

HIGHWAY TO WELL & SAFETY

KNOW YOUR HEART RISK

One reason heart disease is so deadly is due to its silent nature. Often, people do not know they have heart issues until they experience a heart attack or stroke.

There's plenty of good news, though. The risk factors for heart disease are fairly easy to spot. Taking steps to understand your heart numbers and manage your risk can decrease your chance of heart disease. And even if you already have heart disease, you can improve your odds by addressing your risk factors.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

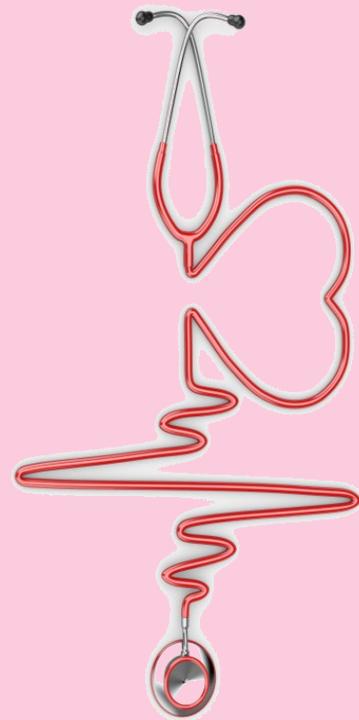
Regular check-ins with your doctor are key to monitoring heart health. Your doctor will check your blood pressure, blood lipids, and overall health to determine your heart disease risk. Here are some numbers that could signal cause for concern:

- Blood pressure equal to or higher than 130/80 mm/Hg
- Total blood cholesterol ≥ 200 mg/dL
- LDL cholesterol ≥ 100 mg/dL
- HDL cholesterol less than 40 mg/dL for men and 50 mg/dL for women
- Fasting blood sugar equal to or higher than 100 mg/dL
- Waist circumference greater than 40 inches for men and 35 inches for women

HABITS THAT PUT YOU AT RISK

While the numbers your doctor tests for can indicate your heart disease risk, they are not the only factors to watch out for. Your lifestyle habits can tell you a lot about the health of your heart. Here are some habits that can increase your risk:

- Smoking
- Drinking more than 1 drink a day for women or 2 drinks a day for men
- Eating too much salty food
- Not eating enough fruits and vegetables
- Consuming a diet high in red meat and processed foods
- Being sedentary, or getting less than 150 minutes of exercise a week



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Last Months Winners:

- Joanna Cervantes
- Cassandra Schwartz
- Katelin Sargent
- Lara Zimmerman
- Laurie Pustina
- Teri Taylor
- Michelle Chiuchiolo

Puzzle Giveaway:

- Suzy Brown
- Crystal Daley
- Sherry Greco
- Angela Rivera

SO HOW (EXACTLY) DOES EXERCISE HELP THE HEART?

Exercise benefits the heart by decreasing its workload. Exercise improves the ratio between the heart's demand for oxygen and its supply through the coronary arteries.

With exercise, the heart gets stronger because it gets bigger and is able to pump more efficiently, according to Joseph Libonati, PhD, associate professor of nursing at Penn Nursing and a cardiac physiology expert.

Exercise allows your heart to push out a greater volume of blood with every beat and it does so at a lower heart rate. It also improves the blood flow to the heart by improving the heart's ability to have its coronary blood vessels dilate. Together, these changes improve both the supply and demand of the heart.

How does exercise lower high blood pressure?

Exercise helps lower high blood pressure by improving the ability of your blood vessels to dilate (grow larger), making the pressure on those vessels less. Exercise also improves your blood sugar levels and makes you leaner. This allows your heart to pump blood at lower pressures, thereby making your heart work less.

What exercise is best for the heart? Using large muscle mass repetitively is best for heart health. Think about the acronym **FIT**:

F – Frequency (5 days a week)

I – Intensity (if you can talk, you're at the right intensity)

T – Time (30 to 60 minutes/day)

Why is exercise important as you age? Exercise is important to maintaining healthy bones and muscles. As you age, you start to have smaller muscles and weaker bones. Activities that maintain muscles and bone mass help you age with a greater ability to function.

Resistance training or weight training is a good way to maintain bone mass, so making this type of exercise part of your daily routine is important into your 40s and beyond. Also, maintaining muscle mass helps the body's metabolism and can reduce the risk of obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

[M3 Insurance](#)

A typical heart pumps approximately 4 tablespoons of blood with each beat.

[Source](#)

GARDENING GIVEAWAY

Gardening has been shown to improve overall cardiovascular health and mental wellbeing.

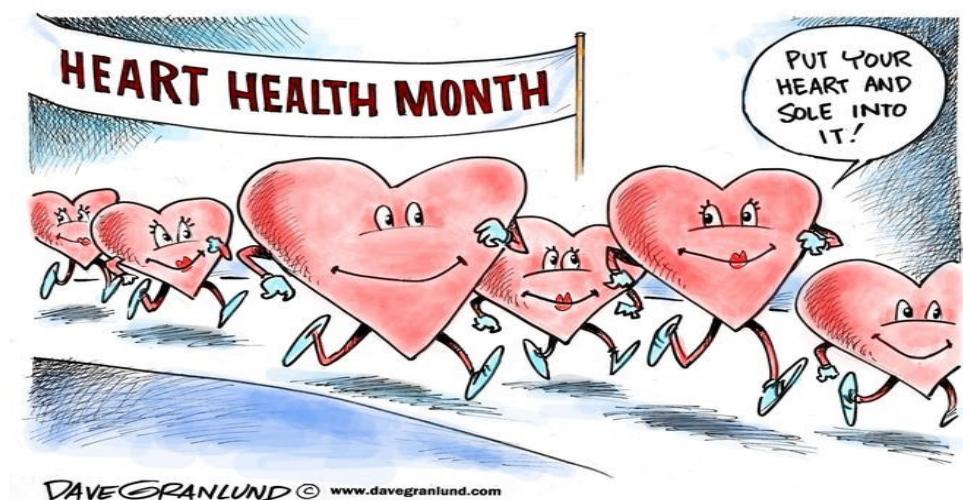
Giveaway includes: 16 XL Cell Seed Starting Tray, A Beginner's Guide to Gardening Book & a Repotting Mat.

