

SPECIAL FOCUS ON HEART HEALTH

HEALTHY NEIGHBORS

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Healthy NewsWorks Community Edition

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Illustration by Jocelin Lai

Preventing heart disease was the theme of a poster contest open to students at Healthy NewsWorks schools. A sixth grader at East Norriton Middle School illustrated the poster above. To view other winning drawings, please visit www.HealthyNewsWorks.org.

Take steps now to keep heart fit

Welcome to our special heart-healthy community edition of *Healthy Neighbors*.

This newspaper has been written and illustrated by students in elementary and middle schools in Norristown, Philadelphia, and Upper Darby. The authors belong to their schools' health newspapers where they learn how to research, report, and write accurate stories about health-related topics for their peers, teachers, and family members.

The stories in this edition feature important topics about caring for your cardiovascular system—no matter how old you are. In fact, our student journalists have learned that they can reduce the chances of developing heart disease if they adopt a healthy lifestyle while they are young.

Healthy Neighbors is made possible through generous support from the Einstein Healthcare Network—our Community Healthcare Champion—The Edna G. Kynett Memorial Foundation, and the Elsie Lee Garthwaite Memorial Foundation. Special thanks to Quest Diagnostics as the Community Wellness Partner for Healthy NewsWorks for all its support. These articles first appeared in school health newspapers that participate in the Healthy NewsWorks program.

Healthy habits help your heart

Mrs. Schunder wants students to take care of their hearts.

“You only have one heart and you need it for your whole life,” Mrs. Schunder, Hancock Elementary School’s nurse, said in a recent press conference.

The Norristown school nurse said the choices children make now will affect them for the rest of their lives. Eating nutritious food and doing aerobic exercises regularly are two ways to prevent heart disease.

Dancing, jumping rope, and playing sports are exercises to help the heart stay in shape, she said.

“You can exercise indoors or outside so there is never an excuse not to exercise,” Mrs. Schunder said. “Anything that makes you feel your heart beating means you are having a great workout.”

In fact, Mrs. Schunder said she works out at home on cold or snowy days by going up and down the

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Illustration by Raina Guinther, James Dobson Elementary School

Watch what you eat Pay attention to heart health

(Continued from Page 1)

stairs. “You can always do something,” she said. You can even jump rope *without* the rope.

Children should exercise about an hour each day, according to government fitness experts.

“We can also help our hearts by watching what we eat,” Mrs. Schunder said. “Eating healthfully is really good for giving you lots of energy.”

Children should avoid eating too many treats. Treats are called treats for a reason, she said. They are not meant to be eaten every day. Over time, the fat from eating too many treats and other unhealthy foods can clog blood vessels, she said. That can make it hard for the blood to flow smoothly and make the heart work extra hard.

When families go shopping in the grocery store, Mrs. Schunder offered a heart-healthy tip: Shop mostly around the perimeter of the store. That’s where the fruits, vegetables, dairy products, fish, and meat are located. Watch out for the cookies, cakes, and other treats in the center aisles. Also, when buying dairy products and meat, remember to choose items that are low in fat.

—By Healthy Times staff,
Hancock Elementary School

What's cholesterol?

The word *cholesterol* crops up on TV and appears on food labels and cereal boxes.

It’s a big word to describe a fat-like substance, medical experts say. People need some cholesterol in their body to help their brain, skin, and other organs “grow and do their jobs,” KidsHealth.org says.

But too much cholesterol can build up on blood vessel walls and make it hard for blood to move freely. Over many years, the situation can lead to chest pains and other heart problems, according to Dr. Walter Tsou, past president of the American Public Health Association.

The body’s liver makes cholesterol, but people also consume it

when they eat certain foods such as butter, fish, eggs, and cheese, KidsHealth says.

Dr. Tsou says it’s also in red meat and junk food. It is important for children to think about the foods they eat. “The habits you learn when you are a kid can actually have a lifelong consequence in your ability to control cholesterol,” he says.

People need to get a blood test to find out their cholesterol levels, says Dr. Tsou. He encourages children to eat food such as fruits and vegetables and to exercise to keep their cholesterol levels healthy.

—By Healthy Bulletin staff,
Marshall Street Elementary School
To learn more, view student video on:
www.HealthyNewsWorks.org

Healthy NewsWorks is grateful to its supporters.



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We also wish to thank our Healthy NewsWorks student reporters and their teachers for helping to create this special healthy-heart publication.

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Reviews from Cole Manor E.S. Books and games teach about health and heart

"Blast Off" is a great game to test your knowledge of healthy foods and exercise. When I played the game, I had so much fun. It was challenging because the goal is to fuel a spaceship with smart foods and with 60 minutes of exercise. If you win, your spaceship will go to Planet Power.

You can't just add food to your ship. You need food from all food groups. The food groups you can choose from are fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy. Food has to be put in for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. If you put in too much food, your ship gets too heavy and you can't lift off.

I like this game a lot. It was challenging at first, but it was fun so I kept playing it! I think students who are 8 years old and older will like it. You can find "Blast Off" at: www.fns.usda.gov. Go to the website's search engine and type in: "Blast Off Game." You will spot it in the results. Enjoy!—*By Maggie Daniels*

A Drop of Blood. *By Paul Showers*

This book teaches kids about science by using interesting pictures and details. The book is published by HarperCollins and is packed with 25 pages of awesome facts about blood.

