

healthy heart

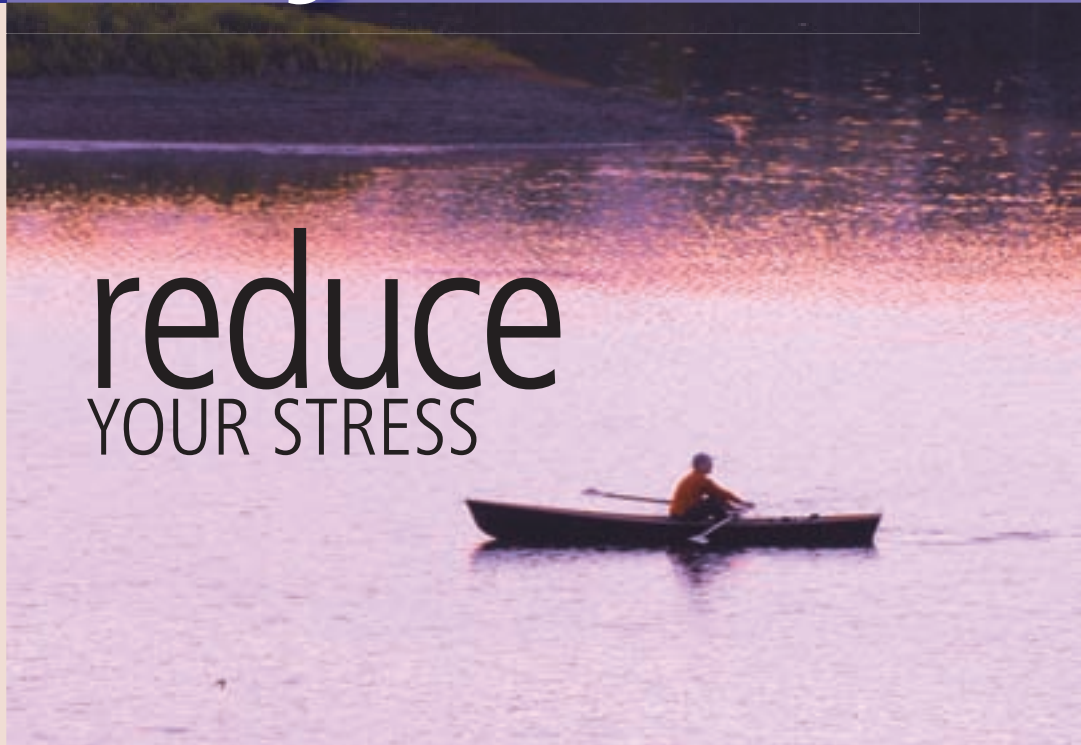
HEALTH NEWS AND INFORMATION

Are you stressed?

Most of us face stressful situations every day. A burned dinner is frustrating, an important meeting may be exciting and an argument with your spouse may make you feel sad.

All of the above feelings can be signs of stress. Other symptoms include: ■ Emotional: anger, fear, irritability, anxiety, depression or helplessness. ■ Physical: sleeplessness, stomachaches, heart palpitations, dizziness, headaches, or pain in the neck, jaw or back.

Sources: American Heart Association; American Psychological Association



reduce
YOUR STRESS

A balancing act

When was the last time you felt pressured or challenged?

Maybe you were preparing for a job interview. Or maybe you were up all night with a sick kid.

Stress is the way that your body responds to these immediate demands.

Some stress can be exciting and enlivening, like the pressure on a golfer attempting a putt for a birdie.

But too much stress can be exhausting and can lead to unpleasant physical and emotional symptoms.

Source: American Heart Association; American Psychological Association



YOU'RE STUCK IN TRAFFIC, you're late for an appointment and your hands are white-knuckled on the steering wheel.

This, you think to yourself, is stressful.

Stress often can make you feel anxious, causing your heart to pound and your breathing to become labored—physical responses that can be bad for your heart if you have heart failure, says the American Heart Association (AHA).

Of course, you can't avoid all stressors in life. But there are ways to reduce the amount of stress you have and to cope with stress when it does happen. Here are some suggestions from the AHA: ■ Talk it

out. Discuss problems at work and at home, and try to solve them. Ask your friends, family and clergy for support. ■ Relax. Try to take at

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least 15 minutes a day to sit quietly and breathe deeply. ■ Exercise regularly. Find an activity you enjoy, such as swimming or walking. It will help release tension in your body. ■ Stay positive. Look for the good in situations instead of the bad. ■ Take care of yourself. Don't smoke, drink, overeat, or use drugs or caffeine to help you cope.



HEALTHY facts

AEROBIC EXERCISE CAN HELP PEOPLE WITH HEART FAILURE
Damage from a heart attack or years of high blood pressure can trigger heart failure—a disease in which the heart becomes enlarged and doesn't pump blood efficiently.

People with heart failure typically feel short of breath when they're physically active. Aerobic exercise done on a regular basis, however, can help reduce the size of an enlarged heart in someone with stable heart failure. This can make the heart better able to pump blood.

—*Journal of the American College of Cardiology*

LOOK TO YOUR DINNER PLATE TO LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE
Eating a diet rich in foods that contain omega-3 fatty acids—such as fish, nuts, seeds and vegetable oils—may help keep blood pressure at a healthy level.

—*Hypertension*

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warfarin

REQUIRES DILIGENCE AND CARE

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE TAKE THE blood thinner warfarin to lower their risk of a heart attack, stroke or other health emergency. The prescription medication helps prevent blood clots from forming or growing bigger.

