



## BROWN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

1117 CENTER STREET  
PO BOX 543  
NEW ULM MN 56073-0543  
Phone (507) 233-6820 • Fax (507) 233-6819

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Contact: Karen M. Moritz, Director  
507-233-6820

### Remember Your Heart

By: Erin Schwab

February is upon us and some may have those yummy candy hearts and their loved ones on their mind as this month is often known for Valentine's Day. This month, we encourage you to think about YOUR heart as well. February is a month that we focus help Americans learn about heart disease and what can be done to prevent it. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease is a leading cause of death, attributing to one of four deaths in the United States. Closer to home, about 232,000 people in Minnesota suffer from coronary heart disease.

Heart disease may be congenital from birth, however, there are other risk factors that can lead to heart disease such as diabetes, obesity, smoking, diet, and physical activity. So, what can be done to change the course of heart disease?

Heart disease can be preventable and altering certain behaviors can help one live a healthier life. Paying attention to the food and beverages you consume is a great start to living a heart-healthy life. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins will give your body the fuel it needs. Also, limiting the amount of sugars, bad fats, and alcohol can positively impact your health. Moving your body is another easy way to protect your heart. The United States Department of Health and Human

Services recommends getting 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity 5 days a week. Take a walk (or maybe snowshoe) to get that activity in! Your heart will thank you.

Now, it's not all about what you eat and how much you move. The amount of stress you hold can gravely impact your heart health. We know that our current times have been difficult and trying for many people. If you find yourself holding the weight of the world on your shoulders, talk with your medical provider and they can direct you to resources that can help. While you're with your doctor, make sure to have your blood pressure and cholesterol checked. These two can affect your heart-health and if they are out of range, your doctor will help you get them in check.

This may be overwhelming information, but the good news is there are people who can help you get any help you need to decrease your risk of heart disease. Your medical provider will be willing to go over your risk factors and discuss a customized plan. Organizations such as workplaces, schools, daycares, healthcare systems, and community organizations can look for guidance to bring into their sites from the partnership Brown County has with the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP). The Heart of New Ulm Project also provides education and resources to improve the health of New Ulm area residents. So this February, don't just think about those candy hearts, look into the resources available to you and remember YOUR heart as well.

More information on what heart disease is and how it can be prevented can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/index.htm>.