent resource for walking and exercise tips and support.

ACSM/AHA Recommendations:

- Thirty minutes of moderate activity on 5 days per week or 20 minutes of vigorous activity on 3 days per week.
- Eight to 10 muscle-strengthening activities on 2 nonconsecutive days per week

**Always check with your medical provider before beginning an exercise program.*

Nothing but the *Whole truth*

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, at least half of the three to five recommended daily servings of grains should come from *whole* grains. That's about three ounces of whole grains per day.

It seems easy but adding dietary whole grains can get pretty confusing now that most food manufacturers have scrambled to reformulate their whole grain options to entice consumers.

Exactly what are whole grains?

Whole grains are the entire seed (the "kernel") of a plant. This kernel is made up of three parts: the bran, the germ, and the endosperm.

- **Bran:** The tough outer skin of the kernel. Full of B vitamins and fiber. Fiber is associated with heart health.
- **Germ:** The most nutritious part of the kernel. Loaded with B vitamins, some protein, minerals, and healthy fats.
- **Endosperm** is the largest inner part of the kernel. Contains all the calories and starch, along with small amounts of proteins, vitamins, and minerals.

During milling, grain is ground to produce flour. If the bran, germ, and endosperm are retained during processing, the resulting flour is classified as a *whole grain*. When grains are refined, the bran and germ layers are removed. The resulting *refined flour* has been stripped of about 50% of the vitamins and minerals.*

Sometimes, manufacturers add back vitamins and minerals to produce an *enriched* product, which can still contribute valuable nutrients to your diet – but whole grains are healthier. Whole grains provide more protein, more fiber, and many important vitamins and minerals.

The shopping conundrum

Making the best whole grain selections can, in fact, be a bit tricky. You can't always identify whole grains by their color or by names such as brown bread, nine-grain bread, or mixed grain bread.

To make matters worse, it seems like every other product on the grocery store aisle makes some kind of claim to whole-grain-fame. Even cookies! However, according to the Whole Grains Council, only about 10-15 percent of grains on the market are actually *whole* grains.**

When shopping for whole grain products, look for packaging that says, "whole" or "whole grain." Also, make sure that whole grain is listed as the first ingredient on the food label.

The dietary puzzle

Good intentions notwithstanding, though many of us bring home the whole grains, it may take some inspiration to get them to the table.

So what's the best way to incorporate a variety of whole grains into the diet? Most of us are familiar with the standard fare including whole oats or oatmeal, whole-grain corn, popcorn, wild rice, brown rice, whole wheat, and cracked wheat.

Consider the many other delicious varieties of whole grains, which can make eating healthfully much more interesting. Some of these include quinoa, buckwheat, whole rye, bulgur, whole-grain barley, and millet. Give these other grains a try.

Here are some tips for increasing dietary whole grains from the Harvard School of Public Health:

- Start the day with whole grains. If you're partial to hot cereals, try old-fashioned or steel-cut oats. If you're a cold cereal person, look for one that lists whole wheat, whole oats, or other whole grain first on the ingredient list.
- Use whole-grain breads but check the label to make sure that whole wheat or another whole grain is the first ingredient listed.
- Instead of potatoes, try brown rice, bulgur, wheat berries, millet, or hulled barley.
- Switch to whole wheat pasta, and if these products are too chewy for you, try those that are made with half whole-wheat flour and half white flour.

For a more comprehensive list of whole grains visit the Harvard School of Public Health's Nutrition Source Website at http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/whole_grains.html. Also, remember to visit Mypyramid.gov for ideas on improve your health and your diet.

* *Journal of Food Composition and Analysis, Challenges in developing a whole grain database: Definitions, methods, and quantification, Volume 19, Sup 1, August 2006.*

** <http://wholegrainscouncil.org>

National Wear Red Day



Heart disease is the #1 killer of American women.

In fact, one in four women dies from heart disease every year. Additionally, heart disease can also lead to disability and a significantly decreased quality of life. This is *The Heart Truth*.

The Heart Truth is actually the name of a popular campaign sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and partner organizations like the American Heart Association (AHA). The goal of this campaign is to help women learn more about the dangers of heart disease.

The *Heart Truth* campaign features the Red Dress, which has become a nationally recognized symbol for women and heart disease awareness – and February 1st has been designated as National Wear Red Day.

In recognition of National Wear Red Day – and throughout the month – encourage others to take action to prevent heart disease.

Start with getting a blood pressure and cholesterol screen. Then, take steps to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce the risk factors for heart disease.

Below are some tips for Heart Health from the NHLBI:

- **Don't smoke, and if you do, quit.** Women who smoke are two to six times more likely to suffer a heart attack than non-smoking women. Smoking also increases the risk of stroke and cancer.
- **Aim for a healthy weight.** It's important for a long, vigorous life. Overweight and obesity cause many preventable deaths.
- **Up the activity.** Commit to move more and be more physically active. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.
- **Eat a heart smart diet.** Choose a nutrient dense diet that is high in fiber, low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol, and moderate in total fat.
- **Know your numbers.** Get routine screens for blood pressure, cholesterol (total, HDL, LDL, triglycerides), and blood glucose. Work with your doctor to improve any numbers that are not normal.

Learn more about National Wear Red Day and heart disease prevention at the NHLBI Website at nhlbi.nih.gov/health/hearttruth.

"Health is the vital principle of bliss, and exercise of health."

-James Thomson

FOH, the Occupational Health Provider of Choice for the Federal Government

The mission of FOH is to improve the health, safety, and productivity of the federal workforce. Created by Congress in 1946, FOH is a non-appropriated service agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Program Support Center.

Federal agencies throughout the U.S. and overseas can access FOH services. FOH provides worksite health services, Wellness/Fitness, Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), Work/Life, Environmental Health and Safety, Organizational and Professional Development, and Training and Education.

Contact FOH at (800) 457-9808 or visit us at www.foh.dhhs.gov.