It's a lifesaving drug, but a powerful and complicated one too. If not taken correctly, it can lead to life-threatening bleeding and even death.

If you take warfarin, follow these safety tips—and any others you get from your pharmacist and doctor:

- Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of the prescription and nonprescription medicines, herbal remedies and vitamins you take. Talk with your doctor before stopping any and before starting new ones.
- Take warfarin exactly as prescribed and at about the same time every day.
- If you miss a dose, call your doctor. Take the dose as soon as possible on the same day. Never double up the next day.
- If you take too much warfarin, call your doctor right away.
- Keep your vitamin K intake constant every day—vitamin K affects how warfarin works. Vitamin K is found in leafy, green vegetables, such as spinach and kale; in certain oils, such as canola oil; and in other foods.
- Avoid cranberry juice and cranberry products.
- Tell all of your health care providers, including your dentist and anyone giving you a shot, that you take warfarin.

Sources: National Library of Medicine; National Institutes of Health



Keep your vitamin K intake constant every day.



When taking warfarin, avoid cranberry products.

LIVING WITH A pacemaker

AN IMPLANTED PACEMAKER regulates your heartbeat without your input. But you can't just forget about the device once it's in place.

To help you make sure your pacemaker does its job properly, the American Heart Association offers this advice: ■ Allow about eight weeks after surgery for your pacemaker to settle firmly in place. During this time, avoid sudden, jerky or violent actions that can cause your arm to pull away from your body. ■ Check your heartbeat regularly to make sure your pacemaker is working as it should. You will need to know two things: the maximum number of heartbeats per minute that is acceptable, and how fast or slow your heart should be beating. Ask your doctor how often to check your heart rate and what kind of change should cause concern.

To test your heart rate, check your pulse. To find your pulse, put your fingertips on a point inside of your wrist or over an artery in your neck where you can feel the

beat. Count the number of beats for one full minute to see if your heart is working within the acceptable range. Keep a record of your pulse checks for your doctor. If your pulse is very fast or very slow, call your doctor. ■ Take prescribed medicines exactly as instructed. ■ Follow all instructions from your doctor regarding diet and physical activity. ■ Before you receive a medical treatment, tell doctors, dentists or other health professionals that you have a pacemaker. ■ Carry an identification card that tells people you have a pacemaker. ■ Ask your doctor about special situations, such as surgical procedures, that may affect your pacemaker. Airport metal detection devices and most household and office equipment won't cause problems. If you suspect a piece of equipment is affecting your pacemaker, turn the equipment off or move away.

Carry an identification card that tells people you have a pacemaker.

■ Keep all medical appointments. Pacemakers need to be checked regularly.

Your pacemaker: How it works

A pacemaker is designed to manage the pace and regularity of your heartbeat when your heart is not contracting normally. It does this by stimulating the heart with low-energy electrical pulses.

A pacemaker has two main parts:
■ A battery-powered generator con-

taining a computer chip. ■ Wires with electrodes and sensors that connect your heart and the generator.

The computer chip receives information sent from your heart through the wires.

The chip figures out what electrical pulses to send and when the generator should send them.

The sensors can detect movement, blood temperature, breathing or other

factors that indicate your level of physical activity. This allows the chip to adjust to your activity. It can, for example, make your heart beat faster when you exercise.

The chip also records your heart's electrical activity and rhythm. Your doctor can use this data to nonsurgically adjust your pacemaker so it works best for you.

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute





Papaya black beans and rice

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 cup chopped red onion
- ½ cup orange juice
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons fresh chopped cilantro
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 cup finely chopped red bell pepper
- 1 cup finely chopped green bell pepper
- 1 medium papaya, peeled, seeded and diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cans (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained
- 6 cups hot cooked brown rice

Instructions

Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add all ingredients except beans and rice. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally until bell peppers are crisp-tender. Stir in beans. Cook about 5 minutes or until heated through. Serve over rice.

Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition facts (per serving)

Calories 410 Calories from fat 40

Percent Daily Value*

Total fat 5g	7%
Saturated fat 1g	3%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 440mg	18%
Total carbohydrate 78g	26%
Dietary fiber 14g	56%
Sugars 8g	
Protein 13g	
Vitamin A	30%
Vitamin C	170%
Calcium	10%
Iron	25%

*Percent daily values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet.
Recipe from www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov.



EATING WELL WHEN eating out

IT'S IMPORTANT TO TRY TO eat healthfully if you have heart disease. But if you have been to a restaurant lately, you know it isn't always easy to find foods that are good for you. Sodium, fat and calories abound in many tempting menu choices.

You don't have to give up eating out, however. You just have to know what to look for on menus and what to ask for when you order. So the next time you dine out:

■ **Search out key words on the menu.** Heart-friendly choices include items that are broiled, baked, grilled, steamed or poached. Steer clear of foods described as *fried*, *au gratin*, *crispy*, *sautéed* or *scalloped*.

■ **Ask for substitutes.** Instead of

french fries or similarly high-fat side dishes, ask for fruit or vegetables. Request that items like sauces, sour cream and salad dressing be served on the side, so you can control how much you eat. Better yet, see if there are low-fat or fat-free versions available. And don't be afraid to make special requests, such as asking that your meal be prepared without added oil or salt.

■ **Practice portion control.** Put half of your meal in a to-go box when you get it. Or split an entree with a friend.

Source: American Heart Association

Get more tips on keeping
your heart healthy at
www.mychp.com.