



## Heart Healthy!

With Valentine's Day arriving this month, it's the perfect time to focus on your heart. Here are some sensible tips for better overall health:

- Eat fewer processed foods – they are packed with sodium, which contributes to high blood pressure.
- Add whole grains, fish, poultry, fruits, veggies, and nuts as part of a balanced diet.
- Reduce salt intake by substituting herbs and spices such as garlic, lemon, vinegar, cumin, cinnamon, nutmeg, pepper, or oregano.
- Increase your physical activity by adding variety throughout your day; take the stairs at work, park a little further away from your destination, or walk/bike to an errand instead of driving.

**Take this quiz** to see how savvy you are about one of your body's most precious organs (*answers on next page*):

### True or False?

- 1) If I don't already have heart disease, I don't need to be concerned about my cholesterol level.
- 2) My last cholesterol level was within my goal, so I don't really need to be concerned about cholesterol anymore.
- 3) Eating less saturated fat is the best dietary change I can make to lower my blood cholesterol.
- 4) I should avoid all fat.
- 5) If I am overweight, losing weight will help me to lower my blood cholesterol.
- 6) Exercise can lower cholesterol level.



## Traditional or Roth 401(k)?

How do you choose between a traditional 401(k) and a Roth 401(k)? You pay taxes now with a Roth versus later with a traditional 401(k). If you think that you will be in a lower tax bracket after you retire, it's best to stick with the traditional 401(k). However, if you expect your tax rate to be the same or higher in retirement then a Roth 401(k) is the better choice. Its basic principle is that you are declining a tax break now in return for one at retirement.

## What a Headache!



Are you a migraine sufferer? A migraine is much more than just a headache; it is recurrent and pulsating, typically felt on one side of the head. If you experience more than two of these symptoms, you probably have a migraine:

- Headache is unresponsive to typical painkillers
- Pain gets worse with movement
- Vision gets blurry
- Feeling the urgent need to lie down or go to a quiet, dark room
- Dizziness occurs with a turn of the head
- Pain is so severe that vomiting occurs
- Headache lasts from several hours to several days or weeks

*(continued)*

## Warm Up the Winter!

### Low-Fat Whipped Hot Chocolate

*Because it's whipped, it tastes and looks creamy – for less than half the fat!*



4½ cups skim milk

1/3 cup sugar or sugar substitute

2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder

1½ teaspoons vanilla extract

1½ teaspoons cinnamon

Whip ½ cup of the milk, sugar, cocoa, vanilla and

cinnamon using a whisk. Heat up the rest of the milk in a saucepan till steam appears; then remove from the heat and whisk. Whip the cocoa mixture with the milk and pour into glasses or mugs. Serves 6.

### Heart Healthy Quiz Answers (from pg. 1):

- 1) **False** – Even in the absence of heart disease, lowering cholesterol levels can prevent a first heart attack.
- 2) **False** – High cholesterol and heart disease are only controlled, not cured, by diet and drug therapy.
- 3) **True** – Saturated fat raises your blood cholesterol more than anything else you eat. Stay away from fatty cuts of meat, whole-milk dairy products, and oils such as palm and coconut. Choose fruit, vegetables, and whole grain foods instead.
- 4) **False** – Your body still needs fat for a variety of functions; not all dietary fat is bad. Look for unsaturated fats in products you consume, but still limit your intake, as all fats are high in calories.
- 5) **True** – If you are overweight, losing even a little weight can help lower LDL cholesterol. Two keys to losing weight are eating fewer calories and becoming more physically active.
- 6) **True** – Regular exercise helps lower LDL levels and blood pressure, reduce excess weight, and improve the fitness of your heart and lungs.

Source: National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute

**Health and Wellness tips for your work, home and life – brought to you by the insurance and healthcare specialists at Corporate Health Systems, Inc.**

- Sound and light is extremely bothersome
- Your head feels like it's being stabbed
- Pain has a throbbing sensation

To prevent future migraines, stay away from chocolate, alcohol, and caffeine – they all are considered contributing factors. At the first sign of a migraine:

- Drink (non-caffeinated) herbal tea.
- Try aromatherapy – ginger, lavender, peppermint all have calming effects. Or, use them in the bath!
- Use a hot or cold compress on the forehead.
- Get a professional deep tissue massage; if the source of the migraine is tension, a massage may help alleviate the pressure.



## Workplace Woes

Do you come home from work with strained muscles and a sore neck? Your posture while sitting at your desk may be to blame. To alleviate aches and pains, try the following:

- Adjust your computer monitor to eye level.
- Change your position often; never sit for more than 45 minutes at a time.
- Get up and walk around throughout the day.
- Don't slouch – sit straight up.
- Avoid bending to the side or forward to reach something; arrange your desk and drawers so that frequently used items are well within your reach.