"A Drop of Blood" talks about why humans need blood and how blood works. Dracula is the main character in the story and his job is to explain blood. It is funny because we know Dracula is a make-believe character who drinks blood!

I learned a lot from reading this book. Everyone knows that blood is red, but did you know it is red because of red cells? The red cells carry oxygen from the lungs to every part of the body. We need oxygen to live.



Illustration by Rawan Al Salmi, Highland Park Elementary School

I would recommend "A Drop of Blood" for students in second grade and older. I also think people who want to be doctors, nurses, or surgeons should read this book. I enjoyed it!—*By Iresa Lincoln*

Hear Your Heart. *By Paul Showers*

"Hear Your Heart" is an informational book with a lot of great pictures. This book is only 33 pages and it is published by HarperCollins. It is filled with lots of interesting facts about the heart. For example, did you know that your heart is about as big as your fist?

Another interesting fact is that the heart is a strong muscle that works day and night. The heart has veins, arteries, and valves. Valves keep the blood moving in the right direction. The veins and arteries transport the blood to and from the heart.

We also learned that a fourth grader's heart beats about 90 times a minute, but an adult's heart beats about 72 times a minute.

We think kids ages 7 and up should read the book because they will understand it better than younger kids.

—*By Brian Burke, Mahogany Greene, and Kevin Wayne*

Websites offer heart information

Check out these websites to learn more about keeping your heart in good shape.

* **Fatsmack**

Fatsmack.org: Explains how drinking sugary drinks can be harmful to your health.

* **Girlshealth—Be Healthy, Be Happy, Be You**

Girlshealth.gov: Offers tips for healthy eating at fast food restaurants and fun ways to exercise.

* **Franklin Institute: The Human Heart**

www.fi.edu/learn/heart/healthy/diet.html: Get facts about how your heart works. Listen to heartbeats.

* **KidsHealth Heart Center**

kidshealth.org/kid/centers/heart_center.html: Watch a heart video, take a quiz or try a recipe. Great information about keeping your heart healthy.

* **Bam! Body and Mind**

www.cdc.gov/bam/: Find the right activity for keeping fit. Check out the healthy snack recipes and fun games.

* **Fit Kids Healthy for Life!**

www.kspsfitkids.org: Find out why exercise is cool. Watch videos about staying fit.

Work out your brain!

Can you unscramble the following words connected to heart health? (Answers at the bottom of this page)

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------|---|
| 1) hlseocoetrl | _____ | A fat-like substance that can clog blood vessels |
| 2) hndnisoepr | _____ | Chemicals that lift your mood |
| 3) eeesxric | _____ | Activity that makes your heart beat faster |
| 4) tuuaatsnder | _____ | Healthy fat that is found in nuts, plant oils |
| 5) mkngios | _____ | Bad habit that is harmful for the heart |
| 6) laancbde | _____ | You should eat a _____ diet |
| 7) sratn tfsa (2 words) | _____ | Unhealthy fat found in a lot of junk food |
| 8) thrae | _____ | Organ that pumps blood |
| 9) doobl | _____ | Liquid that moves nutrients and oxygen through the body |
| 10) dtaursaet | _____ | Limit this fat found in meat |

Be sure to eat balanced meals

Eating a healthy diet is a balancing act: Not too much. Not too little. Just the right amount.

That’s particularly true for fats.

Miss Rachel Sakofs, a registered dietitian at Einstein Healthcare Network, said you should pay attention to the kinds and quantity of fats in your diet.

“Fats are important,” said Miss Sakofs, who visits schools to teach children about leading a healthy lifestyle. “Too much fat isn’t healthy.”

Like a cushion, fats help people protect organs in the body, she said. They also help digest vitamins. However, consuming a lot of fat can lead to clogged arteries, Ms. Sakofs said.

In a recent press conference, she said you need to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy fats. She listed three major categories:

1. Unsaturated fat comes from plants. Examples are olive oil and nuts.
2. Saturated fat comes from animals. Examples are meat and cheese.
3. Trans fat is manufactured by turning liquid fats into solids. It is found in a lot of junk food.

Miss Sakofs said unsaturated fats are healthier for you than saturated and trans fats. Children can lower the amount of saturated and trans fat in their diet by eating less junk food and choosing baked food instead of fried food.

Miss Sakofs said children should eat about 60 grams of fat a day. A medium order of french fries is about 21 grams, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. So you need to be careful about how much fat you consume.

Miss Sakofs said low-fat diets are better for the heart because eating too much fat can build up plaque and clog arteries. Clogged arteries means that the heart has to work harder to pump blood.

To keep your heart healthy, Miss Sakofs suggested exercising regularly and eating plenty of fiber. Go for lean sources of protein such as fish, chicken (without the skin), beans, and tofu.

Miss Sakofs said it’s important to read the nutrition facts on foods. For instance, a label might say something is trans fat-free, but it could be high in sodium, another fat, or sugar.

According to Miss Sakofs, a healthy diet is a balance of proteins, grains, fruits, vegetables, and dairy. It also includes plenty of water.

Eating a healthy diet will help you have good heart health, she said.

—By Healthy Panther staff
Eisenhower Science and Technology Leadership Academy

Answers to Brain Workout!

1. Cholesterol 2. Endorphins 3. Exercise 4. Unsaturated 5. Smoking
6. Balanced 7. Trans fats 8. Heart 9. Blood 10. Saturated