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November 1, 2004

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the November issue of **Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight**, Eat Right Montana's 2004 campaign. In this month's issue, we focus on **heart-smart lifestyles** and on **taking time for health in organizations**. The handouts offer tips on **delicious, easy ways to enjoy vegetables** and **creating active organizations**.

Reducing risk factors for cardiovascular disease (CVD) is still a major health priority for Montana families. This is especially true in the case of Native Americans, since CVD is the leading cause of death among American Indians. Of the 9 controllable risk factors identified in the Interheart Study, 7 are directly related to food and fitness: **lipid levels, blood pressure, diabetes, abdominal obesity, fruit intake, vegetable intake, and physical activity**. For additional consumer-friendly, heart-smart tools, check out these resources:

- **USDA Interactive Healthy Eating Index/Physical Activity Tool**
www.usda.gov/cnpp/ihei.html
These newly-upgraded, online self-assessment tools allow consumers to track and score their habits – and find answers to lifestyle questions.
- **Everyday Choices for a Healthier LIFE**
<http://www.everydaychoices.org/>
Site for a new effort by American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, and American Diabetes Association to work collaboratively.
- **University of Vermont (UVM): 5-A-Day for Better Health**
<http://nutrition.uvm.edu/5aday>
A research project of the UVM, this multi-media site allows users to assess produce intake – and provides tons of info, tips, and recipes.
- **Meeting Well - Toolkit for Healthy Meetings**
http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/ped_1_4.asp
The toolkit, described with other programs at this URL, may be ordered from your local American Cancer Society office or at **1-800-ACS-2345**.

Thanks for your past and future support of **Eat Right Montana**. Your feedback is always important to us; please let us know what you think.

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**Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight: #11. Heart-smart choices
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Healthy Families 2004: Taking time for a healthy heart (11th in a series of 12)

Cardiovascular disease (CVD), also known as heart disease and stroke, already affects thousands of Montana families. Sadly, CVD is likely to cause many more health problems, including death and disability, in the future. That's because so many Montanans have one, or more, CVD risk factors.

“Cardiovascular disease is everybody’s business,” says Crystelle Fogle, MBA, RD (registered dietitian) with the Montana Cardiovascular Health Program. “By making some heart-smart choices in our homes, schools, workplaces, and organizations, we can reduce the chance of Montanans suffering a heart attack or stroke. By taking a little time for a healthy lifestyle, we can make a big difference in the well-being of all Montana families.”

Heart-smart food choices are an easy – and delicious – way to reduce your risk of CVD. Based on research from around the world, eating more fruits and vegetables may be one of the smartest choices you can make. Eating at least five servings of produce a day helps fight CVD, diabetes, and cancer, as well as everyday colds. It also helps maintain your eyesight and improve overall health at the same time.

According to Fogle, a study in the November *Journal of Nutrition* emphasizes the double benefit of vegetable intake. “Volunteers who ate vegetables consistently for two weeks had higher blood levels of vitamin C – and lower levels of some compounds that impair health.” In this study, the vegetables were eaten as gazpacho, an antioxidant rich soup of tomatoes, cucumbers, green peppers, and garlic.

Hearty soups and stews are a great way to enjoy veggies on frosty winter days. Other ways to bump up your intake during cold and flu season include: crunchy carrots for a snack at school or work; a tossed spinach salad at lunch or dinner; and a quick-to-cook side of frozen broccoli in the evening.

Eat Right Montana, a statewide coalition promoting healthful eating and active lifestyles, urges Montanans to combine heart-smart food choices with regular aerobic activity. Being active strengthens your heart muscle – as well as all the muscles in your legs, arms, back, and stomach.

“Add some fitness and nutrition into everything you do,” says Fogle. “If you belong to a club or organization, add a five minute stretch into your meeting – and serve a colorful veggie tray as a snack.”

ATTACHED: *Easy Ways to Enjoy Vegetables and Creating Active Organizations*

12 Delicious, Easy Ways to Enjoy Vegetables

From a health standpoint, vegetables are a five-star food group: naturally nutrient-rich; better tasting than a vitamin pill; low in calories and fat; cholesterol-free; and packed with disease-fighting phytonutrients. To maximize your health with vegetables, nutrition experts suggest at least 3 to 5 servings per day – in a rainbow of colors. All types of vegetables can be nourishing and delicious – fresh, frozen, canned, and juiced.