To enter please email: employee-relations@danecounty.gov and use **Gardening** in the subject line and include name and job location (this is where the prize will be sent via inter-do).

Deadline: February 13th

FITNESS EVENTS NEAR MADISON

- * [Frozen Assets - 5K](#)— Saturday, February 7th, 2026
- * [Subzero Race Series—1M](#)—Saturday, February 14th, 2026
- * [Madison Shamrock Shuffle—5K & 10K](#)— Saturday, March 14th, 2026



KNOW THE DIFFERENT HEART DISEASE TYPES

You've probably heard the terms cardiovascular disease, heart disease and coronary heart disease. But did you know each of these terms means something different?

WHAT IS CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE?

Cardiovascular disease is any type of disease that affects the heart or blood vessels. "Cardio" refers to the heart, and "vascular" refers to the blood vessels. Types of cardiovascular disease include:

• Coronary heart disease • High blood pressure • Stroke • Heart failure • Peripheral artery disease



WHAT IS HEART DISEASE? Heart disease is any type of condition that affects the heart's function or structure. The most common type of heart disease is coronary heart disease. Heart disease also includes:

- Heart rhythm disorders known as arrhythmias
- Cardiomyopathy
- Congenital (present at birth) heart defects
- Coronary artery disease (CAD)
- Heart failure

Heart disease is a type of cardiovascular disease.

WHAT IS CORONARY HEART DISEASE?

Coronary heart disease is also called coronary artery disease (CAD). Coronary heart disease happens when a fatty substance called plaque builds up in the arteries. Sometimes people call this clogged arteries or atherosclerosis. The plaque reduces the amount of blood getting to the heart. This can cause angina, or chest pain. It can also cause blood clots and can lead to a heart attack.

[M3 Insurance](#)

To make room for your heart, your left lung is slightly smaller than your right lung.

[Source](#)

SHRIMP SCAMPI SHEET PAN MEAL

Servings: 4; Prep Time: 10 min; Cook Time: 5 min; Total Time: 15 min

Per Serving (1/4 sheet pan, no rice): 244 Calories, 6g Fat, 5g Carbs, 44g Protein

INGREDIENTS:

- * 1.5 lbs large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- * 2 small-medium zucchini, sliced into 1/8 in thick half moons
- * 2 tbsp. lemon juice
- * 1 tbsp. olive oil
- * 1/2 tsp. sea salt
- * 1/2 tsp. ground pepper
- * 3 cloves garlic, minced
- * 1/4 c. grated or shredded parmesan cheese
- * 1/4 c. fresh parsley leaves, chopped
- * Lemon slices, for serving

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to broil (450°F). Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper or spray with cooking spray.
2. Place shrimp and zucchini on prepared baking sheet and toss with lemon juice, olive oil, salt, pepper and garlic until shrimp and zucchini are evenly coated.
3. Place pan in the oven and broil for 5-6 minutes or until shrimp turns pink and zucchini is tender.
4. Divide shrimp and zucchini mixture between four plates and sprinkle with parmesan cheese and parsley. Serve over cauliflower rice or steamed white rice.



[Recipe](#)

BRAIN STRAIN

To enter the newsletter puzzle drawing, please submit your entry via inter-d (CCB 418) or email to: **employee-relations@danecounty.gov**.

Entry must be received by February 13th.

Please circle at least 3 prizes that interest you:

- Resistance Band Set & Workout Cards

- Calm Lavender Shower Bombs
- Tai Chi for Beginners DVD
- Ab Wheel & Jump Rope
- Inflatable Donut Ball
- Grounding Mat
- Muscle Roller Stick
- Cast Iron Cookbook for Beginners
- 500pc Wisconsin Badgers Game Day at the Zoo Puzzle
- White Noise Sound Machine and Eye Mask
- The Beginner's Guide to Raising Chickens Book
- Adult Coloring Book w/ Colored Pencils
- Wreck This Journal Book
- Dumbbell—Kettlebell Grip Handle
- The Complete Cooking for Two Cookbook

Unscramble the letters to complete each sentence. Then circle the correctly spelled word in the puzzle. Words are horizontal, vertical and diagonal but not backwards.

1. Your heart is the strongest and most important _____ in your body. **CLUMSE**
2. The American Heart Association recommends that most adults eat no more than 1,500 _____ of sodium a day. **SAMRLMILGI**
3. A can of soda can have about eight _____ of sugar. **OSAPETSNO**
4. Smoking harms your blood cells and blood _____. **LSESEVS**
5. You can keep your heart and lungs strong by staying away from _____ cigarettes. **ICLOECNRTE**
6. Another way to keep your heart and lungs healthy is to stay away from _____ smoke. **ODASCDNNEH**
7. Physical activity can reduce the symptoms of _____. **ROENSIDSPE**

8. Eating too much sugar may contribute to such health problems as heart disease and _____. **TISAEEDB**
9. Eating too much _____ can make your heart work harder. **USMOID**
10. If a person has high _____, it can lead to heart disease, which is why it's important to eat lots of fruits and vegetables. **SLHECROLET**

11. Eating too much sodium can lead to high blood _____. which makes the heart work harder. **USREPSER**
12. For every hour you exercise, you may gain two hours of life _____. **NEYXCAETCP**