Here are a dozen daily ways to treat yourself to good health!

- 1. Broccoli and cauliflower:**
Versatile and very healthful – eat them raw (with dip if you like) or cooked, in a salad, or even a slaw.
- 2. Carrots:**
Sweet, crunchy, good for your teeth, eyes, and heart! Perfect raw (as a snack or salad) or cooked in a stew.
- 3. Peppers:**
Green, red, yellow, orange, or even purple! Enjoy peppers in a salad, stir-fry, casserole, or as a snack.
- 4. Spinach:**
A salad of baby spinach leaves with pears, apples, or cranberries can turn anyone into a real spinach lover.
- 5. Onions:**
The zesty onion family (scallions, leeks, and garlic, too!) offer some powerful antioxidant nutrients.
- 6. Peas:**
Fresh, frozen, or even canned, peas are a treat to eat – and they are very popular with small children.
- 7. Beets:**
If you've never liked beets, try them in a new way – like roasted, grilled, or lightly steamed in the microwave.
- 8. Sweet potatoes and yams:**
Switch the color on your usual baked potato – and you'll get a lot more nutrients, along with great taste.
- 9. Mushrooms:**
Just a mushroom or two adds rich flavor to a casserole, soup, stew, stir-fry, or even a tossed green salad.
- 10. Leaf and romaine lettuce:**
Rule of thumb for a healthy salad: The darker green or red the lettuce leaves, the more nutrients you get.
- 11. Green, yellow or purple beans:**
Like their pea 'cousins,' beans offer some fiber and a little bit of protein, along with vitamins and minerals.
- 12. Tomatoes:**
Cooking increases the availability of some tomato nutrients – so enjoy canned sauce, paste, and chunks.



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**Celebrating
Healthy Families
2004**

12 Fun Ways to “Walk the Talk” in Your Organization

Almost everyone in America is looking for easy ways to be active and get fit. Any group, organization, or club (service, professional, educational, or social) can easily help its members become healthier. It doesn't have to take a lot of time – or money. All it takes is a commitment to an active lifestyle – and a little creativity to get things moving along. Here are a dozen fun ways to help your group get up and get moving – one step at a time.

- 1. Take 10 at every meeting:**
Take ten minutes to get moving – with a few stretches, a few dance moves, or a few leg lifts in a chair.
- 2. Introduce new activities:**
Expose members to new options for being active. Invite local experts to showcase yoga, pilates, or zumba!
- 3. Sponsor a sports team:**
Get actively involved with getting kids active. Practice with the kids, set up the field, or actively coach.
- 4. Plan active celebrations:**
Hula-hoop or limbo contests? Conga lines? A little silliness can provide active fun at almost no cost.
- 5. Join active events:**
Nearly every community has walks, runs, or other active events where you can share your group spirit.
- 6. Start a walking club:**
Getting together at a specific time and place often makes it easier to get motivated and get moving.
- 7. Get a little competitive:**
Some people are motivated by a competitive spirit – and like to see who can walk the most steps.
- 8. Take an active challenge:**
At www.presidentschallenge.org/, individuals, teams, and clubs can track their activity levels.
- 9. Give activity awards:**
Recognize members who become more active – and those who support others in active lifestyles.
- 10. Support active communities:**
Actively work towards bike paths, skate parks, or hiking trails – fun, safe activity for people of all ages.
- 11. Choose an active location:**
Move meetings to places where members can be active before or after – like a park or bowling alley.
- 12. Play, play, play:**
An organization or club that plays together stays together – and has a lot more fun too!



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**Celebrating
Healthy Families
2004**

HEALTHY FAMILIES 2004

Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight

JANUARY 2004

1. Keep a record.

FEBRUARY 2004

2. Develop a routine.

MARCH 2004

3. Balance food and activity.

APRIL 2004

4. Take a daily dose of moderation.

MAY 2004

5. Enjoy variety every day.

JUNE 2004

6. Take time for health every day – at home.

JULY 2004

7. Take time for health every day – at work.

AUGUST 2004

8. Take time for health every day – on vacation.

SEPTEMBER 2004

9. Take time for health every day – at school.

OCTOBER 2004

10. Take time for health every day – around town.

NOVEMBER 2004

11. Take time for health every day – at organizations.

DECEMBER 2004

12. Celebrate the joy of health every day.



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